



Welcome to your new Epoch Pre by Catalinbread! We've worked hard to get this into your hands so we hope you'll enjoy using it as much as we enjoyed making it.

Let's Get Started

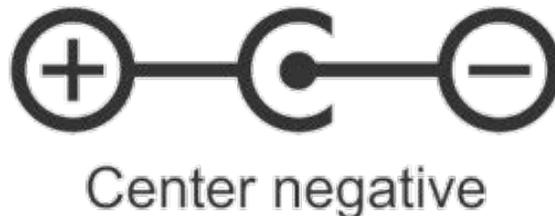
The preamp is an exacting replica of the EP-3 preamp, from the 22v power supply, to the JFET preamp, to the circuit loading contributed by the echo function (we made a filtering circuit that mimics the loading), to the mixer output circuit. The buffer also runs off of 22v and is a discrete silicon transistor based buffer.



Honing down on this circuit was critical and a long journey. We dedicated hours and days into this design, revising our prototype until all agreed that what we had concocted was sonically perfect!

POWER YOUR EPOCH PRE

The Epoch Pre was designed to be used with a 9V DC power supply with center-negative polarity. Make sure that the power supply you are using has the following logo printed on it:



Using a center-positive power supply will damage your Pre, so please be sure that you are using a power supply with the correct polarity. For the cleanest sound we recommend using the highest quality power supply you can acquire, preferably with isolated power outputs if you are powering multiple pedals. The current draw for the Epoch Pre is ~10 mA. If using a daisy-chained power supply, make sure that its amperage is rated to be above the sum of all the current draws for each pedal in the chain.

BALANCE

This is essentially the volume control, but much more nuanced than that. It is the wet/dry mixer circuit from the Echoplex/Belle Deluxe but of course, there is no wet signal! We used the fancier mixer circuit rather than a standard volume control because it contributes to the subtle tone-shaping that the Echoplex is known for. From min to around noon, it acts much like a volume control. But from noon to max, the volume doesn't really increase. Instead, what you'll hear is that the tone shifts in subtle ways.

The thickest tone will be from around 1:00 to 3:00. As the Balance knob is maxed, the low end gets tighter. If you are plugging a guitar straight into the Pre, these tone shifts may seem very subtle. But as you add more pedals in front of the Pre, the effect becomes more pronounced.

BIAS

At its core BIAS controls the gain of the pedal. As you turn it, it will crackle. We assure you, this is okay! Set to minimum, the pedal will be around unity gain and will get the general response of the EP-3. (Remember, the Echoplex was not designed to boost signal. Echoplex designers were just trying to come up with a unity driver and not effect the sound. But the preamp did change the sound and everybody loved it for what it did). Turn up the Bias for more gain. The Epoch Pre is super high headroom and won't distort, even at high Bias settings. What it will do is make everything sound bigger.

BOOST

This switch allows for an instantaneous preset boost, as determined by where the Boost knob is set. The Boost function is part of the preamp; if you have the pedal bypassed, the Boost does nothing. This boost function was voiced to make the signal bigger, louder, and wider. The Naga Viper, for example, in contrast makes the sound more focused.

EARLY/LATER push-button

What the frack does Early/Later mean? The EP-3 Echoplex went through a few revisions during its production life. The first 400 units had a different preamp voicing and has now become one of those holy grail legend type things.

The Early voicing had a tighter bass and more upper midrange boost which made it perfect to enhance the big cranked up Marshalls everyone was playing through. As you know, if you crank up a tube amp it gets thicker and you can lose definition and cut-through power. Think of the Van Halen sound (although it is not known if he used early or later models).

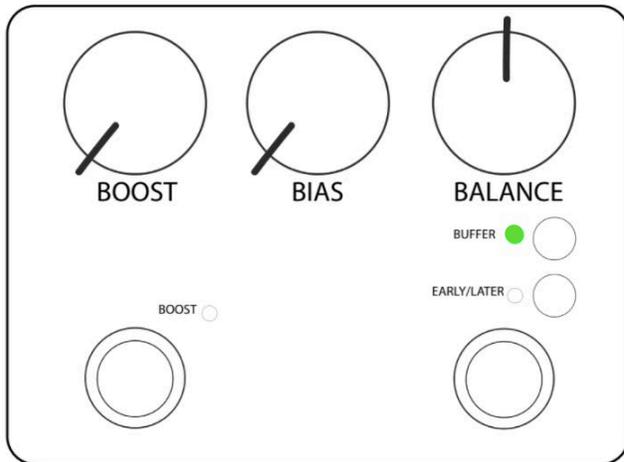
The Later voicing has a bigger, looser bass and more of a flat frequency response. It's overall vibe is thick and creamy.

The Early/Later button on the Epoch Pre reconfigures the preamp to both of those specs in exacting detail, down to the type of input/output/bypass capacitors.

