

Small Hours

The lofi room plugin, by Lamplit Studios



User manual · version 1.0 · lamplitstudios.com

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1. Welcome

Small Hours turns any sound into late-night lofi. It's a room you can play: every object in the room is a control. The tape deck wobbles the pitch, the record player adds crackle, the window brings in real rain, and the lamp sets how much of the effect you hear.

Under the room are thirteen sound modules: tape wobble and wear, saturation, vintage sampler character, filters and head bump, vinyl and tape noise, a chain of up to four media (vinyl, cassette, VHS, radio and more), a streaming codec, a compressor, reverb, tape stops and stutters, and recorded rain and room ambience. Four macro knobs and one Magnitude knob let you get there fast; every detail is there when you want it.

Everything that changes over time (wobble, dropouts, crackle, rain) follows your song's timeline, so a section plays back the same every time you play it from the same spot, and your bounce matches what you heard.

2. Installing

System requirements

- **Windows:** Windows 10 or 11, 64-bit.
- **macOS:** macOS 11 Big Sur or later, on Apple silicon or Intel.
- A DAW that hosts VST3, Audio Unit (macOS) or CLAP plugins, or use the standalone app on its own.

Windows

Download the installer from lamplitstudios.com and run it. If Windows shows "Windows protected your PC", click **More info**, then **Run anyway**: this appears for new publishers, not because anything is wrong. Choose the formats you want (all are ticked by default):

Format	Installed to
VST3	C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3\Small Hours.vst3
CLAP	C:\Program Files\Common Files\CLAP\Small Hours.clap
Standalone app	C:\Program Files\Lamplit Studios\Small Hours , with a Start menu shortcut

To uninstall, use **Settings** → **Apps** → **Small Hours** → **Uninstall**.

macOS

Download `SmallHours-1.0.1-macOS.pkg` and open it. The installer is signed and notarised by Apple, and lets you choose the formats (all are ticked by default):

Format	Installed to
Audio Unit	/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/Components
VST3	/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3
CLAP	/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/CLAP
Standalone app	/Applications

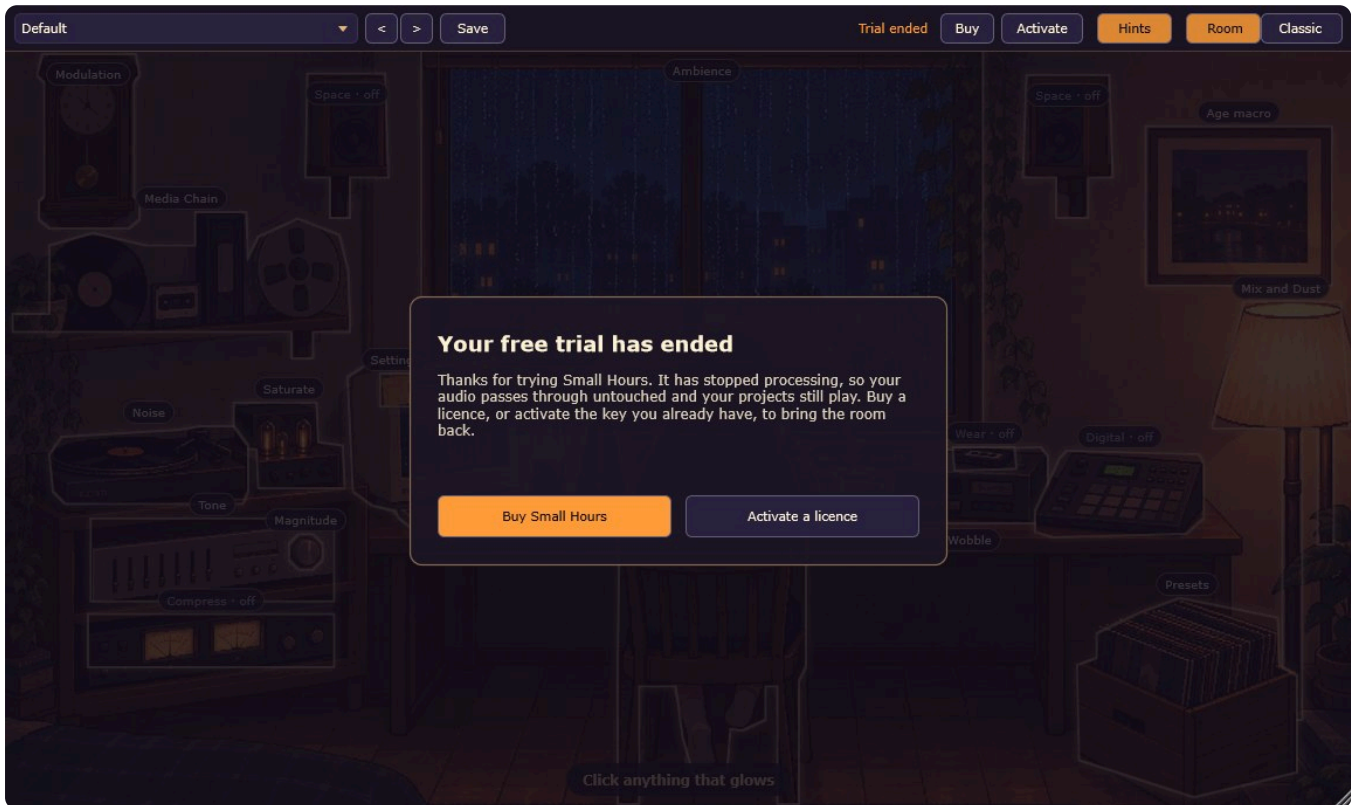
Then open your DAW and look for **Small Hours** by **Lamplit Studios** in your effects. If it isn't there, rescan your plugins (see [Troubleshooting](#)).

