

# HELIX X

## Wet Dry Wet

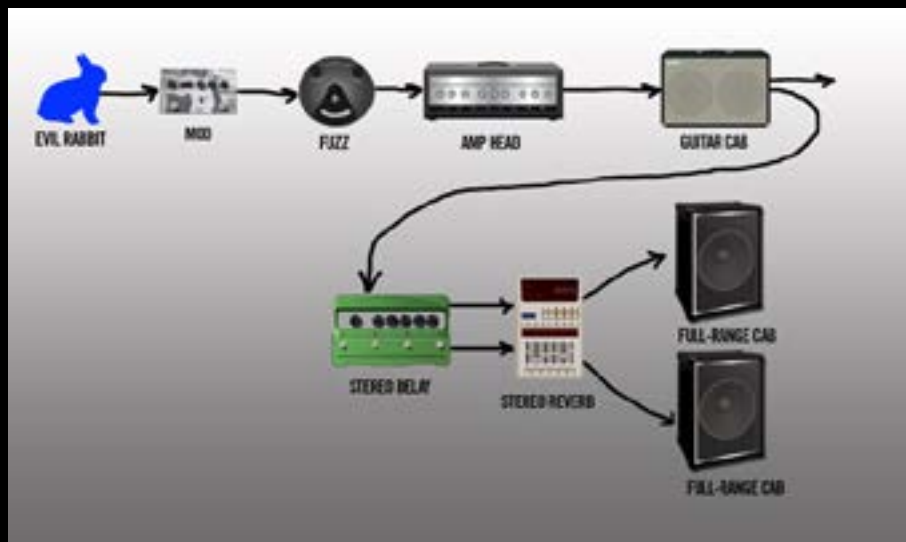
It goes without saying that the order in which you set up your guitar effects has a lot to do with the way your rig sounds. If you put a delay effect in front of your amp, it takes on a much more saturated and in-your-face character than if it were after it.

Most guitarists run their effects serially (meaning 'one-into-the-next'), in variations of this kind of setup:



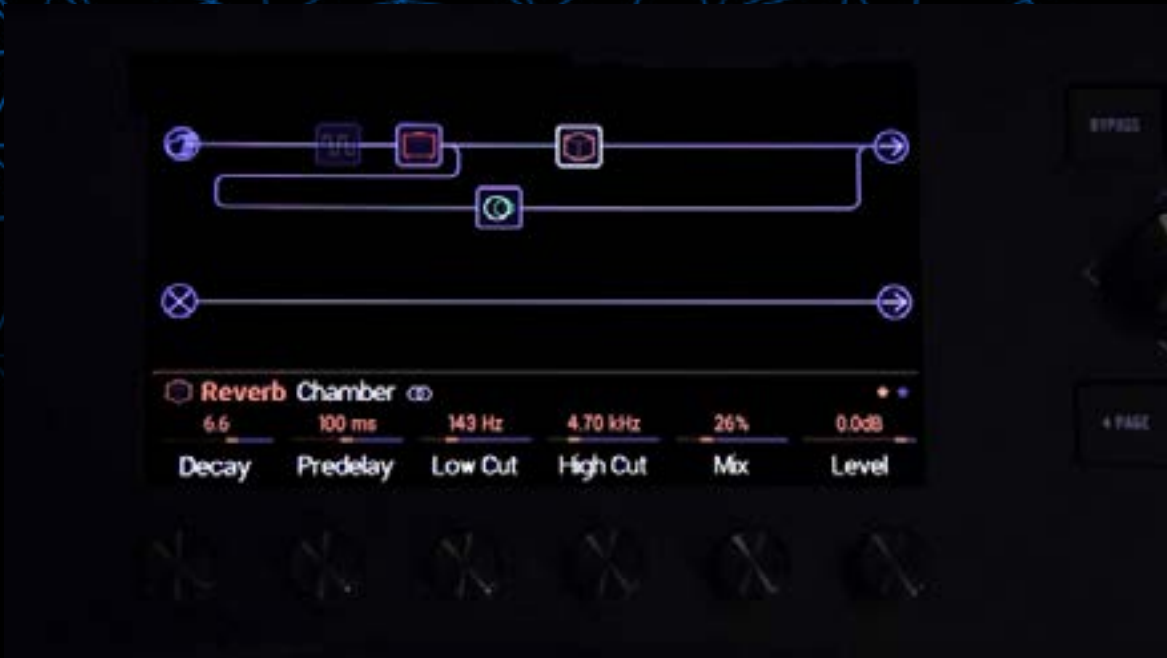
However, things get more interesting if you're not forced into a purely serial routing scenario. Separating some of the signals from each other can yield some real sonic benefits, but up until now it has only been widely achievable in the recording studio, or onstage in a complex and expensive setup.

The term "wet-dry-wet" or "WDW" has come to describe one such routing scenario, where the main guitar sound comes out dry, and the post-amp modulation and time-based effects come out a separate set of speakers in stereo, set to 100% wet. Like this:



The benefit of this scenario is improved clarity, as the 100% wet effects are simply added to the dry tone and don't replace it at high mix settings. Set correctly, the dry tone is never swamped or taken over by the effects – the patch can sound huge, but the dry guitar pokes out easily because it's being summed with the wet sounds at the end of the line, and not going through them serially. Regarding the wet setting - this is important, folks - any effects on parallel paths usually need to be set to 100% wet to avoid phasing issues.

It's also important to note that you don't have to set up a pure "WDW" scenario to see a benefit from the concept. Check out this patch in Helix below:



Here I've created a hybrid setup, taking advantage of a pair of Helix's four stereo paths available per patch. The signal splits after the amp, so one path feeds a reverb effect directly, and the other path feeds a delay effect set to 100% wet. The delay then rejoins the main signal path after the reverb.

Why do this? If you look at the routing you can see that all I've done is prevent the delay repeats from hitting the reverb. The benefit – and the reason why I set up nearly all of my patches in Helix this way – is that the delay repeats don't fill up the reverb with their energy, which can make things sound muddy. In this kind of setup the entire sound has been cleaned up a little – the delays stay clear and distinct, as they aren't being diffused or blurred by the reverb, and the reverb is only heard when the guitar is playing live, not when the delays repeat.

This parallel concept is how I usually mix guitars in the studio, so it's fantastic to have the ability to take these sounds onstage without a needing pile of gear. The possibili-

ties are immense and exciting – and there are sounds that you can achieve by routing this way that simply aren't possible in other scenarios.

Don't worry if this all looks a bit scary – it's actually not hard at all to accomplish with Helix. In fact, we've included a bunch of templates to let you experiment with these scenarios right from the start, so you can see if it's something that agrees with your playing style.

For me, parallel stuff is all about definition. Even with a relatively “wet” patch swimming in swirly goo, I can still hear the notes pop out easily routing this way. Check out some of the sound samples at <https://soundcloud.com/line6/sets/helix> or some examples of how these patches really make a difference, and maybe someday soon I'll do a deeper dive into this world, if enough of you folks let us know that you'd like me to. Happy tone sculpting!