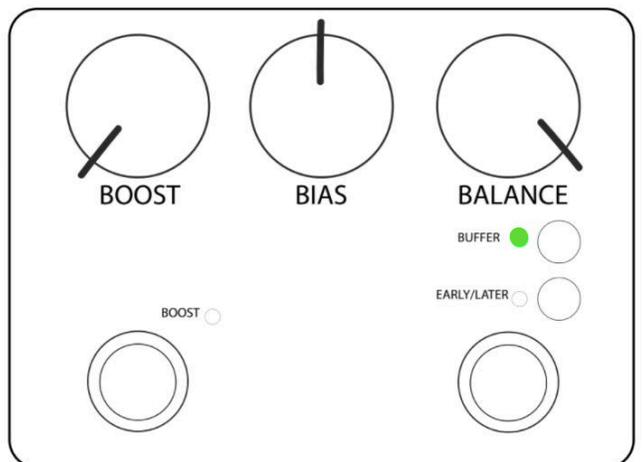
EPOCH PRE STARTER SETTINGS

- BOOST ON
- BOOST OFF
- BUFFER OFF
- EARLY
- BUFFER ON
- LATER

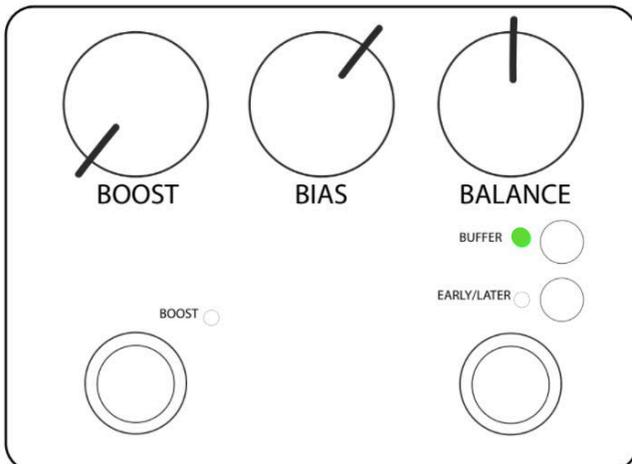
To get you up and running we've included a few starter settings.



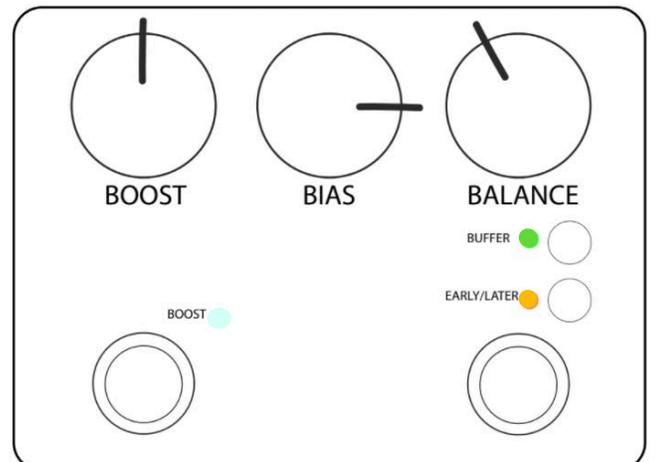
EP-3 TONE ENCHANCE



TIGHT HEADROOM



THICK CLEAN TONE



LOW END BOOST

PURPOSE OF THE EPOCH PRE?

While you could use it anyway you want to, our design intention is for the Epoch Pre to be the very last pedal in the chain. Not only does it provide boost, it acts like a mastering plug-in on the master fader - your whole pedalboard sounds bigger, lushier, wider. The Epoch Pre bundles all the frequencies without squishing them like a compressor. For moments where you're looking for your part to stand out in the mix, engage the Boost! Remember, the EP-3 was a three-pronged device, not only was it a delay but also a sonic enhancer and live performance tool. The design of the Epoch Pre was intended to feature its capabilities as a sonic enhancer. Folks with massive pedalboards will benefit from having this at the end of the chain.

Then there's the buffer. First, a bit of context - as you now know, the preamp's volume control is the mixer circuit from the EP-3. This mixer circuit has a relatively high output impedance which is partly responsible for the warm sound usually associated with the EP-3. But if you're running a long cable from the pedalboard to the amp, your signal can become too dull and lifeless with just the preamp. Activating the buffer gives your pedalboard a low-impedance, high-current feed to your amp so you could run 100' cable and it would be fine. Back in the day, folks that used EP-3s typically had it on top of the amp so the cable to the amp was usually short so there wasn't as much of a loading problem. We designed the pedal so you could have the buffer always engaged. Even if you're not using the preamp, your pedalboard will still get that benefit. But really, we doubt anyone will turn this pedal off once they hear what it does for their pedalboard. Seriously!

ALSO - Not only can you use the Epoch Pre as a sonic enhancer / boost, you can use it to turn DOWN the volume of your entire pedalboard without losing any tone or that cranked-up feel. Perfect for late night playing! Just run your pedalboard into it and turn the Balance control way down. You kind of have to experience it for yourself: retaining the feel and sound of all your cranked up pedals, just without the volume.

If you're in minimalist mode, you can use the Epoch Pre just between your guitar and amp and use it to boost and enhance your amp.