3. Trial and licence

Free trial

The first time Small Hours runs on a computer, a **14-day trial** starts with everything unlocked. The top bar shows how many days are left, with **Buy** and **Activate** buttons.

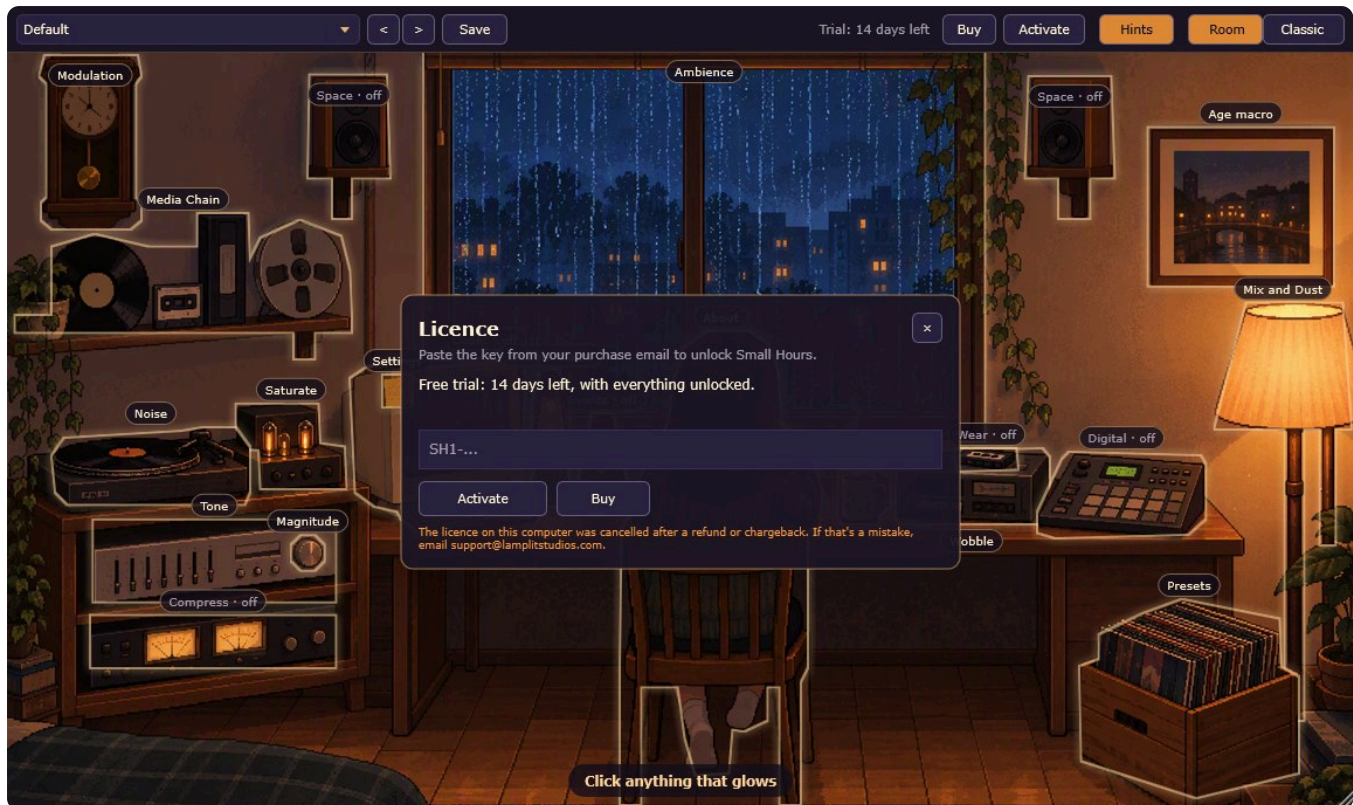
When the trial ends, Small Hours stops processing: your audio passes through untouched (still in time with the rest of your project), your sessions still open, and a "trial has ended" screen offers Buy and Activate.



After the trial: audio passes through untouched until you activate a licence.

Activating

1. Buy Small Hours at lamplitstudios.com. Your licence key appears on the page straight away and arrives by email. It starts with SH1- .
2. In Small Hours, click **Activate** in the top bar (or on the trial-ended screen).
3. Paste the key and click **Activate**. You'll see "Licensed to ...".



The licence panel: paste your key and click Activate.

Activate once per computer: one activation covers every format and every DAW on that computer. Your licence lets you use Small Hours on the computers you personally use, such as a studio desktop and a laptop. Keep the email so you can activate again on a new computer.

Moving or removing a licence

Click the girl at the desk to open **About**, then **Licence**, then **Remove from this computer**. You can then activate the same key on another computer.

