



MUSIC-REACTIVE SPECTRUM VISUALIZER
BY HERBISTRY · FOR FINAL CUT PRO & MOTION

AUDIO EFFECTOR: EQUALIZER

Your music, moving on screen. **Audio Effector: Equalizer** is an animated EQ that reacts to your song, right inside Final Cut Pro and Motion. Bars, waveforms, radial rings, colors, and a rack of stackable effects. No song in the project? It dances to a beat you set.

THE SHORT VERSION

What the Equalizer does

Add it as a generator, drop your footage or a color on the track below, and you have got an equalizer bouncing to your music on screen. Load a song and the bars ride the real audio: they jump on the bass, the waveform tracks the melody, the color moves with it. Ten styles, from tall spectrum bars to radial rings and an oscilloscope, plus a whole rack of animation effects you can stack two deep. Fifteen presets get you a finished look in one click.

One thing to know up front: Final Cut does not let a generator listen to your timeline audio, so the Equalizer reads the song from a **file you choose**. Point it at the same track you cut to and the bars land on the same beats. No song at all? It runs on a beat you set instead, so you always get movement. This manual covers the whole workflow, every control, and the presets.

Install, add, and unlock the Equalizer

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

- 1 Install it.** Download the installer and open it. It is notarized by Apple, so there are no security warnings to fight. If Final Cut or Motion was open, quit and reopen it so it picks up the new plugin.
- 2 Add it to your timeline.** The Equalizer is a **generator**, not a clip effect. In Final Cut Pro, open the **Generators** browser, find **Herbistry ▶ Audio Effector: Equalizer**, and drag it onto your timeline. Put your footage or a background on the track right below it, since the equalizer plays over whatever is under it. More on this just below.
- 3 Try it free.** Every style, effect, and preset works right away, no time limit. The catch is a small Herbistry leaf **watermark** over the picture, so the trial is perfect for auditioning but not for a clean export.
- 4 Buy a license.** Grab it from the Audio Effector: Equalizer page on fordeetv.com. Checkout is quick, and your license key arrives by email in your receipt.
- 5 Activate it.** In the inspector, find the **License** row (it reads "Enter License..."). Click it, paste your key from the receipt email, and hit **Activate**. The watermark disappears and your exports come out clean. It is a one-time thing, the plugin remembers.
- 6 On more than one Mac.** One license covers **two Macs**. Need a third? Free a slot first: click the **Licensed ✓ (Deactivate)** row on a Mac you still have and deactivate. No longer have that Mac? Sign in at the [Lemon Squeezy orders page](https://fordeetv.com) with the email you bought with, click your license key to see its activations, and deactivate the one you want to free. That same page is where you look up your key if you ever lose it.

GOOD TO KNOW

The Equalizer does all its work on your Mac. Your video and your song never leave your computer. The only thing that ever goes out is the quick check that confirms your license key when you activate.

It's a generator, not a clip effect

This is the one thing that trips people up, so here it is clearly. A generator makes its own picture from nothing, so it does not sit on your footage. It sits on its own layer, above it.

Do this

THE SETUP THAT WORKS

- Add the Equalizer as a **generator**, on its own layer.
- Put your footage or a background on the track **right below** it.
- Pick your song in the plugin's **Song** control.
- The equalizer draws over transparent space, so wherever there are no bars, your background **shows straight through**.

