



OPTICAL FILM GLOW

BY HERBISTRY · FOR FINAL CUT PRO & MOTION

# AFTERGLOW

Light, the way real glass and film treat it. **Afterglow** finds the bright parts of your shot and only glows those, so a neon sign blazes and a face stays clean. Dial it gentle for a tasteful polish, or push it into a full dreamy haze.

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## THE SHORT VERSION

## What Afterglow does

Drop Afterglow on a clip and it does the optical stuff real glass and film stocks do to bright light. Four passes, stacked: a soft **bloom** around your highlights, a warm **halation** bleed hugging them, a hazy **diffusion** veil that lifts the blacks and kills the digital edge, and a **highlight roll-off** that lets blown whites go creamy instead of harsh.

The trick that makes it read real: every glow is **highlight-aware**. Afterglow isolates the bright parts of your actual footage first, then glows only those. A streetlight blooms, the wall beside it does not. That is the whole difference between this and the pre-rendered "glow" overlays that just blur the entire frame. It is a focused optical-glow effect, not a full film-emulation suite, and it runs in real time on Apple Silicon.

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## FIRST RUN

## Install, run, and unlock Afterglow

From download to a clean export. Here is the whole path.

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**Get FxFactory.** Afterglow installs through **FxFactory**, the free plugin manager for Final Cut

Pro and Motion. Grab it at [fxfactory.com](https://fxfactory.com) if you do not have it already.

- 2 Install Afterglow.** Find Afterglow by Herbistry inside FxFactory and install it from there. If Final Cut or Motion was open, restart it so it picks up the new effect.
- 3 Find it in Final Cut.** Afterglow is a clip effect. It lives in the **Effects browser** ▶ **Herbistry** ▶ **Afterglow**. Drag it onto a clip like any other effect. In Motion it is in the **Filters library** under **Herbistry**.
- 4 Try it free.** Every control works right away, no time limit. The catch is a Herbistry leaf watermark tinting the frame, so the trial is perfect for auditioning the looks but not for a clean export.
- 5 Buy and unlock.** Purchases happen right inside the FxFactory app. Buy Afterglow there and the watermark disappears. FxFactory remembers the license, so it is a one-time thing.

#### GOOD TO KNOW

Afterglow does all its work on your Mac, on the graphics card, frame by frame. Your video never leaves your computer.

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# One effect, two depths

Afterglow opens with four friendly sliders and a preset menu. Everything deeper is one checkbox away, and hidden until you ask for it.

## The simple front

ALWAYS VISIBLE

- A **Presets** menu, then four sliders: **Amount**, **Warmth**, **Bloom Softness**, and **Diffusion**.
- These four are **macros**: each one drives several of the real controls underneath at once.
- Pick a look, push Amount, done. A finished glow in about ten seconds.
- Best for: most shots, most of the time.

## The pro panel

TICK "SHOW ADVANCED"

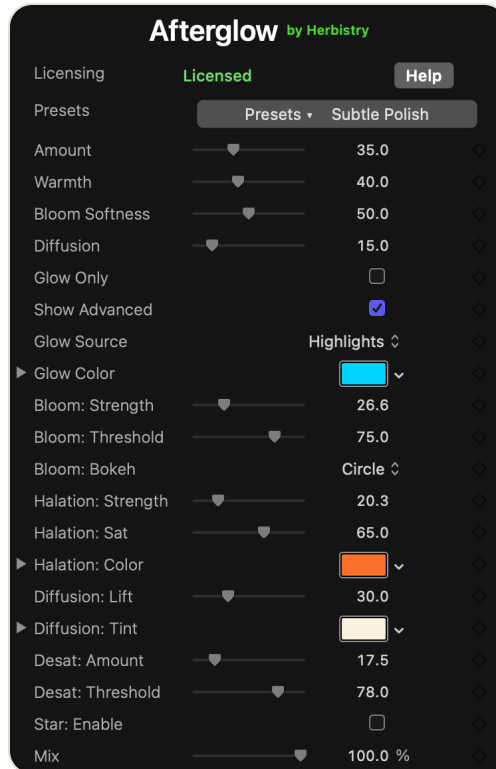
- Turn on **Show Advanced** and the full rig appears: glow source, bloom, halation, star, diffusion, desaturation.
- Every one of those is the **real value** the simple sliders were steering for you.
- Override anything by hand. The front sliders keep working alongside it.
- Best for: colorists, fine-tuning, and the cyberpunk hue-pop.