Online checks

Small Hours works offline. While licensed and online, it checks with our server about once a day that the key hasn't been cancelled (after a refund or chargeback). The check sends only the key's serial number and the plugin version. If the computer is offline, nothing changes. See our [privacy policy](#).

4. The room



The room with Hints on: every glowing object is a control.

- **Hover** over an object to light it up; the rest of the room dims.
- **Click** it to open its panel. Click the **x**, click the object again, or click somewhere else in the room to close it.
- Modules that are switched off are tagged **off**. Each module panel has an **On** switch at the top right.
- Knobs: drag up and down. Double-click a knob to return it to its default. Values are shown below each knob.

The room reacts to the sound: rain runs down the window and lightning flashes on thunder; the VU meters move with the output; the valves glow with drive; the speakers pulse; the record spins and sparks on loud crackles; the lava lamp flows with Wobble, the mug steams with Warmth and dust floats in the lamplight with Dust; the metronome flashes on the beat. During a Tape Stop the whole room slows down with the tape.



Hovering an object lights it and shows its name.

The top bar

Control	What it does
Preset menu	Choose a factory or user preset. The arrows < and > step through them.
Save	Save the current settings as a user preset.
Hints	Shows or hides the glowing outlines and name tags. Your choice is remembered.
Room / Classic	Switch between the room and Classic, a plain list of every control.
Trial · Buy · Activate	Shown during the trial (and after it).

Default

<>Save

RoomClassic

▼ Global

Magnitude

50.0 %

Mix

100.0 %

Input Gain

0.0 dB

Output Gain

0.0 dB

Auto Gain

☒

▼ Macros

Age

0.0 %

Warmth

0.0 %

Dust

0.0 %

Wobble

0.0 %

▼ Wobble

Wobble On

☒

Wobble Amount

50.0 %

Wow Depth

30.0 %

Wow Rate

0.6000001 Hz

Classic: every control in a list, grouped by module.

5. Quick start

1. Put Small Hours on a track or bus: keys, a drum loop, a full beat, vocals.
2. Click the **record crate** and pick a preset, such as *Dusty Vinyl* or *Warm Cassette*.
3. Turn the **big knob** on the hi-fi (Magnitude) to set how lofi it gets. 50% is the preset as made; 100% doubles it.
4. Season with the macros: the **photo frame** (Age), the **mug** (Warmth), the **lava lamp** (Wobble) and the **lamp** (Mix and Dust).
5. Click the **window** to add rain or a room around the track.
6. Save your sound with **Save** in the top bar.

On a full mix, keep **Mix** below 100% for a subtle tape glue, or put Small Hours on a send for rain and room sounds only.

6. How the sound flows

The modules always run in this order, whether or not you can see them:

Input → Saturate → Digital → Wobble → Wear → Tone → Noise → Media Chain → Codec → Compress → Space → Events → Ambience → Mix → Output

So the noise bed goes through the media you chain after it, the compressor pumps the noise along with the music, and the rain and room sounds sit in the room around the tape, not on it.

Small Hours has a fixed latency of about 33 ms at 48 kHz, which your DAW compensates for automatically. The dry signal is delayed to match, so the Mix knob never causes phasing.

7. Room map

Object	Opens	What it's for
Tube amp	Saturate	Tape, tube, transistor or wavefold drive
Sampler	Digital	Classic sampler bit depth, sample rate and converters
Tape deck	Wobble	Wow, flutter and slow drift in pitch
Cassette	Wear	Dropouts, azimuth error and crinkled tape
Hi-fi receiver	Tone	Filters, head bump and the dulling of age
Record player	Noise	Vinyl crackle, hiss, rumble, hum and room tone
Shelf	Media Chain	Run the sound through up to four media
Computer screen	Codec	Low-bitrate streaming artefacts
VU meters	Compress	Glue it together, or make it pump
Speakers	Space	Room, spring or plate reverb, and stereo width

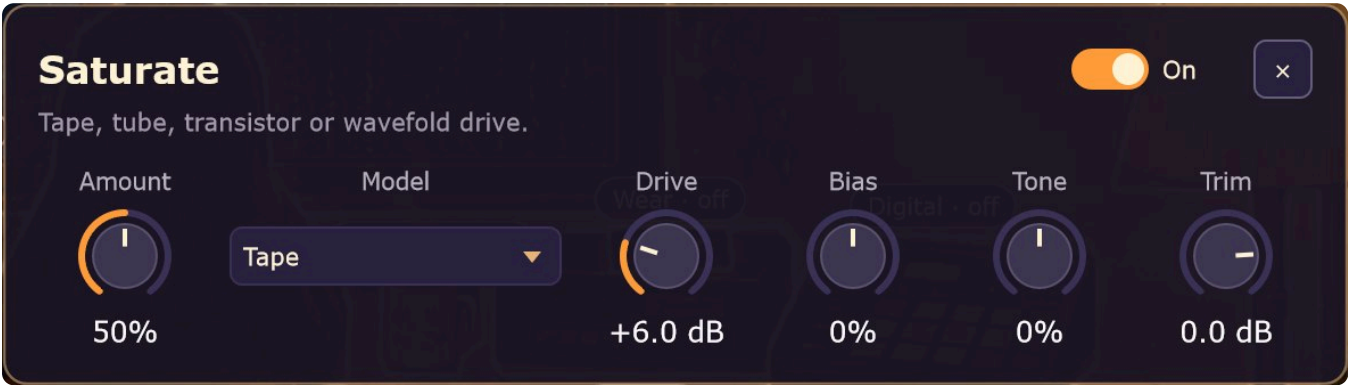
Metronome	Events	Tape stops, stutters and pitch dips
Window	Ambience	Real rain and room recordings
Photo frame	Age macro	Ages everything at once
Mug	Warmth macro	Warmth in one knob
Lava lamp	Wobble macro	All the movement in one knob
Lamp	Mix and Dust	Wet/dry blend, and crackle and hiss in one knob
Big knob on the hi-fi	Magnitude	How lofi: scales every module at once
Wall clock	Modulation	Four slots that move controls automatically
Sticky note	Settings	Input and output levels, Auto Gain and Quality
Record crate	Presets	Load and save presets
The girl at the desk	About	Version, licence and third-party notices

