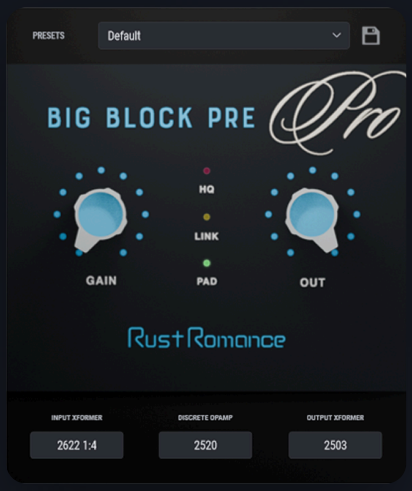
SOCKETABLE DISCRETE CONSOLE

BigBlockPre *Pro*

User Guide — Basic Operation



Version: 1.0.0 (VST3 / AU)

Supported DAWs: Reaper, Cubase, Live, FL Studio, Studio One, Bitwig and other 64-bit VST3 / AU hosts

Rust Romance

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About This Guide

This guide covers the basic operation of BigBlockPre Pro — how the panel is laid out, what each control does, and how to work with the swappable components and presets.

1 What Is BigBlockPre Pro

BigBlockPre Pro is a preamp plug-in built around the concept of a “Socketable Discrete Console” — a discrete-component console that doesn't exist in reality. Just as you might swap cards in and out of a real console, BigBlockPre Pro lets you choose and combine three components in the signal path independently: the input transformer, the discrete op-amp (DOA), and the output transformer.

Signal Flow

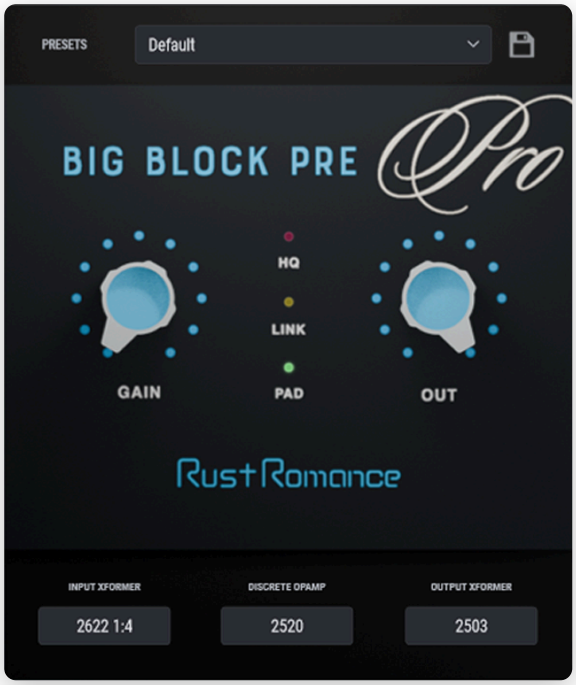
Regardless of which components you choose, the signal always follows this fixed order:

Input → PAD → **Input Transformer** → **DOA (GAIN)** → **Output Transformer** → OUTPUT → **Output**

Difference From the Free Edition (LE)

The free BigBlockPre LE has its input transformer, DOA, and output transformer fixed to `AP2622 → 2520 → AP2503`. The Pro edition's key difference is that each of these three slots can be chosen independently. Swapping the DOA changes how the GAIN knob behaves and how it drives the sound — that “a different component, a different machine” experience is the core feature of the Pro edition.

2 Panel Layout



The BigBlockPre Pro main panel

Location	Element	Role
Top row	PRESETS field + save icon	Select/save presets (see §5)
Left	GAIN knob	Adjusts the DOA's input gain
Center	● HQ / ● LINK / ● PAD LEDs	Click to toggle on/off (see §3)
Right	OUTPUT knob	Adjusts the output level
Bottom row	INPUT XFORMER / DISCRETE OPAMP / OUTPUT XFORMER boxes	Choose components (see §4)

All three LEDs and all three selector boxes can be clicked to change or check their setting.

3 Controls

PAD

A passive attenuator placed just before the input transformer. Click to toggle it on/off; the default is **ON**. Turn it on when feeding a hot input signal, or whenever you want to lower the level reaching the DOA to change its character.

