

# ZVEX EFFECTS

TYPE: Hand Painted Series [HP] | MODEL: LO-FI LOOP JUNKY™

**Congratulations!** You're the proud owner of a hand painted Z.Vex Effects Lo-Fi Loop Junky!™

**OVERVIEW:** I've made something. You'll have to decide if it's worth it. It took me years of goofing around with this strange analog recorder but I think it's finally finished. I've put my best foot forward to make your guitar sound really special this time. The recorded version of your performance may never sound the same as the original, but sounding the same isn't always the most important part of what effects do.

This is the Lo-Fi Loop Junky™. It's really low fidelity... the recording of your guitar is filled with hiss, moan, distortion and warped-record strangeness, but everyone will be able to tell the loop from your real guitar. Because the processing of your direct guitar is done with my new bootstrap circuit, with the very highest impedance circuit I've ever developed (even higher than the super hard-on™ circuit) your direct guitar will have detail incomparable with anything you've ever heard. The juxtaposition of your direct guitar against the smashed, distorted, shimmering/warbling recording of the loop mechanism will make it clear once and for all who is the guitarist and what is the machinery.

I've always been bothered by digital loopers. Who knows who is you and what is the device? Enter the Lo-Fi Loop Junky™. No one will ever question who is who and what is what again.

There are distinct advantages and disadvantages to my new, tiny, battery-saving device. You may only record one loop. There is no sound-on-sound available with this technology for now. But, if you unplug your cables, take out the battery, and bury it for a hundred years, the last loop you recorded will still be there when you drag yourself out of the grave and plug it in for the centennial resurrection gig. That's because it uses really bizarre technology that literally crams analog signals into static digital storage cells without a-to-d conversion. That's right... THERE IS NO ANALOG TO DIGITAL CONVERSION. It's pure analog storage, just like the old bucket-brigade technology, for 20 seconds straight. It would take 25 800ms analog delay pedals to hold the loop that this thing can play. For those of you who know how an a-to-d converter works, I offer this brief explanation: Inside the big fat chip, the voltage of the analog signal is sampled thousands of times per second and stored in sample-and-hold cells. The voltages of these individual cells are transferred using a horrifying silicon machine that squirts charge (something like a caulk-gun) into digital storage cells normally designed to hold ones and zeros. When the circuitry decides that the voltage in the cell is close enough to the sampled voltage (who can predict?) it moves on to do it again. It's like some kind of electronic Russian roulette, where the recording may or may not be accurate when compared with the original, but at least no computer ever puts its paws on the signal. Dig? There are no computers and no a-to-d conversion chips in this pedal!

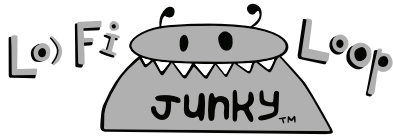
How does it sound? Some people compare it to a warped, damaged 45-rpm record. Some say that the compression is immaculate, while some say it destroys any concept of the original dynamic. Some say that the noise is intolerable... some say it's as precious as snow in the middle of nowhere. Some people have no taste. Lucky for me, taste is not the issue. I can promise one thing... your direct guitar will sound impeccable. I can't promise that the loop will sound good... you'll have to make some adjustments to your concept of "good" to be sure of that. I can promise that the loop will be different from any sampler you've heard.

## WHAT IT DOES & FEATURES IT HAS:

- [1] Records up to 20 seconds of your performance.
- [2] Allows you to initiate and finish a recording at any moment with a stomp switch, when activated.
- [3] Begins looping a few thousandths of a second after the record process is finished.
- [4] Remembers your loop even when unplugged or with the battery removed, for up to 100 years.
- [5] Records loops in either bypass mode or play mode.
- [6] The true-bypass switch initiates loop playback from the sample's beginning at any time.
- [7] Has vibrato with speed and depth controls, allowing a vibrato/chorus/Leslie-like shimmer.
- [8] Has very slow vibrato speed for warped-record effects, to very fast for jiggly playback.
- [9] Has real clocked-analog recording with no analog-to-digital conversion.
- [10] Records using velvety compression for a smooth organ-like sound.
- [11] Allows overdriven recording of storage cells using 'record level' control.
- [12] Has a tone control that rolls off hiss and other annoying artifacts for burbling, mellow samples.
- [13] Has hiss! Lots of it! It's analog, remember, with no noise-reduction, and it's lo-fi. 8^)
- [14] Has very limited frequency response. Nothing above 2.6 kHz. Brick-wall filtering.
- [15] Has a safety-switch to protect a favorite sample from being recorded over accidentally.
- [16] Plays back at any volume, louder than your direct guitar if you wish.
- [17] Has a gorgeously transparent guitar preamp built-in to give your direct guitar a glistening finish.
- [18] Really small footprint, like a fuzz factory.
- [19] Draws as little as 2 mA from the battery when in bypass mode, and about 12 mA when activated.
- [20] Smells great.
- [21] Features aliasing artifacts, distortion, hiss, out-of-tune effects, strange behavior, and long battery life.
- [22] Allows loop erasure during bypass, resulting in a looping hiss sample.
- [23] Never sounds like what you played into it. Always alters the original tone and dynamics.
- [24] No learning curve! Five simple knobs, two stomp-switches for bypass and record, and a safety switch.
- [25] Has simple LED status indicator. Lights up solid while recording, blinks once at the end of every loop. Stops in bypass mode.