8. The modules

Every module has an **Amount** knob (how much of that module you hear, scaled by Magnitude) and an **On** switch. Percent controls run from 0 to 100%; controls marked $\pm$ run from -100% to $+100\%$ with the middle as neutral.

Saturate

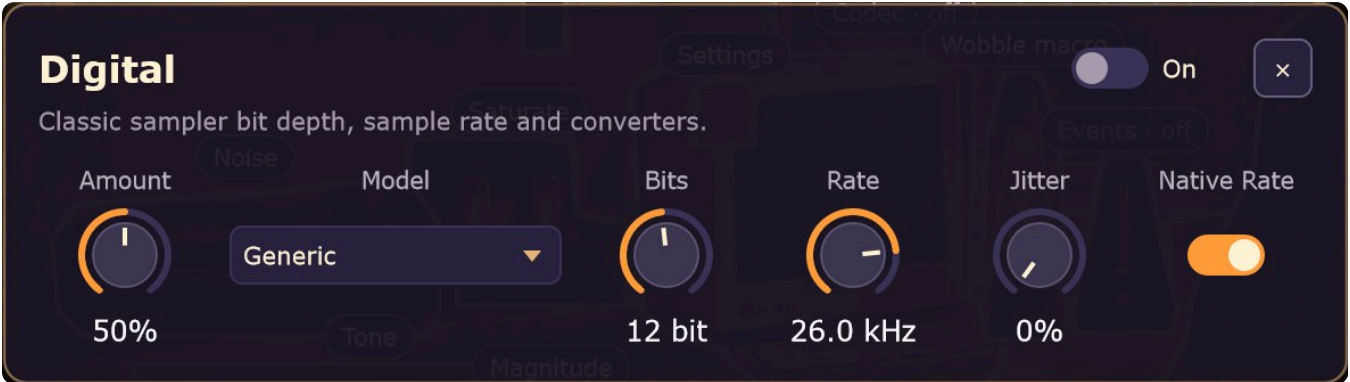
The tube amp



Control	Range	What it does
Amount	0–100%	How much of the saturated sound is blended in.
Model	Tape, Tube, Transistor, Fold	Tape is soft and smooth; Tube adds warm even harmonics; Transistor is harder and brighter; Fold wavefolds for an aggressive edge.
Drive	0–24 dB	How hard the signal hits the stage.
Bias	$\pm$	Makes the curve lopsided for more even harmonics and a gritty, asymmetric colour.
Tone	$\pm$	Darker or brighter colour from the drive.
Trim	–24 to +6 dB	Level after the stage, to balance the drive.

Digital

The sampler



Control	Range	What it does
Amount	0–100%	How much of the digital character is heard.
Model	See the table below	The converter character: filtering, output stage and, with Native Rate on, the machine's own bit depth and sample rate.
Bits	1–24 bit	Bit depth (when Native Rate is off, or for Generic).
Rate	500 Hz–48 kHz	Sample rate; lower rates add aliasing and dull the top.
Jitter	0–100%	Clock jitter: a smeared, unstable top end.
Native Rate	On/Off	On: use the model's own bit depth and sample rate, where it has them. Off: use the Bits and Rate knobs.

Model	Native	Character
Generic	Your Bits and Rate	Raw sample-and-hold: pure bit and rate reduction.
Crunch '87	12-bit, 26 kHz	No filtering in or out: gritty, aliased and bright.
Smooth '88	12-bit	Steep filters that follow the rate: clean and rounded.
Swing '88	12-bit, 40 kHz	Gentle filters and a soft output stage: punchy and warm.
Dusty '05	Your Bits and Rate	Gentle filters and a soft output: a later, smoother box.
Choir '84	8-bit companded, 27.7 kHz	Early 8-bit with companding: grainy but full.
Oasis '85	8-bit, 30 kHz	Early linear 8-bit with a dark output filter.

Wobble

The tape deck

Wobble

Wow, flutter and slow drift in pitch.