## NOTHING IS FAKED OR HIDDEN

The four front sliders are not a dumbed-down preview. They move the exact same pro parameters you see when you tick Show Advanced. Start simple, open the hood whenever you want more, and the two never fight each other.

# The inspector, top to bottom

Everything lives in one inspector. The simple front is always up top. The rest only appears once Show Advanced is on, grouped by pass so each control reads as "which effect, which knob."



The Afterglow inspector with **Show Advanced** on, so the full per-pass rig is visible. Most days you only touch the four dials up top.

## SIMPLE FRONT

### Presets

load a full look, or save your own

### Amount

the master dial: how much glow overall

### Warmth

clean white bloom to warm film halation

### Bloom Softness

how wide the glow spreads

### Diffusion

the hazy veil over the whole frame

## PREVIEW & ADVANCED

### Glow Only

see just the added light, on black

### Show Advanced

reveals everything below

## **GLOW SOURCE & BLOOM**

### **Glow Source**

Highlights, Color, or Both

### **Glow Color**

the target hue for Color / Both

### **Bloom: Strength, Threshold, Bokeh**

the soft halo and its shape

## **HALATION & DIFFUSION**

### **Halation: Strength, Sat, Color**

the warm red bleed

### **Diffusion: Lift, Tint**

the veil and its color

### **Desat: Amount, Threshold**

creamy highlight roll-off

## **STAR / CROSS-SCREEN**

### **Star: Enable**

off by default

### **Points, Length, Angle, Strength**

the cross-screen spokes off bright points

# The simple front, one by one

Four sliders, all 0 to 100. Most looks are just these four. Amount is the one you reach for first.

## THE MASTER

### Amount

MASTER

How much glow overall. It scales the bloom, the halation, and the highlight roll-off together, so one slider takes the whole effect from a whisper to a full bloom. This is the dial most people touch and the one to ease back when a look is too much.

— AT 0

No added glow. **The picture comes through clean.**

— AT 100

Full bloom and halation. **Highlights bloom hard.**

Diffusion is separate, so even at Amount 0 the veil can still be working if you want haze without bloom. Default is **35**.

# THE CHARACTER

## Warmth

DEFAULT 40

Sets the flavor of the glow, from a clean neutral lens bloom to a warm film halation, and warms the halation tint as it climbs.

— AT 0

Neutral white bloom. **A clean glass-lens glow.**

— AT 100

Warm orange halation. **Full film-stock bleed.**

## Bloom Softness

DEFAULT 50

How far the glow spreads out from a highlight, from a tight rim to a wide, airy haze. It also softens the diffusion bleed, since they share the same blur.

— AT 0

A tight halo hugging the highlight.

— AT 100

**Wide, dreamy spread** across the frame.

## Diffusion

DEFAULT 15

The black-mist veil, the soft filter that lifts the blacks and pulls the hard digital edge off everything. It runs on its own, separate from Amount, so you can have haze with no bloom or bloom with no haze.

— AT 0

Crisp. True blacks, sharp edges.

— AT 100

**Hazy and lifted,** the Pro-Mist look.

## TWO SWITCHES UP FRONT

**Glow Only** shows you just the added light on a black frame, so even a subtle glow is easy to see while you tune. Flip it back off when you are done. **Show Advanced** reveals the pro panel below. Both start off.

# The pro panel

Tick **Show Advanced** and these appear, grouped by pass and named "group: knob" so they stay easy to find. Reach for them when a front slider cannot get you where you want, or when you want the neon hue-pop.

## GLOW SOURCE

### Glow Source & Glow Color

HIGHLIGHTS · COLOR · BOTH

What the glow keys off. **Highlights** glows by brightness, the normal film behavior. **Color** glows only the parts near a hue you pick in **Glow Color**, so just the neon-cyan sign lights up and nothing else. **Both** does brightness and hue together. This is the cyberpunk hue-pop, and it is the most fun control in the panel.

Glow Color defaults to a neon cyan. It only does anything in **Color** or **Both** mode.

## BLOOM

### Bloom: Strength & Threshold

THRESHOLD 75

Strength is how bright the soft halo gets. **Threshold** is the gate: how bright a pixel has to be before it blooms at all. Lower the threshold and more of the frame starts to glow; raise it and only the very brightest points do.