Not this

COMMON MIX-UPS

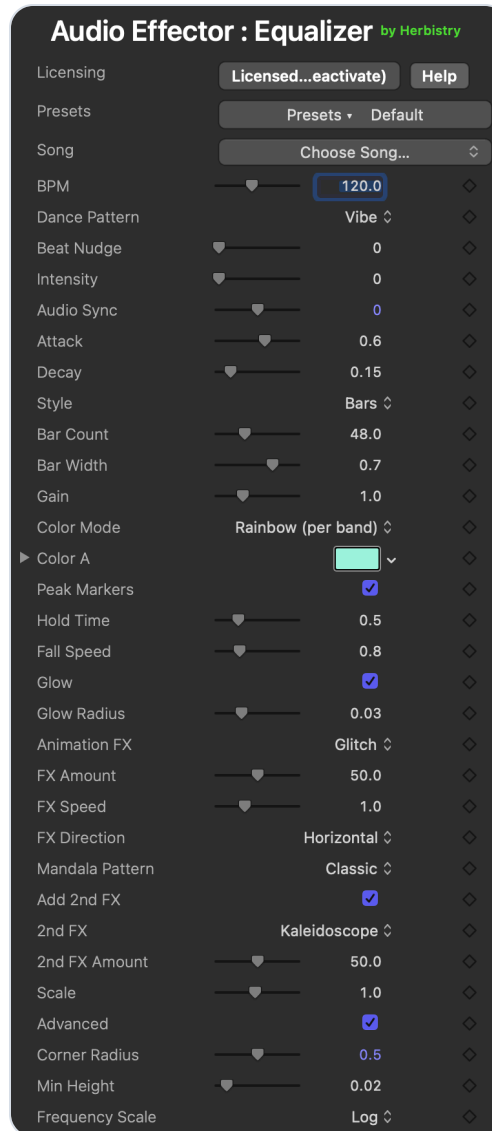
- Don't drop it **onto a clip** like a filter. It isn't one, and it won't attach.
- Don't expect it to hear your timeline's **audio track**. Final Cut doesn't allow that, so you point it at a song file instead.
- Don't hide your background **above** it. Backgrounds go underneath.

RULE OF THUMB

Generator on top, background below, song picked in the plugin. That is the whole setup. It works exactly the same in Motion, where you add it as a generator layer with your footage underneath.

The inspector, top to bottom

Everything lives in one inspector. It reads top to bottom, and the controls that don't apply to your setup hide themselves, so it stays tidy. Here's the map.



The Audio Effector: Equalizer inspector in Final Cut Pro, with the branded header and the Help link on the License row. Controls that don't apply to your current setup hide themselves, so it stays tidy.

TOP OF THE PANEL

License

activate your key, or free a seat

Presets

load a full look, or save your own

Song

pick the audio file the bars follow

AUDIO

Intensity

the master: how hard the bars react

Audio Sync

line the song up with your clip

BPM & Dance Pattern

shown only when no song is loaded

Beat Nudge

shift the beat within itself

STYLE & SHAPE

Style

ten equalizer looks

Bar Count & Bar Width

how many bars, how fat

Gain

overall amplification

COLOR

Color Mode

four color modes plus eight built-in palettes

Color A & B

your own colors for Solid and Gradient

MOTION & FX

Peak Markers & Glow

the caps that ride the tops, and the bloom

Animation FX

a treatment over the whole EQ, plus a second one you can stack

TRANSFORM & ADVANCED

Scale

size the whole equalizer up or down

Advanced

opens Attack, Decay, Corner Radius, Min Height, Frequency Scale

THE AUDIO ENGINE

Feed it your song

Give it the song once and the bars know where every beat is. This is the part that makes the Equalizer tick.

- 1** Click **"Choose Song..."** and pick the audio file. MP3, WAV, M4A, AAC, AIFF, anything your Mac can play. Use the **same file** you cut into your timeline.
- 2** **Let it analyze.** It reads the song once, the loudness, the bass, mids, treble, and the tempo, right there on your Mac. Takes a moment, and it only happens once per song.

- 3 **Line it up if you need to.** If your equalizer clip starts partway down the timeline, it reads from the clip's own start, so it can land behind a song that begins at zero. Set **Audio Sync** to how many seconds into the song your clip begins and it locks back on. Reacting a hair late or early? Nudge Audio Sync until it sits right.
- 4 **Set the feel. Intensity** is the master dial: how hard the quiet bands lift and the whole thing reacts. Under **Advanced**, **Attack** and **Decay** shape how fast the bars rise and fall, snappy and percussive or smooth and flowing.

NO SONG? IT STILL MOVES

No music in the project, or you just want a vibe? With no song loaded, the Equalizer dances on its own. Set **BPM** to your track's tempo, pick a **Dance Pattern**, and the bars groove along. **Beat Nudge** slides the beat: 0 is right on it, 0.5 is the off-beat, 1 is a full beat late. Beat Nudge works with a song too, for when you want the hits to fall on the snare instead of the kick.