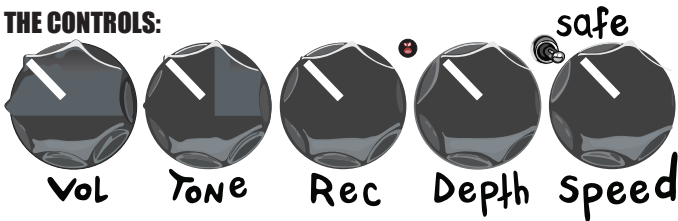
## What it does NOT do:

- [1] No sound-on-sound. No multiple layers, no overdubbing, just one simple loop.
- [2] No digital crispness. No dynamic preservation. No high-end detail except on direct guitar. No hi-fi.
- [3] No reverse playback. Sorry. I wanted this too. The analog recorder chip won't play backwards.



**RECORDING TIPS:** When using a loud guitar, such as a Les Paul with PAFs, turn the record level down a bit. You'll hardly be able to hit a chord or strike a string without overloading the delicate analog recorder otherwise. Don't use the record volume at the highest setting unless you don't mind a faint "pop!" at the start of each loop (which can be handy, actually). Don't use the vibrato depth turned way up while recording a quiet, precious sample, or you may hear a slight "whoosh" in the background as the sample starts. On normal volume samples, you never hear this. Record using a strident tone (lead pickup) if you need to hear the sample easily. Because of the excessive compression you get from bass-heavy pickups, you may not hear as much note detail as you like otherwise. Set the record level at the optimum position for your playing style if you plan to record loops on the fly, or you may be disappointed with either the level of hiss (set too low) or level of distortion (set too high). Experiment until you know what record level is best for you.

### THE CONTROLS:



- Volume:** Loop volume. Gets really loud if you need it.
- Tone:** Cuts noise and distortion. Makes the final sound of the loop rolled off and organ-like if necessary.
- Rec:** Record volume. You can decide how loud to drive the recorder... to overdrive if you like.
- Depth:** Vibrato depth. Adjust for the level of pitch twisting that makes you happy.
- Speed:** Vibrato speed. Adjust for the speed that spins the sound around in a way that fits the music.

### THE BUTTONS:

On the left: Bypass. When you kick this in, the loop starts playing. When you kick it out, you have true-bypass, pure silence, just like all other Z.Vex Effects.

On the right: The record switch. Hit this just as you start recording a new loop. Switch it off on the exact same beat when you finish recording your loop. If you've made a mistake, quickly hit it twice so you can hear the gentle hiss of nothingness instead of your bad loop. You can defeat this switch with the safety switch located between the two vibrato knobs.

At the top right: The safety switch. This tiny switch lets you save a favorite loop so you won't accidentally erase it, no matter what condition you might be in while stumbling over your pedal. Woo-hoo! Yee-haw!

### HINTS:

To give better separation between your playing and the sample's playback tone, use different pickups for each. To tighten up the loop length, discipline your record-switch stomping so that you hit the switch simultaneously with the beginning of your pick movement on "1" (or whatever beat you wish to start on) and stomp the record switch off exactly at

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the moment you wish to hear the loop begin playing back. There is a very slight delay as the internal electronics finish housekeeping (making notes on the loop's end point and processing the last few samples into memory) on the very first playback after the record button is struck off, but after that, the loop becomes exactly as tight as you recorded it. Most of the time, you'll never notice that there's any delay before it kicks in after recording. The tone control can be used to reduce hiss or distortion if you get a great take but the level was wrong. Check the playback volume carefully to make it fit with your direct guitar, so that the loop doesn't drown you out if you get quieter... remember that the loop is very compressed so it's always louder than you normally play, and it doesn't need to be very loud to be quite present.

### FAQ:

Q: There's a "tick!" or "pop!" at the beginning of my loops!

A: Turn the record volume down a bit.

Q: There's a "whoomp!" sound on my loops.

A: Turn the vibrato depth down while recording. Usually this is invisible anyway.

Q: Sometimes my loop plays too short, or seems to skip.

A: With very short loops you may have to reduce the vibrato depth and/or speed control to about ¾ of maximum to avoid this. It doesn't always happen, but sometimes the violent action of the vibrato circuit confuses the analog recorder chip. Sometimes this sounds really interesting.

Q: There's a squealing/humming noise in my gear during record mode.

A: Move the Lo-fi Loop Junky to a different place in your pedal order. It may need to be first in order to get the best fidelity for the guitar's pickup detail and avoid any ground problems that generate noise during record mode.

Q: My television gets snowy while I am using my Lo-fi Loop Junky.

A: Reduce the dose. Grab the reins.

Q: I can't hear the detail of my fuzz when I record it with my Lo-fi!

A: The Lo-fi Loop Junky has a maximum frequency response of 2.6 kHz. That means no high-end detail, which fuzzes have lots of. Maybe your fuzz needs to be after the Lo-fi, not before. Of course, that means your direct guitar will be fuzzed too. Sacrifices must be made when dealing with small boxes, limited technology, and esoteric sounds.

Q: The beginning of my samples sound like the pitch is swooping in slightly when I turn down the vibrato depth control.

A: If you record with the vibrato depth control down, this will never happen.

Q: When I adjust the depth knob, the speed seems to change.

A: The two knobs are slightly interlocked, so you have to tweak each one individually every time you adjust the other.

### WARRANTY:

Your hand painted Lo-Fi Loop Junky™ has a lifetime warranty. Please visit <http://zvex.com/website/repairs.html> for any repair questions or more information.

Enjoy!



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