GAIN (0 dB – +45 dB)

Adjusts the closed-loop gain of the selected DOA. The default is **0 dB** (knob fully left). Turning it clockwise raises the gain and brings out more of the DOA's non-linearity and distortion.

> The GAIN knob displays a 0–45 dB range, but the actual gain ceiling you can reach depends on the circuit of the selected DOA (see §6).

LINK

Links GAIN and OUTPUT inversely. The default is **OFF**. The moment you turn it on, the current GAIN and OUTPUT values are captured as a reference point; from then on, moving either one moves the other by the same amount in the opposite direction (raise GAIN by +3 dB and OUTPUT drops by −3 dB, and vice versa). Use it to keep the overall output level roughly constant while dialing in how hard you drive the DOA. Turning LINK off leaves both knobs wherever they currently sit.

OUTPUT (−45 dB – 0 dB)

A passive attenuator placed after the output transformer. The default is **0 dB** (knob fully right). Use it to tame the extra level added by GAIN.

HQ (Engine Switch)

Switches the processing engine between WDF (LED lit) and FAST (LED off).

- **WDF**: The reference engine, computing the circuit model directly. Most accurate, at a somewhat higher CPU cost.
- **FAST**: A lightweight engine derived from WDF. Fine to leave selected for everyday production work.

The switch is applied internally at a safe point (such as while playback is stopped or the sample rate changes). Depending on the selected component combination, the bottom of the panel may show “Engine not ready: selected component combination is unavailable.” If you see this, wait a moment or try a different combination.

4 Component Selection

Clicking any of the three boxes along the bottom of the panel opens a menu of the components available for that slot. This is the heart of what BigBlockPre Pro is about.

INPUT XFORMER

Label	Notes
2622 1:4 *(default)*	600Ω-family, standard 1:4 winding
2622 1:8	150Ω-family wiring mode
JT-110K	High-impedance-family transformer
LL1587	An alternative 1:4 winding transformer

DISCRETE OPAMP (DOA)

Label	Notes
2520 *(default)*	Same reference DOA as the LE edition
1731	
990	
AM10	
OA10	

OUTPUT XFORMER

Label	Notes
2503 *(default)*	75Ω→600Ω, 1:3 winding
3556	1:3 winding
JE-123-A	Steel core, 1:3 winding
CMOQ-2L	1:3-equivalent wiring
S-217-D	1:3-equivalent wiring

> Changing the DOA changes the actual gain ceiling and the way the sound distorts, even at the same GAIN knob position — "changing the DOA changes what the GAIN knob means" is exactly what the Pro edition is going for. The input and output transformers likewise shift the tonal character and impedance relationship. Start from the default combination (2622 1:4 / 2520 / 2503, sonically equivalent to LE) and swap one slot at a time to hear the difference.

5 Presets

Click the **PRESETS** field at the top of the panel to open the preset menu.

- **Default**: Resets every parameter to its default value.
- **Factory presets** (6 in total): `Dumb Friend` / `European Tea Party` / `Her butt` / `Nagging Old Man` / `Shiny Skinhead` / `Strong Guy`
- **User presets**: Presets you've saved yourself appear here.
- **Save As...**: Saves the current settings under a name you choose. The disk icon next to the field does the same.
- **Delete**: Deletes the selected user preset.
- **Show Presets Folder**: Opens the folder where presets are stored, in your file browser.

Presets are stored under `Documents\RustRomance\BigBlockPre Pro\Presets\*.bbp`.

If the current parameter values drift from the selected preset, an asterisk (`*`) appears after the preset name to show there are unsaved changes.

6 Things To Know

About the GAIN Knob's Ceiling

The GAIN knob shows a 0–45 dB range, but every DOA has a physical gain ceiling set by its circuit topology. For the default 2520, that ceiling sits around +40 dB — turning the knob further clockwise won't raise the gain any further once you reach it (this is not a bug; it faithfully reproduces the real circuit's behavior). Each DOA has a different ceiling, so swapping components changes the gain you actually get at the same knob position.

Choosing Between the WDF and FAST Engines

For everyday production work, leaving the engine on **FAST** is fine. Switch to **WDF** only when you want to check the most accurate rendering — for example, during a final mix check.

Supported Sample Rates

44.1 / 48 / 88.2 / 96 / 176.4 / 192 kHz.