THE FIVE DANCE PATTERNS

VIBE

The default
layered, musical movement with sharp accents on the beat

SINE WAVE

Smooth rolling waves
clean and hypnotic, no hard hits

PULSE

Everything punches on the beat
tight and percussive

RIPPLE

A wave travels across the bars
a moving crest, left to right

SPARKLE

Random twinkles on the beat
scattered, glittery pops

Ten equalizer styles

The **Style** menu is the shape of your equalizer. Same audio, ten completely different looks. Rainbow color is the default across all of them.

BARS & BLOCKS

Bars

the classic tower spectrum, growing off the baseline

Center Mirror

bars grow out from the middle, both directions

LED Segments

chunky segmented meter columns, the VU look

Dots

a dot-matrix grid that fills as bands get loud

LINES & FILLS

Line

a single thin spectrum line tracing the bands

Area

the same curve, filled solid underneath

RADIAL

Radial (Outward)

bars burst out from a center ring

Radial (Inward)

bars point in toward the center

WAVEFORM

Waveform

an oscilloscope trace that reacts across its whole width

Mirror Waveform

the same scope, mirrored into a symmetric shape

The controls, one by one

Grouped the way the inspector is. Most are a single slider; the ones with extra options say so.

AUDIO

Intensity

MASTER

The master dial for how hard the equalizer reacts. It lifts the quiet bands so the whole spectrum comes alive and pushes the loud ones harder. If the look is right but it is all too flat or too much, this is the one slider to reach for.

— AT 0

Flat and literal. **Only the loud bands move.**

— AT 100

Quiet bands lifted, **the whole frame fills.**

Audio Sync

LINE IT UP

Slides the song earlier or later against your clip. If your equalizer starts mid-timeline, set this to how many seconds into the song that point is. Small nudges fix a reaction that lands a hair off.

Beat Nudge

BEAT PHASE

Shifts the beat within itself. 0 sits on the beat, 0.5 lands on the off-beat, 1 is a full beat late. Works whether you are on a song or a manual BPM.

Attack & Decay

ADVANCED

How fast the bars rise (Attack) and fall (Decay). Fast on both reads snappy and percussive; slow reads smooth and flowing. They live under the **Advanced** toggle.

STYLE & SHAPE

Bar Count

8 TO 128

How many bars the spectrum is split into. A low count reads bold and blocky; a high count reads like a fine, detailed spectrum.

Bar Width

FAT OR THIN

How wide each bar is, from thin needles with gaps to bars that touch edge to edge. Pairs with Bar Count to set the whole density of the look.

Gain

AMPLIFY

Overall amplification of the signal. Turn it up to make a quiet mix drive the bars taller. Different from Intensity: Gain is raw volume, Intensity is how the reaction is shaped.

Radial Inner Radius

RADIAL STYLES

Only on the two Radial styles, and it appears right under Style. It sets the size of the empty ring in the middle that the bars grow from: small for a tight sun, large for a wide halo. Hidden on every non-radial style.

COLOR

Color Mode

TWELVE MODES

How the bars get their color. Four modes run off your own colors: **Rainbow (per band)** is the default, a full spectrum spread across the bars; **Solid** is one color; **Gradient** runs Color A into Color B; **Reactive (by level)** shifts each bar's color with how loud it is.

Under those sit eight built-in palettes, each a ready-made color ramp painted up every bar:

Cyanotype, **Sepia**, **Fire**, **Neon**, **Teal & Orange**, **Vaporwave**, **Toxic**, and **Infrared**. Pick one and you're done, no color picking needed.

Color A & Color B

+ DIRECTION

Color A is your solid color, or the start of the gradient. In Gradient mode, **Color B** is the far end and **Gradient Direction** runs the blend Vertical or Horizontal.

Color A applies to Solid and Gradient; Color B shows up for Gradient only. The eight palettes bring their own colors, but they still honor **Gradient Direction**, so you can run any of them up the bars or across them.

PEAKS & GLOW

Peak Markers

+ HOLD & FALL

Little caps that ride the top of each bar and drift back down, the classic VU meter look. **Hold Time** is how long a cap hangs at a new high; **Fall Speed** is how fast it drops after.

Glow

+ RADIUS

A soft bloom around the bars, in their own color. **Glow Radius** sets the spread. On the two radial styles a smaller glow also gives you a bigger ring, so it doubles as a framing control there.