WOW AND FLUTTER

Amount

50%

Wow Depth

30%

Wow Rate

0.60 Hz

Flutter Depth

15%

Flutter Rate

9.00 Hz

DRIFT

Drift

40%

Spread

20%

Sync

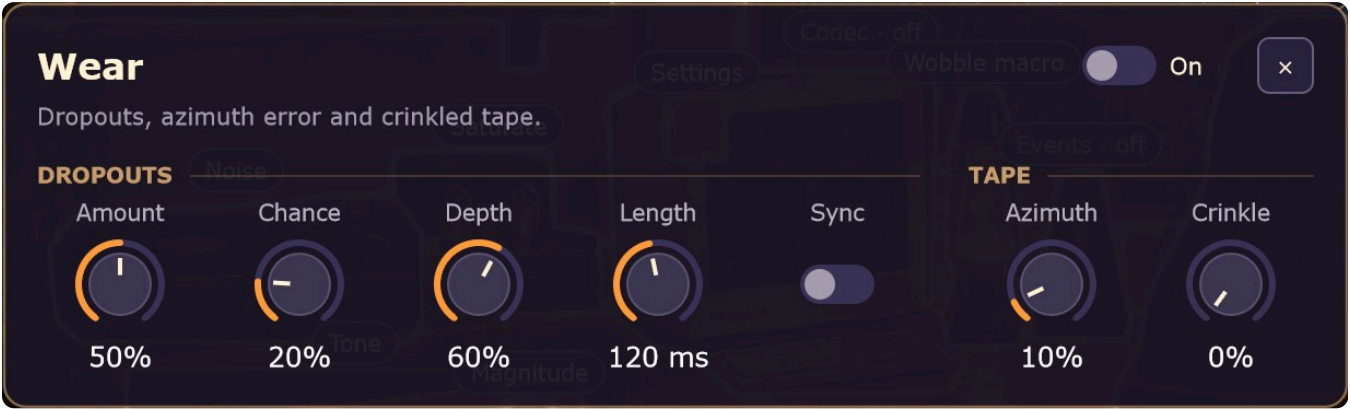
Division

1 bar

Control	Range	What it does
Amount	0–100%	Overall strength of the pitch movement.
Wow Depth / Rate	0–100% / 0.1–4 Hz	Slow, seasick pitch swaying.
Flutter Depth / Rate	0–100% / 4–25 Hz	Fast, shimmering pitch wobble.
Drift	0–100%	Slow, wandering pitch drift, like a tired motor.
Spread	0–100%	Lets left and right wobble differently, for width.
Sync / Division	On/Off, 4 bars–1/16	Locks the wow to your song's tempo at the chosen note length.

Wear

The cassette



Control	Range	What it does
Amount	0–100%	Overall strength of the wear.
Chance	0–100%	How often dropouts happen.
Depth	0–100%	How far the level falls in a dropout.
Length	10–1000 ms	How long each dropout lasts.
Sync	On/Off	Places dropouts on your song's beat grid while it plays.
Azimuth	0–100%	A misaligned tape head: duller, slightly smeared highs between the channels.
Crinkle	0–100%	Crinkled tape: brief bursts of flutter and loss.

Tone

The hi-fi receiver



Control	Range	What it does
Amount	0–100%	How much of the tone shaping is applied.
High Pass	20–1000 Hz	Removes low end below this.
Low Pass	1–20 kHz	Removes high end above this.
Resonance	0–100%	A peak at the filter corners.
Bump Freq / Bump Gain	30–200 Hz / 0–6 dB	Tape head bump: a warm lift in the low end.
Age	0–100%	Progressive loss of highs, like an old tape.
Tilt	±	Tilts the whole spectrum darker or brighter.

Noise

The record player



Control	Range	What it does
Amount	0–100%	Overall noise level.
Crackle	0–100%	Vinyl crackle and pops.
Rumble	0–100%	Low turntable rumble.
Hiss	0–100%	Tape hiss.
Hum / Hum Freq	0–100% / 50 or 60 Hz	Mains hum with its harmonics, at European (50) or American (60) frequency.
Room Tone	0–100%	The quiet air of a room.
Tone	±	Darker or brighter noise.
Width	0–100%	Mono to wide noise.
Follow	0–100%	Makes the noise follow the music's level, so it fades away in silences.

Media Chain

The shelf of records, tapes and reels



Four slots, run left to right (Slot 1 first). Each slot is a complete medium with its own **Amount**. Chain them to tell a story: a record, sampled, dubbed to cassette, then streamed.

Medium	Character
Vinyl	Crackle, a slow record wow, a soft top and a little low-end lift.
Cassette	Hiss, wow and flutter, head bump, a rolled-off top, gentle compression and the odd dropout.
VHS	Dark, narrow and wobbly, with hiss and frequent dropouts.
Reel-to-Reel	Open and full, with saturation, a deep low bump and subtle flutter.
Sampler	An early-digital converter.
MP3 / Stream	Low-bitrate streaming artefacts.
AM Radio	Mono, narrow band, squashed hard, with crackle, noise and hum.
Phone	Mono, telephone band, 8-bit and compressed.
Pocket Tape	A personal cassette player: fast, strong wobble, a dark top, hiss and dropouts.

Auto Gain (in Settings) keeps the level steady as you stack media. Changing a slot's medium fades through silence so it never clicks.

Codec

The computer screen



Control	Range	What it does
Amount	0–100%	How much of the codec sound is heard.
Bitrate	8–320 kbps	Lower bitrates sound more swirly and smeared.
Bandwidth	2–20 kHz	Cuts the highs, as low-quality encoders do.
Warble	0–100%	Watery, underwater artefacts from missing detail.
Packet Loss	0–100%	Brief gaps and glitches, like a bad connection.

