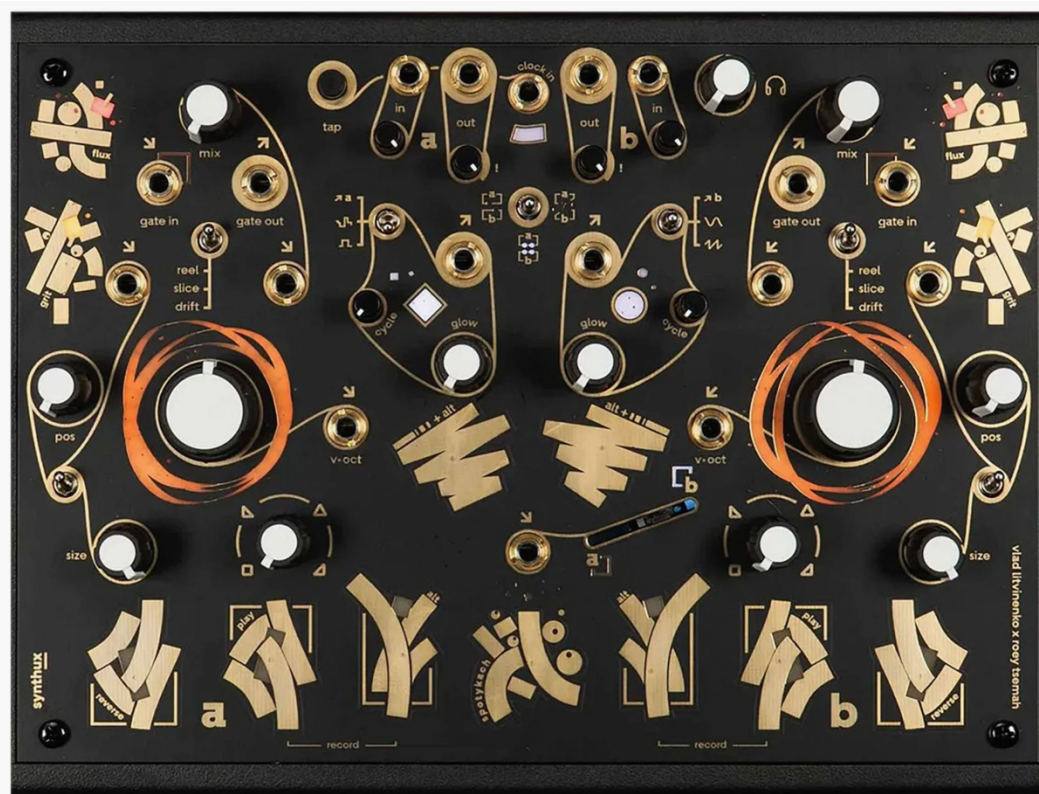


SPOTYKACH: FIRST CONTACT GUIDE



AUTHOR

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SPOTYKACH

Dual-deck looper · sampler · granular

FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Contents	What Spotykach Is · The Playground · How to Read This
Version	v1.0
Firmware	v1.2.0

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WHAT SPOTYKACH IS

Spotykach is a two-deck looper from Synthux Academy, built around one idea: a deck holds a single recording, and a playhead moves through it. Everything on the panel shapes, moves, or feeds that playhead.

There are two decks, and they mirror each other — Deck A on the left, Deck B on the right. Each records its own loop and plays it back independently, and a crossfader sets how much of each reaches the outputs. Each deck reads its loop in one of three modes: **reel** runs the playhead continuously, **slice** cuts the loop into rhythmic pieces you trigger, and **drift** scatters it into a cloud of grains. Same recording, three different ways of hearing it.

It runs on USB-C or a 15 V supply, takes two mono inputs and gives two mono outputs, has a headphone jack, MIDI in and out, and an SD card slot for keeping loops. Its CV and gate connections use standard Eurorack levels, so it patches with a modular system, or with itself.

One thing to notice early: the panel is sparsely labelled. Some of the most-used controls carry no text at all and are found by what they sit next to. That is not an oversight, and this manual names each of them by its neighbours the first time it comes up.

THE PLAYGROUND

Almost nothing here is saved. Loops persist only when you deliberately write them to the SD card. The knob positions, the patching, the mode you were in — all of it goes when the power does.

That is deliberate, and it changes how the instrument wants to be played. There is no state to protect and no wrong turn to undo, so the fastest way to learn Spotykach is to reach for something and hear what it does. The memory holds loops; the interface holds a performance.

HOW TO READ THIS

This manual is in three parts, and they are meant to be used differently.

Part 1 — Using the Spotykach is a course, in ten short sections, and it is the only part written to be read in order. Section 1 gets sound out of the instrument in about a minute. Section 2 is the one that matters most: it teaches the deck, and once you hold that picture, every control that follows has somewhere to land. From there each section adds one idea — modes, shaping, timing, modulation, effects, patterns, two decks together — and the last walks a whole performance end to end. There is also an addendum on power and firmware.

Part 2 — Reference is for looking things up once you already hold the model: exact ranges, the full MIDI and SD detail, a subsystem spelled out. It is searchable on screen and prints as a clean table.

Part 3 — Quick Reference Cards sits between the two. Each card is one task, start to finish, with what you should get and what to check if you don't. Reach for a card when you know what you want to do and want the moves without the explanation.

If you have the instrument in front of you and twenty minutes, start at Section 1 and keep playing as you read. Everything else is here when you need it.

— End of Introduction —

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FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — SECTION 1

First Sound

Contents	Power On · First Loop (Reel) · First Gestures
Version	v1.0
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You're about a minute from your first loop — no theory, no menus. Everything here uses **Reel mode**, the quickest way to hear the instrument do its thing: it starts recording the moment it hears you and plays your loop back the instant you tap a pad. Follow along in order and you'll have sound before you understand how it works — which is exactly the point.

POWER ON

- **USB-C:** plug into any 5V 1A source — a phone charger, a powerbank, or your computer.
- **15V adapter:** the center-positive barrel supply on the rear, if you'd rather run it that way.

Either one is enough — you don't need both. That's all the power setup there is.

NOTE

If your unit is new to you, make sure the firmware is up-to-date. See the Power & Firmware Update addendum for more information on how to do this.