TRANSFORM

Scale

SIZE + FRACTAL

Sizes the whole equalizer up or down. Because it scales the drawing itself instead of stretching a rendered image, it stays crisp at any size.

With **Animation FX** set to **Kaleidoscope**, Scale does double duty. Pull it **below 1.0** and the mandala folds into itself as a self-similar fractal: the lower you go, the deeper it folds, from a subtle texture near 0.95 down to a dense fractal at the bottom. It blooms deeper on the beat and carries your color through the pattern. At 1.0 and up it is the normal zoom.

ADVANCED

Corner Radius

BAR TOPS

Rounds the tops of the bars, from hard square edges to fully rounded caps. A quick way to shift from a technical look to a softer one.

Min Height

THE FLOOR

A floor under every bar so quiet bands still show a sliver instead of vanishing. Raise it to keep the shape readable through quiet passages, or to float the whole equalizer off the baseline.

Frequency Scale

LOG / LINEAR

Log is the default and spaces the bands the way we hear, giving the bass plenty of room. **Linear** spreads them evenly by frequency, which crowds the low end and opens up the highs.

Animation FX

A visual treatment over the whole equalizer, and every one of them moves to the beat. Pick one from **Animation FX**, dial **FX Amount** and **FX Speed**, and go. The FX controls appear once you pick a mode.

DISTORT & DISPLACE

RGB Shift

splits the color channels apart on the beat

Glitch

digital tears that jump on the hits

Pixelate

crunches the whole thing to 8-bit blocks

Wave

ripples the equalizer like water

Shake

jolts the frame on every hit

ZOOM & FOLD

Zoom Pulse

punches in on the beat, bolted to the floor

Kaleidoscope

folds the equalizer into a mandala

COLOR & MOTION

Hue Flow

rolls the colors through the rainbow

Scroll

marches the EQ sideways, or spins a radial one

HANDS - OFF

Auto-Cycle

rotates through the eight treatments on the beat

DIALING THE EFFECT

FX Amount

0 TO 100

How strong the effect is. On most it's straight intensity; on Kaleidoscope it's the fullness of the fold.

FX Speed

PULSE RATE

How fast the effect pulses against the beat. 1 is on the beat, 2 is double-time, 0 freezes the motion.

FX Direction

DIRECTIONAL MODES

Which way the directional effects push, Horizontal, Vertical, or Radial. Shows up for RGB Shift, Glitch, and Wave.

FX Cycle Rate

AUTO-CYCLE ONLY

For Auto-Cycle, how often it switches effect: ½ Beat, 1 Beat, 1 Bar, or 2 Bars.

KALEIDOSCOPE'S MANDALA PATTERN

When a Kaleidoscope is running, the **Mandala Pattern** menu picks how it folds: **Classic**, **Flower**, **Star**, **Tunnel**, **Spiral**, or **Grid**. Each one turns the same spectrum into a completely different symmetry.

And here's the trick that unlocks a whole other set of looks: with a Kaleidoscope running, drop **Scale** below 1.0 and the mandala folds into a self-similar fractal that blooms on the beat. Each pattern folds into its own kind of fractal, so it's six more looks hiding in one slider. See **Scale** in the controls for the full rundown.

STACK A SECOND EFFECT

Turn on **Add 2nd FX** and pick a **2nd FX** to layer a second treatment on top of the first, like a Kaleidoscope fold with a Pixelate crunch running through it. The two share Direction and Mandala Pattern, and an effect can't stack on itself. This is where the wild looks come from.

THE COMBOS ARE THE WHOLE POINT

Kaleidoscope plus Pixelate. RGB Shift plus Hue Flow. A radial style with Scroll spinning it. Between two stacked effects, six mandala patterns and their fractals, ten styles, and a dozen color modes, there are basically infinite equalizers in here. The presets are a tour of the good ones, so start there and then go build your own.

Presets

A preset sets every control at once: the style, the colors, the effects, the shape. Pick one from the **Presets** menu at the top of the inspector, then tweak anything you like. One thing presets never touch is your song. The look changes, the music stays.

START HERE

Default

Bars · Rainbow · glow, no FX

The factory state and the instant reset. A clean rainbow bar spectrum with a soft glow. When a look gets away from you, this is the way back.