Compress

The VU meters

Compress

Glue it together, or make it pump.

Amount

30%

Mode

Glue

Attack

10.0 ms

Release

120 ms

SC High Pass

20.0 Hz

On

×

Control	Range	What it does
Amount	0–100%	How hard it compresses. 0% is neutral.
Mode	Glue, Pump	Glue: gentle and smooth, to hold a mix together. Pump: fast and strong, so the music and noise breathe with the beat.
Attack / Release	0.1–100 ms / 10–1000 ms	How fast it grabs and lets go.
SC High Pass	20–500 Hz	Stops low bass from driving the compressor.

Space

Either speaker



Control	Range	What it does
Amount	0–100%	Reverb level.
Type	Room, Spring, Plate	A small room, a springy tank or a smooth plate.
Size / Decay	0–100%	How big the space is, and how long it rings.
Width	0–100%	Stereo width of the whole sound (100% is unchanged).
Mono Below	20–500 Hz	Keeps the bass in mono below this, for a solid low end.
Mono	On/Off	Folds everything to mono.

Events

The metronome



Control	Range	What it does
Tape Stop	On/Off	Winds the tape down to a halt; switch it off to spin back up. Works even when Events is off. Automate it for tape stops anywhere in your song.
Stop on Stop / Stop Time	On/Off, 100–3000 ms	When you stop your DAW, the last moment winds down like a tape machine.
Start on Play / Start Time	On/Off, 50–2000 ms	When you press play, the sound spins up from a standstill.
Stutter Chance / Length / Repeats	0–100%, 1/8–1/64, 2–8	On the beat grid, the slice that just played repeats a few times.
Dip Chance / Depth / Length	0–100%, 0–100%, 1/2–1/16	On the beat grid, the tape slows and speeds back up; timing never drifts.

The transport stop and start, stutters and dips need **On**; the manual Tape Stop doesn't.

Ambience

The window



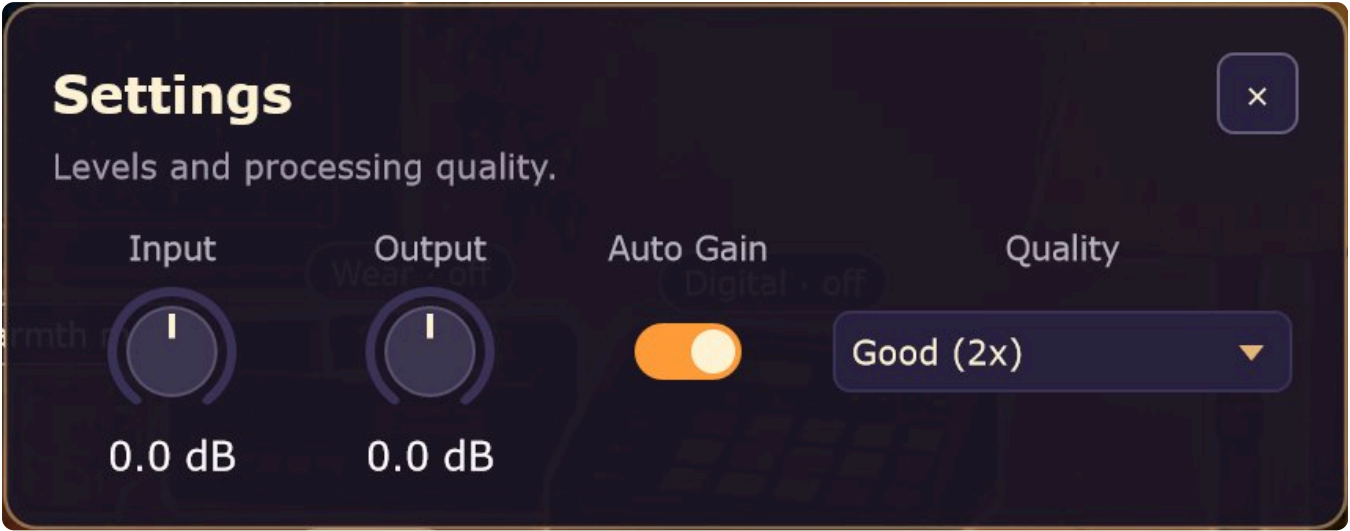
Real field recordings, placed in the room around the tape. They follow your song's timeline and never repeat audibly.

Control	Range	What it does
Rain	On/Off	Switches the rain on (it's off by default).
Amount	0–100%	Rain level.
Heaviness	0–100%	From light, sparse drops to a downpour.
Surface	Window, Metal Roof, Plastic Roof, Leaves, Puddles	What the rain is falling on.
Drop Size	0–100%	Smaller, lighter drops or bigger, heavier ones.
Distance	0–100%	Close and detailed, or far away and soft.
Wind	0–100%	Gusts that sway the rain.
Thunder	0–100%	Distant rolls of thunder (with lightning in the window).
Width	0–100%	Rain stereo width.

Duck	0–100%	Rain dips while the music is loud.
Fireplace, Cafe, Night City, Crickets, Dawn Birds	0–100% each	Room sounds, each with its own level. Mix as many as you like.
Tone / Width / Duck	±, 0–100%, 0–100%	Shape all the room sounds together: darker or thinner, narrower or wider, and dipping under the music.