CONNECT

You'll want to hear yourself, and give the instrument something to work with:

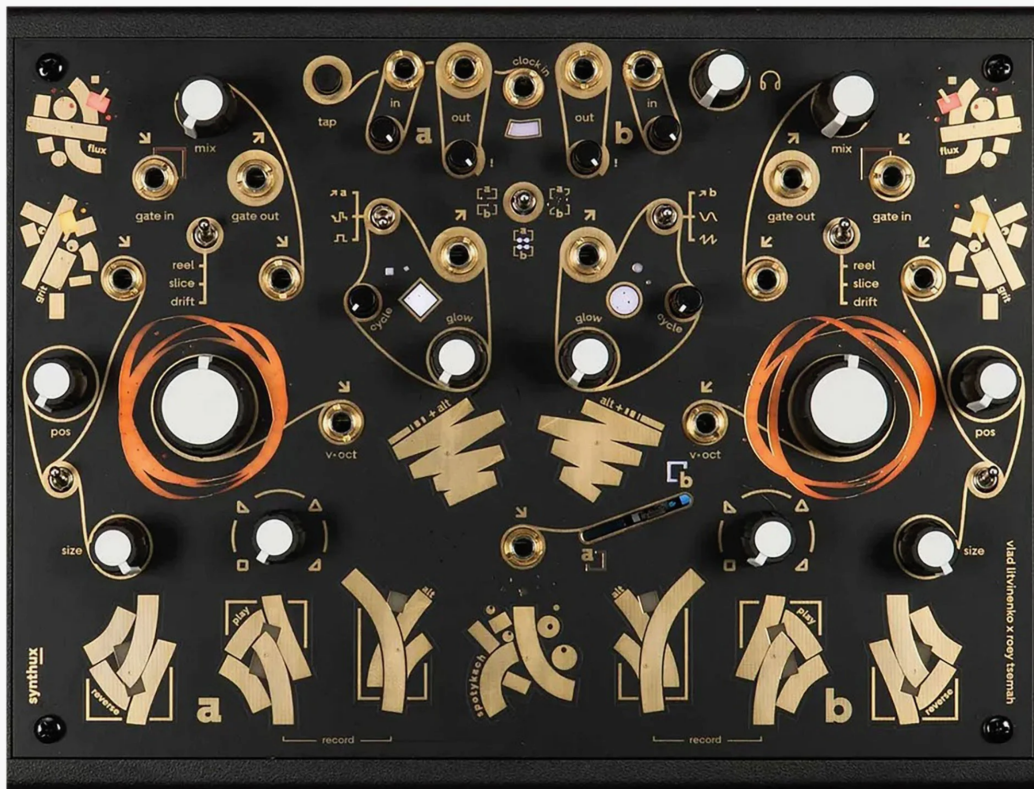
- **Output:** to a monitor, run the deck's out jack (top panel — each deck has its own). To headphones, use the headphone out on the rear panel — but note that its

volume knob is on the front, not beside the jack: it's the knob between Deck B's in trimmer and Deck B's mix, with a headphone glyph next to it.

- **Input:** feed a sound into the in jack on the top panel — an instrument, a line source, another synth, your voice. Line level is fine.

GET YOUR BEARINGS

Before the first loop, find these few controls — they're all you'll touch in this section. Everything lives on one of the two decks; we'll work on **Deck A**, the left half.



The Spotykach front panel. The two decks mirror each other — Deck A is the left half, Deck B the right. You'll work on Deck A.

- The **mode switch** — the little three-way toggle directly above the deck, marked reel / slice / drift down its side.
- The mix knob near the top of the deck — it sets how much input versus loop you hear.
- The play pad along the bottom, and the **record** move printed beside it: alt + play.

- The three shaping knobs — the **large knob** in the centre of the deck, plus pos and size.

That's the whole toolkit for now. Ignore everything else on the panel — it'll make sense once a loop is running.

MAKE YOUR FIRST LOOP

Five small moves, in order:

- **Set Reel mode:** flip Deck A's three-way mode switch to reel — the **uppermost** position. The switch moves up and down, in the same order the labels are printed. The deck's LED ring glows amber.
- **Hear your input:** bring the mix knob down until you can hear your sound coming through. This only confirms the signal is getting in — nothing is recording yet.
- **Arm the deck:** tap alt + play. The play LED blinks red — that means the deck is listening, waiting for a sound loud enough to catch.
- **Make a sound:** play into the input. The moment your signal crosses -40 dB, recording starts on its own — so give it enough level to trip the threshold.
- **Close the loop:** tap play. Recording stops and the loop begins playing back immediately.

That loop, playing back on its own, is the whole heart of the instrument. Everything else you'll learn are ways of shaping it.

NOTE

No sound yet? Bring mix down and give the input more level — recording won't start until you cross the -40 dB threshold.

REEL

In Reel mode the deck is monophonic, and speed and pitch move together — play it faster and it rises in pitch, slower and it drops. That coupling is what makes Reel feel like tape.

PLAY WITH IT

Your loop is running. Now shape it — three gestures, one at a time, while it plays:

- **Speed and pitch:** turn the large knob clockwise to speed the loop up and raise its pitch; counterclockwise to slow it down, until the playhead comes to a stop.
- **Position:** the pos knob sets where in the recording the loop starts from. In Reel it slides continuously as you turn, so you can hunt for a sweet spot by ear.
- **Size:** the size knob sets how much of the recording the loop covers — from the whole thing down to a short repeating fragment.

To stop, tap play again — tapping the pad while the deck is running stops it.

NEXT

You just recorded, shaped, and played a loop — the entire core gesture of the Spotykach, in about a minute. Next, **The Deck** unpacks the core idea the instrument is built on: a loop with a playhead, two of them side by side, and the mix between what you feed in and what plays back. With that picture is in place, every control that follows has somewhere to land.

— End of Section 1 — First Sound —

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FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — SECTION 2

The Deck

Contents	A Loop With a Playhead · Two Decks · Reading the Ring · Mix · The A/B Crossfader
Version	v1.0
Firmware	v1.2.0

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In Section 1 you made a loop without knowing a lot about how it works. This section begins to flesh out that picture, and is central to the instrument. Once learned, every knob, mode, and effect that follows has somewhere solid to land. Fortunately, it's a short read — one idea, seen from a few angles. Keep the panel from Section 1 in front of you; we'll name controls as they come up.

A LOOP WITH A PLAYHEAD

Each deck holds a single recording — a loop — in an internal buffer. A **playhead** moves through that loop, and what you hear is the playhead reading it back, repeatedly.

The three gestures from Section 1 were simply ways of steering this playhead through the loop, and each is one of the deck's white knobs:

- **Speed and pitch:** the **large knob** at the centre of the deck — the big one ringed in orange, with no label of its own — moves the playhead faster or slower through the loop.
- **Position:** the knob marked **pos** sets where in the loop the playhead starts.
- **Size:** the knob marked **size** sets how much of the recording the loop covers.

Everything else on the deck acts on this same loop and playhead. Once you understand what the playhead is, the rest of the panel stops being a wall of knobs — each control just shapes what it does.

TWO DECKS

Spotykach gives you **two** of these — **Deck A** on the left, **Deck B** on the right, each marked with a large a or b at the bottom of the panel. They are identical and independent: each records its own loop, keeps its own settings, and can run on its own or alongside the other.

Everything you learned on Deck A works the same on Deck B. The two decks allow you to layer a loop on A, another on B, and play them together. (We will return to this in more detail in Section 9.)