### Bloom: Bokeh

CIRCLE · HEXAGON · OCTAGON

The shape of the out-of-focus glow, like a real lens aperture. **Circle** is the clean default. **Hexagon** and **Octagon** give the bloom defined blade edges, the vintage-glass look on defocused highlights.



## HALATION

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### Halation: Strength & Sat

SAT 65

The warm bleed that hugs your highlights, the thing film does and digital does not. Strength is how much. **Sat** is how vivid the bleed is, from a faint warmth to a saturated orange glow.

### Halation: Color

WARM RED-ORANGE

The tint of the bleed. It defaults to a warm red-orange, the classic film halation color, but it is a full color well so you can take it anywhere. Warmth on the simple front nudges this for you; here you set it outright.

## DIFFUSION & HIGHLIGHT ROLL-OFF

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### Diffusion: Lift & Tint

LIFT 30

**Lift** raises the floor of the blacks, the milky lifted-shadow part of the Pro-Mist look. **Tint** colors the veil, a soft warm white by default. The simple Diffusion slider sets how much veil there is; these two shape it.

### Desat: Amount & Threshold

THRESHOLD 78

The creamy highlight roll-off. **Amount** pulls the color out of your brightest pixels so a blown highlight reads as soft film white instead of a clipped digital color. **Threshold** sets how bright a pixel must be before it starts to desaturate.

### Star: Enable · Points · Length · Angle · Strength

OFF BY DEFAULT

A real cross-screen filter. Turn on **Star: Enable** and bright points grow angular streaks, the spikes you get shooting lights through a star filter. **Points** sets the spoke count (4, 6, or 8). **Length** is how far the streaks reach, **Angle** rotates the whole star, and **Strength** is how bright the spikes are.

It stays off until you switch it on, and the render skips the whole pass when it is off, so it costs nothing until you want it. Best on point lights: streetlamps, candles, neon, a sun glint.

#### ADVANCED

## Building looks by hand

Any single slider is simple. Here is how to think about them together so you are steering, not guessing.

### THE MENTAL MODEL

Four questions, in order. **How much?** That is Amount. **Clean or filmic?** That is Warmth. **How wide?** That is Bloom Softness. **How much haze?** That is Diffusion. Set those four first. Only open Show Advanced when one of them cannot get you the last ten percent.

#### Tasteful polish

Amount 35 · Warmth 40 · Diffusion 15

The default, and a reason it is the default. A glow you feel more than you see. Lifts skin and highlights without anyone clocking that an effect is on.

#### Warm film

Amount 85 · Warmth 85 · Halation up

Push Warmth and the bloom turns into a warm orange halation hugging every highlight. The film-stock bleed, the classic golden-hour look on any footage.

## Dreamy haze

Bloom Softness 80 · Diffusion 45 ·  
Bokeh: Hexagon

Open the glow wide and lift the veil. Soft, lifted, glowy, the music-video daydream. Switch Bokeh to Hexagon for that vintage-glass shimmer on defocused lights.

## Black mist

Diffusion 80 · Diffusion: Lift up ·  
Amount low

Veil-forward, glow-quiet. Diffusion high with the Lift up gives you milky blacks and a soft filmic bloom, the diffusion-filter look without much bloom on top.

## Neon hue-pop

Glow Source: Both · pick the neon  
color · Star on

The showpiece. Set Glow Source to Both, drop the Glow Color on the neon you want, and only that color blazes. Flick the Star on for spikes off the point lights and you have the cyberpunk frame.

## Tune with Glow Only

Glow Only on · set Threshold &  
Softness · Glow Only off

Not a look, a workflow. Flip Glow Only on to see just the light you are adding on black, dial Threshold and Softness until the glow sits on the right things, then flip it back off.

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# The looks

Six built-in looks ship with Afterglow. A look is a snapshot of every control at once, so picking one sets the whole stack. Choose from the **Presets** menu at the top of the inspector, then tweak anything from there. A fresh insert starts on **Subtle Polish**.

## Clean Bloom

LENS

Amount 70 · Warmth 15 · Soft 40 · Diff 0

A neutral, bright lens bloom with almost no warmth and no veil. The pure highlight glow, clean as glass.

## Dreamy Haze

SOFT

Amount 80 · Warmth 45 · Soft 80 · Diff 45

Wide soft bloom, lifted veil, hexagon bokeh, and a gentle 6-point star. The daydream look for music videos and soft-focus moments.

## Warm Halation

FILM

Amount 85 · Warmth 85 · Soft 55 · Diff 20

Heavy warm red-orange bleed hugging every highlight. Full film-stock character, the golden bleed on bright edges.