Settings

The sticky note on the screen



Control	Range	What it does
Input	±24 dB	Level into Small Hours. Turn up to drive the saturation harder.
Output	±24 dB	Final level.
Auto Gain	On/Off	Keeps the output level close to the input as you add effects, so louder never fools you into thinking better.
Quality	Eco (1x), Good (2x), Best (4x)	Oversampling for the drive stages. Good suits most work; use Eco to save CPU on big sessions and Best for final bounces. Not automatable.

9. Macros, Magnitude and Mix

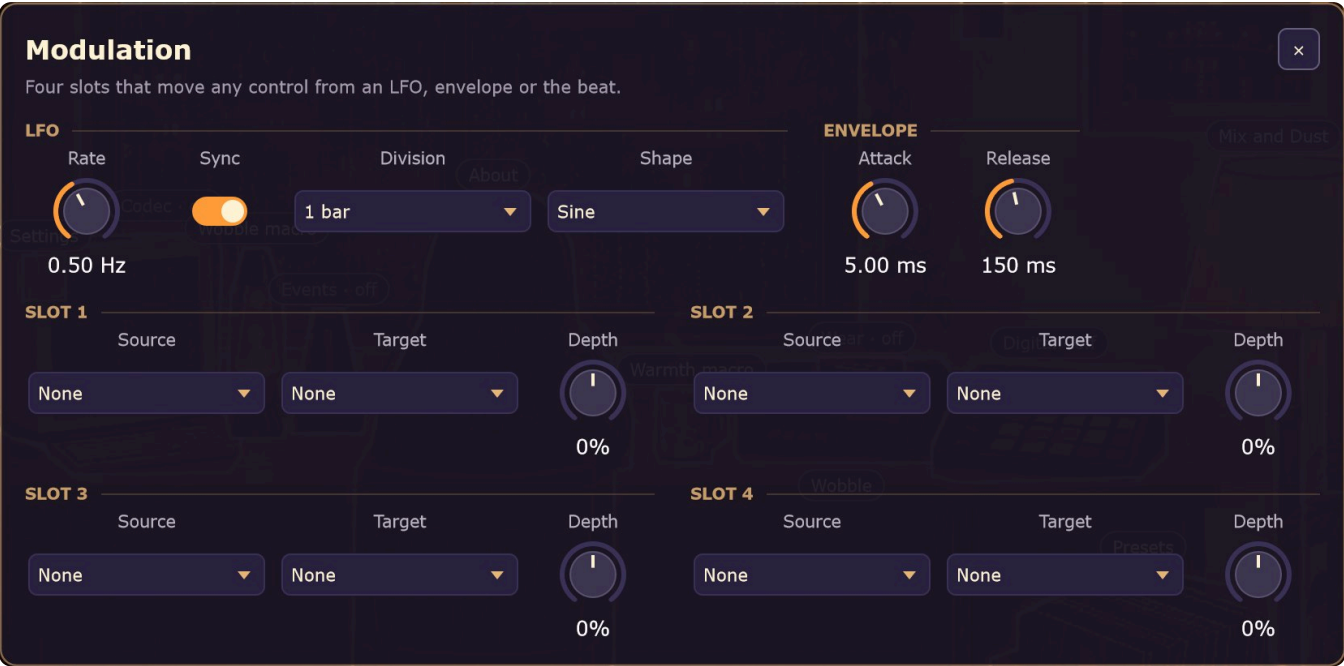
The macros push several modules at once, on top of their own settings. They work even on modules that are switched off, so one knob can take a clean sound somewhere new.

Knob	Where	What it moves
Age	Photo frame	More wear (dropouts, azimuth), duller tone, more noise and hiss, and a touch of wobble.
Warmth	Mug	More saturation and drive, more head bump, and a softer, darker top.
Wobble	Lava lamp	More wow, flutter and drift.
Dust	Lamp	More crackle and hiss.
Magnitude	Big knob on the hi-fi	Scales the effect modules, the Media Chain, the rain and the macros at once. 50% is neutral, 100% doubles them and 0% turns them off. Codec, Events and the room sounds keep their own levels.
Mix	Lamp	Blend of the effect with your dry sound (time-aligned, so no phasing).