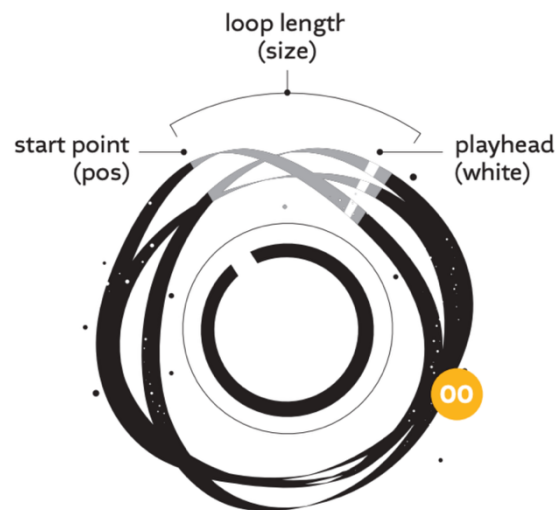
READING THE RING

Spotykach has no screen. The **ring** of light around each deck's **large knob** is the display, and it does three jobs: it draws the loop, it shows a knob's value the instant you touch it, and its base colour indicates the current operating mode.

The Loop, Drawn as Light

The ring is a picture of the very loop from the top of this section. Start recording and it fills in real time as the buffer fills. On playback it lays the loop out around the circle: where the loop begins, set by **pos**; how much of the recording it covers, set by **size**; and a bright **white** mark for the **playhead** sweeping through it.

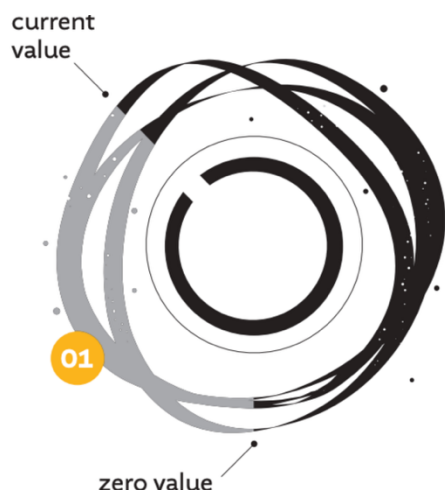
This is why the Section 1 gestures felt visual: every turn of **pos**, **size**, or the **large knob** redraws this ring. You are steering a playhead you can see.



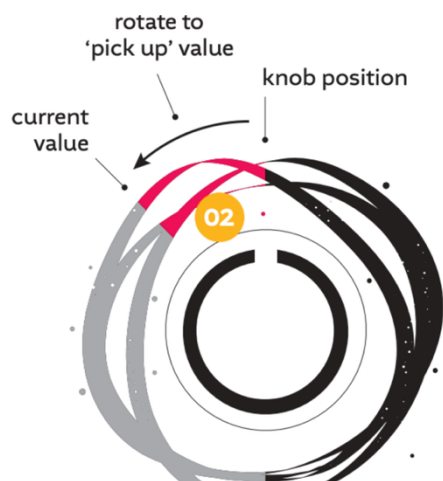
The ring as a picture of the loop — the start point (pos), the loop length (size), and the white playhead sweeping through it.

A Knob's Value, the Instant You Turn It

Turn any knob and the ring stops drawing the loop and shows that knob's **current value** instead — an arc filled from the **zero value** point up to where the knob is set. Let go and the ring returns to the loop.



Turn a knob and the ring fills from the zero value up to the knob's current value.



The red segment spans the knob position and the stored value; rotate toward the value to pick it up.

This is more useful than it first sounds, because most knobs do more than one job — and the ring always shows the value you are actually setting, including one that would otherwise stay hidden. Turn mix and the ring shows the deck's input-versus-loop balance; hold the flux effect pad and turn mix, and the same ring now shows the effect's own mix instead (Section 7). Same knob, different value — the ring tells you which one you have hold of.

Catch-Up: Picking Up a Value

Because one knob can hold different values for different jobs, its physical position often disagrees with the value the deck has stored. When it does, the ring shows a **red segment** stretched between where the knob sits (its **knob position**) and the stored **current value**. Turn toward the value to close the gap; the moment the red disappears you have picked the parameter up, and it moves on from there without jumping.

Colour: the Mode, and Borrowed Jobs

A steady glow's base colour is the deck's mode — **amber** for reel, **blue** for slice, **purple** for drift. The ring also lends itself out for other readouts, each taught in its own section:

- **Tempo and key beats:** white and coloured **dots** around the ring while you set the tempo (Section 5).
- **Effects:** the held effect's **colour** — yellow or orange for grit, pink for flux — while you hold the pad (Section 7).
- **SD card:** six **segments** in a tape's colour while you save or load (Reference).

The rule to carry: a steady base glow is the mode; a **filling arc** is a knob's value, a **red segment** is catch-up, and dots, segments, or an off-mode colour mean some other function is talking.

MIX: INPUT VS. PLAYBACK

This is why bringing mix down in Section 1 let you hear yourself. Each deck's mix knob — near the top of the deck — sets the balance between two things: the **live input** you're feeding in, and the deck's own **recorded loop**.

Bring mix down (CCW) and you hear more of your live input; bring it up (CW) and you hear more of the loop. Before recording, that's how you monitor what's coming in; after recording, it's how you blend the live sound against the loop.

How your inputs reach the decks is set by the small **routing switch** between the top-panel in jacks, which has three positions:

- **Mono:** the inputs feed the decks directly — one input can drive both decks, or each input its own same-named deck.
- **Stereo:** the two inputs become a stereo pair — Deck A takes the left channel, Deck B the right.
- **Generative:** the same stereo split, plus Spotykach adds automatic panning movement to the deck outputs.

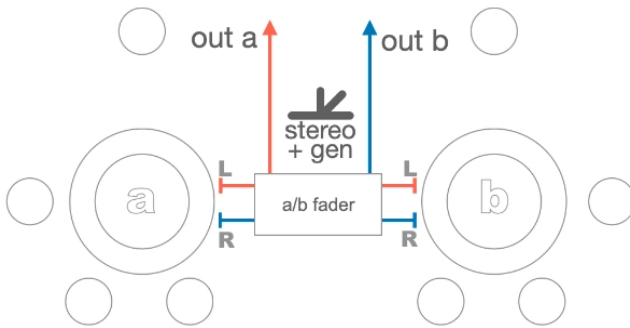
NOTE

For everything in this course, mono with one sound into in a feeding Deck A is all you need — the stereo and generative details, and how each mode changes the outputs, live in the Reference.

THE A/B CROSSFADER

There's a second balance, easy to confuse with the first. The per-deck mix sets input against loop within a single deck. The **a/b crossfader** — the short angled slider sitting below and between the two **trig pads**, just right of the panel's centre line — sets how much of **Deck A** against **Deck B** reaches the outputs. It carries no printed label, but it's the only physical slider on Spotykach.

Two controls, two jobs: mix lives inside a deck; the a/b crossfader balances the two. Keep those straight and the routing never surprises you.



Output routing: both decks are mixed and the a/b crossfader (with its CV input) sets the balance between them, feeding out a and out b. This is the stereo/generative behaviour; the full set of routing modes is in the Reference

NOTE

Try this — record a quick loop on Deck A, then slowly turn mix from one extreme to the other — hear your live input give way to the loop and back. Now nudge pos and watch the ring redraw where the playhead starts. One ring, one loop, one playhead — that's the picture all other controls act on.