ESSENTIALS

Studio Spectrum

Bars · Rainbow · subtle glow

The clean pro spectrum. A crisp rainbow bar analyzer that reads instantly and sits on top of anything.

Oscilloscope

Waveform · phosphor green · Scroll

A single phosphor-green scope trace scrolling like a lab monitor. Retro, minimal, and endlessly watchable.

Fat 12 Band

Center Mirror · 12 fat bars ·
Reactive VU + Hue Flow

Twelve chunky mirrored bars in reactive VU color, drifting slowly through the spectrum. A bold, physical meter.

VIBRANT

Fire Starter

Area · yellow to red · Glitch
flicker

A filled spectrum in a hot yellow-to-red gradient with a flicker of glitch. Looks like the bottom of the frame is on fire.

Ghostly Memories

Dots · rainbow · big glow + Sparkle

A floating dot-matrix EQ with a heavy bloom and sparkle motion. Dreamy, weightless, a little haunted.

Neon Wire

Line · cyan · RGB Shift

A single glowing cyan line with the color channels split apart. Clean neon with a chromatic edge.

GLITCH

Arcade

LED Segments · Reactive VU ·
Pixelate

Segmented meter columns crunched into 8-bit blocks. Straight out of a cabinet from 1987.

Toxic Glitch

Mirror Waveform · yellow to green ·
Pixelate + Kaleidoscope

A mirrored scope in toxic yellow-green, pixelated and folded through a kaleidoscope. Loud and a little dangerous.

Noise Hypnosis

Mirror Waveform · white to black ·
Pixelate + Kaleidoscope (Tunnel)

Black-and-white pixelated waveform folded down a kaleidoscope tunnel. Hypnotic, stark, hard to look away from.

PSYCHEDELIC

Acid Mandala

Center Mirror · green to red ·
Kaleidoscope (Flower) + Hue Flow

A delicate flower-fold mandala in shifting green-to-red, with the hue rolling underneath. Full trip.

Portal

Radial (Outward) · rainbow · RGB
Shift + Hue Flow

A rainbow ring bursting outward, channels split and hue rolling. Feels like something is about to come through it.

Vortex

Radial (Inward) · blue to violet ·
radial Wave

Bars pointing inward in a cool blue-violet, rippling with a radial wave. A slow pull into the center.

Lost in Space

Area · rainbow · fast Hue Flow +
Kaleidoscope

A filled spectrum folded through a kaleidoscope with the color racing around. Deep-space drift.

Cosmic Ripples

Radial (Outward) · rainbow · Glitch
+ Kaleidoscope (Tunnel) + ripple

A rainbow burst rippling out in concentric rings that pump on the bass, folded down a tunnel. The showpiece.

MAKE IT YOURS

Saving your own presets

Built a look 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 Current Settings....**
- 3 Give it a name. It shows up under **My Presets**, right below the factory ones, and you can **Rename...** or **Delete** it from there.

WHAT A SAVED PRESET KEEPS

It saves the whole look, every control at once, but **not your song**, so one preset works across every project and every track. Your saved looks live on your Mac, not inside a single project, so they follow you everywhere you edit.

Quick reference

The sliders at a glance, from one end to the other.

CONTROL	LOW END	HIGH END
Intensity	0: flat, only loud bands move	100: quiet bands lifted, frame fills
Gain	0.1: barely there	3: a quiet mix drives tall bars
Bar Count	8: chunky and bold	128: a fine, detailed spectrum
Bar Width	0: thin needles	1: bars touch edge to edge
Audio Sync	Negative: song reads later	Positive: song reads earlier
Beat Nudge	0: on the beat	1: a full beat late (0.5 = off-beat)
BPM	60: slow march	200: double-time
Scale	0.1: tiny	2: fills the frame
Glow Radius	Small: a tight edge	Large: a soft bloom
FX Amount	0: off	100: full strength
FX Speed	0: frozen	3: triple-time pulse
Min Height	0: quiet bars vanish	High: a visible floor at all times
Corner Radius	0: square tops	1: fully rounded caps

System requirements

The Equalizer is a Mac video plugin. 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**

Added as a generator layer.

MAC TYPE

Apple Silicon Mac

Runs natively on M1, M2, M3, and later.

INSTALLING

A notarized installer

Download from fordeetv.com, then unlock with a license key.