10. Modulation

The wall clock

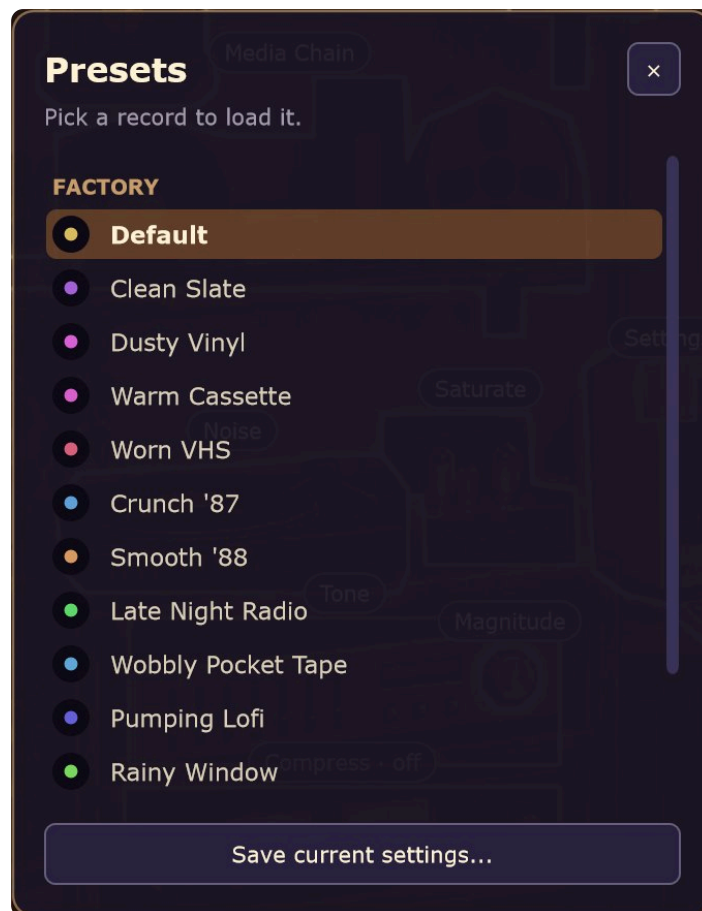


Four slots, each connecting a **Source** to a **Target** with a **Depth** ($\pm$ lets it push up or down). For example: Input Envelope $\rightarrow$ Crackle, so the crackle jumps with every kick; or LFO $\rightarrow$ Wobble, for wobble that swells over bars.

Source	What it follows
Input Envelope	The level of the music going in (shaped by the Envelope Attack and Release).
Sidechain Envelope	The level of your DAW's sidechain input to Small Hours, such as a kick drum.
LFO	A repeating shape: Sine, Triangle, Saw Up, Saw Down, Square or Random Steps. Free-running at Rate, or locked to your tempo at Division when Sync is on.
Random	Smoothly wandering random movement.
Beat	A ramp that rises across each beat.

Targets: any module's Amount, any Media Chain slot's Amount, the four macros, Mix, Magnitude, Rain Heaviness and Crackle.

11. Presets



Click the record crate, or use the preset menu in the top bar. Factory presets:

Default · Clean Slate · Dusty Vinyl · Warm Cassette · Worn VHS · Crunch '87 · Smooth '88 · Late Night Radio · Wobbly Pocket Tape · Pumping Lofi · Rainy Window · Tin Roof Storm · Dream Hall · Spring Tank

To save your own, click **Save** in the top bar (or **Save current settings...** in the crate) and name it. User presets are files ending `.lofipreset`, kept in:

- **Windows:** `%APPDATA%\Lamplit Studios\Small Hours\Presets`
- **macOS:** `~/Library/Application Support/Lamplit Studios/Small Hours/Presets`

Copy them to share with friends or move them to another computer. Your DAW also saves Small Hours' settings inside each project, so presets are optional.

12. In your DAW

- **Automation:** every control except Quality can be automated. Automate *Tape Stop* for tape stops exactly where you want them.
- **Repeatable:** the random parts (wobble, dropouts, crackle, stutters, rain) follow your song position, so playing from the same spot gives the same result, and bounces match playback. Loops vary each time round, as a real tape would.
- **Tempo:** synced wobble, dropouts, stutters, dips and the LFO follow your DAW's tempo.

- **Sidechain:** Small Hours has an optional stereo sidechain input for the Sidechain Envelope source. Route a track to it as your DAW allows (for example, a kick drum).
- **CPU:** a busy setting uses only a few percent of one core. On big sessions set Quality to Eco.
- **Mono and stereo:** works on mono and stereo tracks.

13. Troubleshooting

Small Hours doesn't appear in my DAW

- Rescan plugins in your DAW's plugin settings. Some DAWs only scan at start-up.
- Check the format your DAW uses: Logic and GarageBand need the Audio Unit; Ableton Live, FL Studio, Cubase, Studio One and Reaper use VST3; Bitwig and Reaper also use CLAP.
- Check the plugin is in the folder shown in [Installing](#), and that your DAW scans that folder.
- Pro Tools isn't supported (it needs AAX).

Windows says "Windows protected your PC"

Click **More info**, then **Run anyway**. This warning appears for new publishers.

My key doesn't work

- Copy the whole key, including **SH1-** at the start. Spaces, dashes and capital letters don't matter.
- Can't find the email? Check your junk folder, or email us with your order number.
- A key from a refunded order is cancelled and can't be activated.

The sound stopped changing

If the trial has ended, Small Hours passes your audio through untouched. Activate a licence to bring it back. If you're licensed, check Mix isn't at 0% (and that Magnitude isn't at 0%, which turns most modules off).

Too loud or too quiet

Turn on Auto Gain in Settings (the sticky note), and use Output to set the final level.

Still stuck?

Email support@lamplitstudios.com with your operating system, DAW and what happened. We aim to reply within a few working days.

14. Credits and legal

Small Hours is © 2026 **Lamplit Studios Ltd**, registered in England and Wales, company number 17525280. lamplitstudios.com · support@lamplitstudios.com

The rain and room sounds are public domain (CC0) field recordings from Freesound (freesound.org). Everything Small Hours produces, including those sounds, is yours to use in your music, including commercial releases.

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