NEXT

That's the spine: two decks, each a loop with a playhead, each balancing input against its own loop, the pair balanced by the a/b crossfader. Everything still to come — the three modes, modulation, effects, the sequencer — is just another way of acting on this same loop. Next, **Choosing a Mode** looks at reel, slice, and drift as three lenses on it.

— End of Section 2 — The Deck —

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FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — SECTION 3

Choosing a Mode

Contents	The Mode Switch · Reel · Slice · Drift · Which to Reach For
Version	v1.0
Firmware	v1.2.0

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The loop you recorded doesn't change when you change mode — the **mode** changes how the deck reads and reshapes it. Reel, slice, and drift are three lenses on the same loop: one is tape, one is a sampler, one is a granular cloud. This section is about feeling the difference so you can reach for one on purpose.

THE MODE SWITCH

Each deck has its own three-way **mode switch** — a small toggle sitting directly above the deck, printed `reel / slice / drift` down its side. **It moves up and down, and the labels are printed in the order the switch travels**, so what you read is where you put it:

- `reel` (uppermost) — tape.
- `slice` (middle) — sampler.
- `drift` (lowest) — granular.

Flip it and the deck's LED ring changes base colour to tell you where you are: **amber** for reel, **blue** for slice, **purple** for drift. The recording underneath stays put; only the lens changes — so try the same loop through all three and listen to how differently each one plays it.

REEL — THE TAPE MACHINE

Reel is monophonic, and speed and pitch are locked together: play it faster and it rises in pitch, slower and it drops, exactly like winding tape. It's the most immediate mode and the one you already met in Section 1.

REEL

Try this — record a loop, then turn the large knob. Clockwise speeds it up and lifts the pitch; counterclockwise slows and lowers it, down to a standstill.

SLICE — THE DIGITAL SAMPLER

Slice is driven by the clock, and — unlike reel — pitch is independent of speed, so you can shift pitch without changing timing, or stretch time without changing pitch. It's polyphonic — up to three voices per deck, and there is no panel control that changes that. A fourth trigger takes the oldest voice. If you want a deck held to one voice, it is a setting on the SD card, covered in Section 4.

SLICE

Try this — record a short phrase, then turn the large knob. The timing holds steady while the pitch shifts — pitch-shifting without speeding the loop up.

DRIFT — THE GRANULAR TEXTURE MACHINE

Drift breaks the recording into tiny grains and fires them together into an evolving cloud of sound. *pos* sets the centre of the cloud — the point the grains gather around — and *size* sets how far they spread. Small movements of the source become an endless, shifting texture.

DRIFT

Try this — record something with a bit of movement in it, then slowly turn *pos* and *size*. The grains drift around the recording and thicken into a wash.

WHICH TO REACH FOR

A rough guide, not a rule:

- **Reel:** immediate, tape-like pitch-and-speed play — the fastest way to hear an idea.
- **Slice:** tempo-locked sampling with independent pitch and polyphony — the musical, in-time mode.
- **Drift:** drones, textures, and clouds — when you want atmosphere rather than a clean loop.

You can switch a deck's mode any time, and the two decks can sit in different modes at once — reel on A, drift on B. Pick the lens that suits the sound in front of you.

NEXT

Now that you can pick a lens, **Shaping a Loop** takes the moves from Section 1 — pos, size, speed, and the loop envelope — and turns them into deliberate musical gestures within whichever mode you've chosen.

— End of Section 3 — Choosing a Mode —

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FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — SECTION 4

Shaping a Loop

Contents	Speed & Pitch · Position · Size · Envelope
Version	v1.0
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You can record a loop and pick a mode. Now shape it. Four controls do the sculpting — the **large knob** (speed/pitch), pos, size, and the **envelope shape knob** (found directly above the play pads for either deck). They're the same four knobs in every mode, but each mode gives them a different character, and holding `alt` while you turn most of them opens a second layer. This section takes them one at a time, showing what each does in reel, slice, and drift.

NOTE

Because these knobs each do more than one job, turning one — especially right after switching mode — may bring up a **red segment** on the ring. That's the catch-up indicator, showing that the knob and the deck's stored value disagree. Turn past it to take control, and the value won't jump. (See Reading the Ring, Section 2.) The `alt` layer is the exception: parameters you reach by holding `alt` pick up the moment you turn, with no red segment and nothing to make up. That exemption is specific to `alt` — the layer you reach by holding `tap` has catch-up like any other.

SPEED & PITCH

The large knob — the big one ringed in orange, with no label of its own — controls speed and pitch. However, what it changes depends on the mode:

- **Reel:** speed and pitch are bound — clockwise plays faster and higher, counterclockwise slower and lower, down to a standstill.

- **Slice:** pitch only — the timing stays put while the note moves, so you can pitch-shift without changing tempo.
- **Drift:** like reel, but gentler — because the sound is built from grains, changes in speed are less pronounced.

Hold **alt** while turning the large knob and pitch snaps to musical intervals, the same in every mode: -2 oct, -1 oct, -fifth, 0, +fifth, +1 oct, +2 oct. Handy for staying in tune with other instruments.

POSITION

The pos knob sets where in the recording the loop reads from:

- **Reel:** the start point, sliding continuously as you turn. Make the size small and sweep pos and you get a scrubbing, time-stretched effect.
- **Slice:** the start point, snapped to 1/8-note steps so it lands in time.
- **Drift:** the centre of the grain cloud — the point the grains gather around as they scatter.

SIZE

The size knob sets how much of the recording the loop covers:

- **Reel:** the loop length. The response is exponential — fine and delicate when the loop is short, so shrinking it to a tight stutter stays controllable.
- **Slice:** the length, rounded to a whole number of 16th-notes, changing evenly across the knob.
- **Drift:** how far the grains spread around the position point — from a tight point to a wide wash.

Holding **alt** + size does something different again depending on mode: in **drift** it sets the **grain length**; in **slice** it sets the loop length — the same job the plain knob does, not a voice-count switch.

NOTE

The printed manual gives **alt** + size in slice as a switch between one voice and three. It is not — the deck stacks up to three voices wherever that knob sits. The only way to hold a deck to one voice is `slc_mn_a` or `slc_mn_b` in `config.txt` on the SD card, one per deck. Confirmed at the unit.

ENVELOPE

The **envelope shape knob** shapes the loop's edges. It is a continuous control, not a set of positions: fully counterclockwise the envelope is off, and as you turn clockwise the shape morphs gradually through a sequence:

- **Off** — fully counterclockwise, no shaping.
- **Fade-out** — a punchy ramp-down; the loop tails away at its end.
- **Fade-in/out** — it swells up and tails away.
- **Fade-in** — fully clockwise, a ramp-up; it swells up from silence.

Those are the landmarks you pass through, not detents you click into — every small movement of the knob shifts the shape a little, so the useful settings are usually the ones between the named points. The envelope covers the whole loop, so you can soften clicks at the loop point or turn a sample into a swell. Holding `alt` + envelope sets the length of that fade — and because the fade is measured against the loop rather than in seconds, a longer size buys you a longer fade.