## Black Mist

DIFFUSION

Amount 45 · Warmth 35 · Soft 60 · Diff 80

Veil-forward and cool. A heavy Pro-Mist haze with milky lifted blacks and a slightly cool tint. The diffusion-filter classic.

## Neon Night

SHOWCASE

Amount 95 · Warmth 30 · Soft 45 · Diff 10

The showpiece. Glow Source set to Both for a neon-cyan hue-pop, plus a 4-point star spiking the point lights. Cyberpunk in one click.

## Subtle Polish

DEFAULT

Amount 35 · Warmth 40 · Soft 50 · Diff 15

The fresh-insert default. A gentle all-around glow that flatters the picture without announcing itself. When in doubt, start here.

# Saving your own looks

Built a glow you love? Save it and reuse it anywhere.

- 1 Dial in the look until it is right.
- 2 Open the **Presets** menu at the top of the inspector and choose **Save**.
- 3 Give it a name. It now sits in the menu right alongside the six built-in looks, and you can rename or delete it from there too.

## WHERE YOUR LOOKS LIVE

Each look you save is a small file on your Mac under **Library ▶ Application Support ▶ Herbistry ▶ Afterglow ▶ Presets** in your home folder. (That Library folder is hidden by default: in Finder, hold **Option** and open the **Go** menu to see it.) Because they live there and not inside one project, your looks follow you across every project, and you can hand a look file to a teammate so they get the exact same glow.

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# Afterglow looks vs. Final Cut presets

This trips people up, so it is worth being clear. There are two separate places a preset can live, and they save different things.

## Afterglow looks

INSIDE THE PLUGIN · THE PRESETS MENU

- Saves **the glow**: every Afterglow slider, source, and switch in one snapshot.
- **Travels with you**. Available in every project, on any clip, and the file can be shared.
- Saves only Afterglow's own controls, nothing else on the clip.
- Best for: a **glow you want to reuse everywhere**.

## Final Cut Pro presets

INSIDE FINAL CUT · SAVE EFFECTS PRESET

- Saves the **whole effect on the clip**, including keyframes and any other effects stacked on it.
- **Lives in Final Cut's library**. Only available inside Final Cut Pro.
- Re-apply it to other clips to repeat the exact treatment.
- Best for: remembering the **whole clip treatment**, not just Afterglow.

## RULE OF THUMB

Use an **Afterglow look** when you want to reuse a glow anywhere. Use a **Final Cut preset** when you want Final Cut to remember an entire clip setup so you can stamp it onto the next shot.

## Quick reference

Every control at a glance, from one end to the other. The four up top are the simple

front; the rest appear under Show Advanced.

| CONTROL            | LOW END                        | HIGH END                        |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Amount             | 0: clean image, no glow        | 100: full bloom and halation    |
| Warmth             | 0: neutral white bloom         | 100: warm orange halation       |
| Bloom Softness     | 0: tight halo                  | 100: wide dreamy spread         |
| Diffusion          | 0: crisp, true blacks          | 100: hazy, lifted blacks        |
| Glow Source        | Highlights: glow by brightness | Color / Both: glow by hue       |
| Bloom: Threshold   | 0: most of the frame blooms    | 100: only the brightest points  |
| Bloom: Bokeh       | Circle: clean round glow       | Hexagon / Octagon: bladed edges |
| Halation: Strength | 0: no warm bleed               | 100: heavy red-orange bleed     |
| Halation: Sat      | 0: faint warmth                | 100: vivid saturated bleed      |
| Diffusion: Lift    | 0: true blacks                 | 100: milky lifted blacks        |
| Desat: Amount      | 0: highlights keep their color | 100: creamy white highlights    |
| Star: Length       | 0: short spikes                | 100: long reaching streaks      |
| Star: Points       | 4: classic cross               | 8: full sunburst                |

BEFORE YOU INSTALL

# System requirements

Afterglow is a Mac video effect. Here is what you need.

## OPERATING SYSTEM

**macOS 13.5 or later**

Ventura and up.

## WORKS IN

**Final Cut Pro 10.8.1 / Motion 5.8  
or later**

As a clip effect, under the Herbistry category.

## MAC TYPE

**Apple Silicon Mac**

M1, M2, M3, and later. Apple Silicon only.

## INSTALLING

**Through FxFactory**

Install, buy, and unlock in the free FxFactory app.

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