Drift treats the envelope specially, and it's the key to the mode:

DRIFT

With the envelope at 0 (its default), drift enters a suspended state — the grain cloud just drones, and the trig pad and gate-in are ignored. Open the envelope up and drift comes back to life, ready to be triggered and shaped.

PUTTING THE MOVES TOGETHER

The moves compound. A few starting points:

- **Reel stutter:** shrink size to a sliver and sweep pos — a scrubbed, granular-sounding scan of the recording.
- **Slice in tune:** hold `alt` and set a +fifth or +1 oct, then chop with size for rhythmic, pitched fragments that stay in time.
- **Drift pad:** open the envelope, set a wide size, and drift pos slowly for an evolving wash.

NOTE

Saving to the SD card — a loop lives in the deck only until you replace it, but you can keep it. With a card inserted before power-up, hold tap and tap the deck's play pad to enter SD-card mode; the ring lights six slots — one of six colour-coded “tapes,” each holding six loops. Turn the **large knob** to choose a slot, then tap alt + play to save (or play to load one back). (Tapping the **trig pad** — the large gold pad in the centre of the deck's half, below cycle and glow — switches tapes; the full tape/track layout and WAV format live in the Reference.)

NEXT

You can now shape a single loop with intent, in any mode. Next, **Playing in Time** brings in the clock — tempo, the quantized recording and position that make slice musical, and triggering with the pads and gate in — so your loops lock together rather than just running.

— End of Section 4 — Shaping a Loop —

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FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — SECTION 5

Playing in Time

Contents	The Clock · Tempo · Key Beats · Recording in Time · Triggering
Version	v1.0
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So far, your loops just run — they start when you tap and stop when you tap. This section locks them to a beat. You'll meet the clock, set a tempo, learn the **key beat** that makes slice land musically, and trigger loops as a performance. This is where Spotykach stops being a loop and starts being an instrument you play in time.

THE CLOCK

Spotykach has an internal clock that starts running the moment you power up and never stops. It drives slice-mode playback and recording, and the pattern sequencer (Section 8). Reel and drift run free of it — until you bring timing in through key beats or a pattern.

The **clock LED**, below the clock in jack at the top of the panel, blinks the beat in time with the metronome click. To set the metronome's volume, hold tap and turn glow on Deck A.

SETTING THE TEMPO

The internal clock runs from 20 to 250 BPM, and there are three ways to set it:

- **Tap it in:** tap the tap button in time, and Spotykach takes the tempo from your taps.
- **Dial it:** hold tap and turn cycle on Deck A to move the tempo by hand. Nothing on the instrument displays a number, so this is an adjustment by ear rather than to a figure.

- **Match a sample (slice):** in slice mode with a sample loaded, hold tap and turn the deck's size. The ring shows a series of points, and turning size sets how many quarter-notes (beats) the loaded sample should be counted as spanning. Pick the count that matches the loop — 8 points for a two-bar loop — and the tempo aligns to the sample's length. Every fourth point is white to make counting easier.

KEY BEATS

The **key beat** is the quarter-note where playback and recording trigger the grid your actions snap to. It applies in slice mode, and in any mode once a pattern is running. Set the interval by holding tap and turning mix on Deck A. The ring on Deck A shows the setting:

- **One white dot** — every quarter-note is a key beat (the default).
- **White + coloured dots** — a longer interval; one white and three coloured is a key beat at the top of each 4/4 bar.
- **Whole ring glowing the clock colour** — key beats are off, and actions snap to the nearest 1/16 instead.

NOTE

In play, the clock LED flashes white on the key beat and the clock colour in between, so you can feel where the grid falls without watching the ring.

RECORDING IN TIME

This is what makes slice musical. With the clock in charge, slice quantizes everything to the key beat: playback starts on the next key beat (and stops the instant you tap play or reverse), and recording starts and stops on the next key beat too. Your loop lands locked to the grid instead of wherever your hands happened to land.

SLICE

Set a tempo, choose a key beat, then arm and record as you did in Section 1. Instead of catching your sound the instant it crosses the threshold, slice waits for the next key beat to start and ends cleanly on one — a loop that's already in time.

Reel and drift don't do this on their own — they record on the -40 dB threshold from Section 1, free of the clock, unless you switch on key beats or run a pattern. And remember from Section 4 that slice's pos snaps to 1/8-notes and size to whole 16ths, so shaping stays on the grid too.

TRIGGERING AS PERFORMANCE

Once you're in time, the pads become an instrument:

- **Play and reverse:** tap play to start the loop forward, reverse to run it backward; tap the running pad to stop, or the opposite pad to flip direction. With key beats on, these land on the beat rather than the instant you tap.
- **One-shots:** the **trig pad** fires a single pass. In reel it re-triggers from the start; in polyphonic slice it can stack up to three voices. (If a reel deck's envelope is fully counterclockwise, trig is ignored.)
- **Gate in:** the same one-shot, fired by a jack instead of your finger — patch a clock, a gate, or a sequencer into the gate in jack to play the deck rhythmically, hands-free. This is your first patch point; Section 6 describes the rest.

LOCKING TO THE OUTSIDE

You can also hand the clock to an external source — a modular clock at the clock in jack, or MIDI clock from a computer or sequencer — so Spotykach follows the rest of your setup. Tap alt + tap to cycle the clock source (the clock LED colour shows which is active), and reset the alignment if it drifts by holding tap and tapping the trig pad on Deck A. The full MIDI and clock-format detail lives in the Reference.

NEXT

Your loops now lock to a beat and answer to the pads and gate in. Next, **Making It Move** brings in modulation — LFOs, the envelope follower, and patching CV — so the sound develops on its own instead of only when your hands move.

— End of Section 5 — Playing in Time —

SPOTYKACH

Dual-deck looper · sampler · granular

FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — SECTION 6

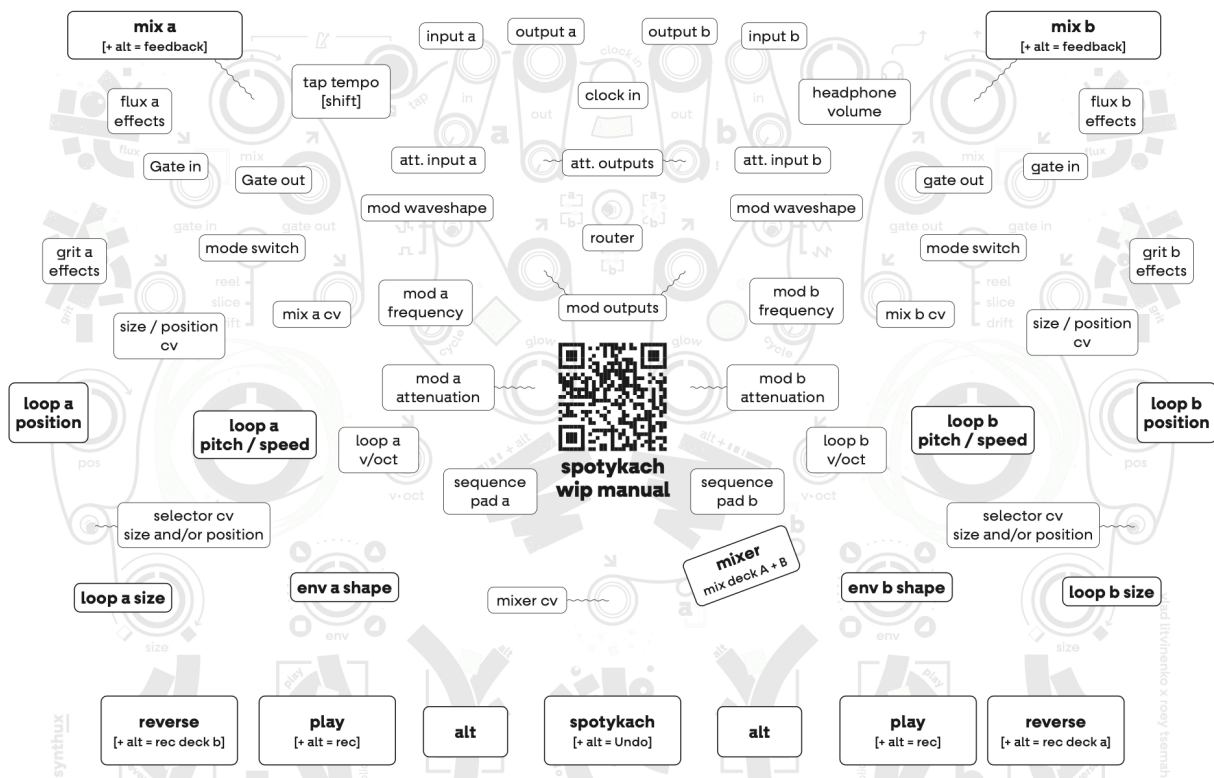
Making It Move

Contents	Modulation Sources · Envelope Follower · The Patch Points · Patching
Version	v1.0
Firmware	v1.2.0

Independent documentation for the Synthux Academy Spotykach. Not published by Synthux Academy.

Until now you move the sound with your hands. Modulation hands that job to the instrument — a control that turns on its own — and patching lets one part of Spotykach drive another with a cable. You met the first patch point, gate in, in Section 5. This section opens up the rest: two modulation sources, a handful of CV inputs, and the gesture that connects them.

Most of the jacks and switches this section uses sit in the middle of the panel and carry no printed labels — so keep the map on the next page in view; we'll point to each by where it is. **They are not unmarked, though: each jack carries a small arrow showing which way signal flows**, so you can tell an output from an input by reading the panel.



to suggest a feature, or register a bug, please use the QR above and join the development environment

The Spotykach front panel. The modulation controls and patch points cluster down the centre column, between the two decks. Most jacks are unlabelled — locate them by position as each is introduced.

TWO MODULATION SOURCES

Spotykach has two internal modulation sources, **A** and **B**, one per deck, in the centre of the panel. Each can be an LFO or an envelope follower, chosen with that source's **modulation source switch** — the three-position toggle above cycle. Each has an output jack you patch from, **directly above glow**. Two knobs shape each source:

- **cycle** — the rate. Hold alt while turning to lock the rate to the clock, in musical divisions: 1/32, 1/16, 1/8, 1/4, 1/2, 1, 2, 3, 4 bars.
- **glow** — the depth.

One switch does all of it. The three positions run top to bottom in the order the switch throws, and **none of them carries text** — the top is marked with an arrow and the deck's letter, the other two with waveform glyphs:

- **Source A:** top, envelope follower of deck a · middle, sample-and-hold · bottom, square.

- **Source B:** top, envelope follower of deck b · middle, sine · bottom, sawtooth.

The glyphs sit to the **left** of Deck A's toggle and the **right** of Deck B's, mirroring the decks. The Envelope Follower setting is described below.

NOTE

The **modulation LED** — the diamond between Deck A's cycle and glow, the disc between Deck B's — shows the source at work before anything is patched. It pulses with whatever shape that source's switch is selecting, at the rate cycle sets, and **its brightness is the depth**: turn glow down and the light dims. In envelope-follower mode it takes on the colour of the deck it's listening to — the same mode colours you read on the ring.

THE ENVELOPE FOLLOWER

Flip a modulation source to follower and it stops oscillating and starts listening. It turns the level of the same-named deck into modulation, so the sound modulates itself. Because it taps the signal after the mix knob, it follows both your live input and the loop. If mix is fully counterclockwise, it follows an external signal alone. cycle sets how quickly it responds (attack and release), and glow boosts quiet sources.

Switching a source between LFO and follower can jump the modulation amount, since the follower's output rides on how loud the signal is — expect a step when you flip it.

THE PATCH POINTS — THE CV INS

The modulation must land somewhere. These are the CV inputs, each a destination you can patch into:

- **Position and size:** the pos/size CV in — the jack **below** gate in — set by its own up/down/centre selector switch, the small toggle between pos and size, to steer position, size, or both. Continuous in reel and drift; applied on the next pass in slice.
- **Pitch and speed:** the v • oct in, tracking one volt per octave; when a deck is played over MIDI, it adds to the note.
- **Trigger:** the gate in from Section 5, firing a one-shot pass.
- **Deck balance:** the crossfader CV in, moving the balance between Deck A and Deck B. It is the lone jack **between the decks, just left of the slider**.

- **Input against loop:** the deck mix CV in, moving that deck's balance between live input and its loop. It is the jack **below** gate out.

All of these accept standard Eurorack levels, and the modulation outputs put out 0 to +5 V — so Spotykach patches cleanly with a modular system, or with itself.

IMPORTANT

The two **gate outs** fire a brief pulse — about 2.5 V, 10 ms — at the start of every loop pass, one per deck. They are live in `reel` and `slice`; `drift` leaves them silent. Patch one into a gate in, an envelope, or a drum trigger, and a deck's own loop becomes a clock for the rest of your rack.

PATCH IT UP

Run a cable from a **source output** to a **CV input** and one part of Spotykach will drive another. A few to try:

- **Clock-synced sweep:** LFO source, alt-set to 1/4 or 1 bar, patched to the pos/size CV — the loop scans itself in time with the beat. Turn size down first: with a long loop the sweep is only audible in `reel`, because in `slice` and `drift` there is too much sound playing to hear the position move.
- **Self-driven pitch:** envelope follower patched to v•oct — the loop's own dynamics nudge its pitch, louder moments riding higher.
- **Auto-crossfade:** a slow LFO into the crossfader CV — the two decks trade places on their own.

NEXT

Your sound can now move on its own and drive itself through a patch. Next, **Effects Live** adds grit and flux — saturation, bit-crushing, and tape delay — played in real time on top of everything you've built.

— End of Section 6 — Making It Move —

SPOTYKACH

Dual-deck looper · sampler · granular

FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — SECTION 7

Effects Live

Contents	Playing an Effect · Grit · Flux · Playing Live
Version	v1.0
Firmware	v1.2.0

Independent documentation for the Synthux Academy Spotykach. Not published by Synthux Academy.

Everything so far shaped the loop itself. Effects are different — you play them in real time. Each deck has two effect pads, `grit` and `flux`, at its outer edge, and each holds a small family of effects. They colour whatever passes through: your live input, the loop, or both at once — so you can even reach for them with nothing recorded and use Spotykach as a straight distortion or delay.

PLAYING AN EFFECT

The effects are momentary by default — they run only while you hold the pad:

- **Hold to engage:** press and hold `grit` or `flux`. As long as it's held, the signal passes through the effect; let go and it's clean again.
- **Latch it on:** tap `alt` + `grit` or `alt` + `flux` to latch that pad on, so it stays without holding; tap the same pair again to release. Both pads latch. Latch when you want both hands free; hold when you want the effect as a gesture.

While you hold a pad, the deck's LED ring glows the effect's own colour instead of the mode's amber, blue, or purple — the borrowed readout from Section 2 — and holds that colour for as long as you hold. When the glow isn't a mode colour, it's the effect showing you which flavour is live.

Latching behaves differently, and it's worth knowing where to look. Release a latched pad and the ring goes **back to the mode colour**, not the effect's — the ring is needed again for the loop and the mode once your hands are free. The only thing showing you an effect is still latched is the **small LED on that effect's pad, which stays brighter**. Check the pad, not the ring.

`grit` holds two effects; on firmware v1.2.0 `flux` holds one. Where a pad has more than one, hold it and tap tap to step to the next — the ring changes colour as it switches. Shape whichever is live while you keep holding: the **large knob** at the centre of the deck and `mix` act on every effect, and `pos` adds a third control on `flux` alone. **The large knob carries no label** — it is the biggest control on the deck, inside the orange swirl.

GRIT — TEXTURE

`grit` roughens the sound. It carries two flavours, and holding `grit` + tap steps between them — watch the ring change colour:

- **Saturation (yellow):** analog-style warmth and drive. Hold `grit` and turn the **large knob** left for soft saturation, right for hard distortion; turn `mix` to blend the effect against the dry signal.
- **Bit crusher (orange):** digital degradation. Hold `grit` and turn the **large knob** left for gentle grunge, right for low-bitrate, harsh clipping; `mix` sets the blend.

Both live on the same pad — yellow is the softer, analog end; orange is the digital breakdown. In either, the **large knob** drives how hard the effect bites and `mix` is your dry/wet.

FLUX — TIME

`flux` holds the time-based effects. On firmware v1.2.0 there's one so far:

- **Tape delay (pink):** an echo with a tape character. Hold `flux` and turn the **large knob** for the tape speed — which pitches the echoes as it moves — `mix` for how much delay you hear, and `pos` for feedback, how many times the echo repeats.

NOTE

Flux is built to grow. Tape delay is the only flux effect on v1.2.0, with more time-based effects planned for later firmware — everything you learn holding `flux` now will carry over.

PLAYING LIVE

Because effects process the input as well as the loop, they're an instrument in their own right — and nothing they do is written into the loop unless you resample:

- **As a gesture:** hold `grit` for a stab of `grit` on a single phrase, then release — the loop underneath is untouched.
- **As a wash:** hold `flux` and let the tape delay smear a passage — the wash lasts exactly as long as you hold the pad, or latch it and let it run.
- **Stack them:** `grit` into `flux`, effects over modulation over two decks — the effect sits on top of everything you've built.

Try holding `grit` and stuttering the pad in and out over a running loop: the momentary hold turns the effect into a rhythmic part. That live, hands-on play is the whole point of the pads.

NEXT

You can now colour the sound in real time. Next, **Patterns** hands that gesture to the sequencer — a per-deck 1/16 pattern that fires the deck for you, so the moves you've been making by hand can run on their own.

— End of Section 7 — Effects Live —

SPOTYKACH

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FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — SECTION 8

Patterns

Contents	What a Pattern Is · Recording a Pattern · Playing and Clearing
Version	v1.0
Firmware	v1.2.0

Independent documentation for the Synthux Academy Spotykach. Not published by Synthux Academy.

In Section 5 you triggered a deck by hand — a tap on the **trig pad** fired a one-shot pass. A pattern records those taps as a looping rhythm and plays them back for you. Each deck has its own step sequencer that fires the deck hands-free, so the moves you were making by hand can run on their own while you do something else.

WHAT A PATTERN IS

The sequencer is per deck, and it lives on the same **trig pad** you already know — the pad below each deck's modulation source. What it records is a rhythm of trig one-shots, quantized to a 1/16 grid and looped:

- **One per deck:** each deck keeps its own pattern, independent of the other.
- **Shared across modes:** the pattern stays with the deck whether it's in reel, slice, or drift. Record it in one mode and it plays in all three — the triggers behave just as your hand's taps did in Section 5 (re-triggering from the start in reel, stacking voices in polyphonic slice).

This is also what brings reel and drift into time. On their own those modes run free of the clock; a running pattern locks their triggering to the beat, the same way key beats did for recording in Section 5.

RECORDING A PATTERN

Set your tempo and key beat first (Section 5) — the key beat decides where the pattern begins.

- **Arm it:** tap `alt` + the trig pad. The `alt` LED blinks white to the clock — it's counting you in.
- **Start playing:** when recording begins depends on your key beat. With a key beat of a quarter-note or longer, it starts on the next key beat, giving you a count-in; with key beats off (the ring glowing the clock colour), it starts the instant you first tap the trig pad.
- **Tap the rhythm:** tap the deck's trig pad in the pattern you want. Every tap snaps to the nearest 1/16, so it lands in time even if your hands don't.
- **Stop:** tap `alt` or `play`. The pattern saves and immediately starts playing the deck.

PLAYING AND CLEARING

Once saved, the pattern plays the deck on its own, starting on the next key beat. Your hands are now free — change mode, shape the loop, add modulation, hold an effect — and the pattern keeps firing underneath, so the deck plays itself while you perform everything else.

NOTE

A pattern triggers the deck; it doesn't record audio. The loop under it is untouched, so you can swap modes or reshape the sound, and the same rhythm keeps playing.

To clear a pattern, hold `alt` + the trig pad for two seconds. The `play` LED blinks quickly and the pattern is gone — record a new one whenever you like.

NEXT

A deck can now play itself in time. Next, **Two Decks Together** brings both decks into play at once — layering A against B, overdubbing, and resampling one deck into the other — so a single loop becomes an arrangement.

— End of Section 8 — Patterns —

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FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — SECTION 9

Two Decks Together

Contents	Layering the Decks · Overdub · Resampling
Version	v1.0
Firmware	v1.2.0

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Everything so far worked one deck. Spotykach has two — identical and independent, as you saw in Section 2 — and bringing both into play is what turns a single loop into an arrangement. You'll layer the two decks against each other, deepen one with overdub, and fold one into the other by resampling.

LAYERING THE DECKS

The simplest way to use both decks is to give each its own loop and play them together:

- **Two loops at once:** record a loop on Deck A and another on Deck B. Each keeps its own mode, shaping, timing, pattern, and effects — reel on one and slice on the other, a pattern running on one while your hands play the other.
- **Balance with the a/b crossfader:** the crossfader sets how much of each you hear — toward A and Deck A comes forward, toward B and Deck B does. It's the top-level balance between the two, the way each deck's own mix balances input against loop.

Because the decks are fully independent, layering is just two of everything you already know, played at the same time.

OVERDUB — LAYERING WITHIN A DECK

To build depth on a single deck rather than across two, overdub. While a deck is playing, tap **alt + play** — the same move that armed recording in Section 1, but

because the deck is already running it now layers new sound onto the existing loop instead of replacing it. The deck starts to behave like a delay:

- **Feedback sets the decay:** tap `alt + mix` to set the overdub feedback — how quickly older layers fade as new ones arrive. High feedback piles layers up and lets them linger; lower feedback lets them decay, like an echo washing out.
- **Fixed loop, live playhead:** while overdubbing, the recorded loop stays at its original length — `pos`, `size`, and speed no longer move the recording head — but the playhead stays fully interactive, so your knob moves are audible yet non-destructive, never written into the loop.
- **The record head isn't bounded by `size`:** if you've shortened `size`, the loop plays only that window but the overdub still writes across the whole recording. Nothing you hear changes while it happens, so an overdub can seem to have done nothing and have worked perfectly. Turn `size` back up and listen through before you decide it failed.
- **Stopping an overdub:** tap `play` and the overdub ends with the loop still running forward; tap `reverse` and it ends running backward. Note the difference from ordinary playback, where tapping the pad that is already running stops the deck.
- **Slice overdub on an external MIDI clock:** the manual cautions that this may glitch, and recommends running *Spotykach* as the master clock where reliable slice overdubs matter.

NOTE

Overdub turns a deck into a conventional looper pedal. For that classic feel, set speed to centre (1x), `pos` and envelope to zero, and `size` to maximum — then each pass records cleanly over the last.

RESAMPLING — FOLDING ONE DECK INTO THE OTHER

Deck-to-deck resampling records the output of one deck straight into the other. On the deck you want to capture into, tap `alt + reverse` to record the other deck's output — its mode, shaping, pattern, and effects and all. **What you get depends on whether the capture deck is already playing:** into a stopped deck it arrives as a single fresh loop; **into a running deck it layers onto what is already there**, the same way an overdub does. Start and stop follow the recording rules you already know: the -40 dB threshold in reel and drift, quantized to the key beat in slice (Section 5).

This is how you commit a performance and keep going: layer and effect a loop on Deck A, resample it into Deck B as one new loop, then free Deck A to build the next part. You can even cross-record both directions at once — A into B and B into A — for a feedback interplay between the two decks.

NEXT

You can now build an arrangement from two decks. Next, **Putting It Together** walks the whole instrument end to end — one performance from first sound to two decks — to pull everything you've learned into a single flow.

— End of Section 9 — Two Decks Together —

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FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — SECTION 10

Putting It Together

Contents	One Performance, End to End · The Playground Mindset
Version	v1.0
Firmware	v1.2.0

Independent documentation for the Synthux Academy Spotykach. Not published by Synthux Academy.

You've met every part of the instrument. This last section doesn't add anything new — it walks the whole thing end to end, so the separate pieces settle into one flow you can reach for without thinking.

ONE PERFORMANCE, END TO END

Here is the arc of a single performance, each step something you already know how to do:

- **Sound:** feed the input and catch a loop in reel — arm with `alt + play`, play in, tap play to close it (Section 1).
- **Mode:** pick the lens the loop wants — reel for tape, slice for a sampler, drift for a granular cloud (Section 3).
- **Shape:** steer it with the large knob, pos, size, and the envelope, in whichever mode you chose (Section 4).
- **Time:** set a tempo and a key beat so the loop lands musically and trigger it with the pads or `gate in` (Section 5).
- **Pattern:** hand that triggering to the sequencer — record a 1/16 rhythm on the trig pad and let the deck play itself (Section 8).
- **Movement:** set an LFO or the envelope follower onto a parameter, or patch a source out into a CV in, so the sound evolves on its own (Section 6).
- **Effects:** hold `grit` or `flux` to colour it live — saturation, bit-crushing, tape delay — as a gesture, or latch either pad on for hands-free (Section 7).

- **Two decks:** build a second part on the other deck, balance them with the a/b crossfader, overdub for depth, and resample one into the other to commit it and keep going (Section 9).
- **Save your work:** keep a loop by writing it to the SD card — hold tap and tap play to enter card mode, pick a slot with the **large knob**, then tap alt + play to save (Section 4).

None of these is a fixed order. Some days you'll start from a loaded sample and a pattern; other days from a single live phrase you mangle past recognition. The point is that every control now has somewhere to land, because you know the one idea underneath them all: a deck is a loop with a playhead, and everything else shapes, moves, or feeds it.

THE PLAYGROUND MINDSET

One thing to carry with you: almost nothing you do here is saved. Your loops persist only when you deliberately write them to the SD card; the control positions, the patching, the mode you were in — all of it resets when the power cycles. That's by design. The memory holds the loops; the interface is the performance. Everything you do to a loop is a moment, not a setting.

So there's no wrong turn to undo and no state to protect. Loops become toys, gestures become games — stay with the sound and see what the next move does.

NEXT

That's the course. You can now reach for Spotykach with intent, from first sound to a two-deck arrangement. From here, **Part 2 — Reference** is lookup: when you want the exact range of a control, the full MIDI or SD detail, or a subsystem spelled out, it's there for the reader who already holds the model — which, now, is you.

— End of Section 10 — Putting It Together —

SPOTYKACH

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FIRST CONTACT GUIDE — ADDENDUM

Power & Firmware Update

Contents	Powering the Unit · What the First Twenty Seconds Look Like · Keeping Firmware Current · The Reset Button · If Something Goes Wrong
Version	v1.0
Firmware	v1.2.0

Independent documentation for the Synthux Academy Spotykach. Not published by Synthux Academy.

Section 1 sends you here before your first loop, and this is the whole of it: how to power the unit, and how to put current firmware on it. Neither takes long, and both are worth doing once properly rather than working around later. Nothing in this addendum is needed again until you update.

POWERING THE UNIT

There are two ways in, and either alone is enough:

- **USB-C:** any 5 V 1 A source — a phone charger, a powerbank, a computer. The unit draws little enough to run off a battery pack, which is most of what makes it portable.
- **15 V barrel:** a 15 V 1 A **centre-positive** supply on the rear. The barrel is 5.5 mm outside, 2.5 mm inside.

You can safely connect both at once; there's no switching to think about and nothing to damage.

NOTE

Powering from a computer's USB port can produce a high-pitched whine. That's a ground loop, not a fault. Run the unit from any separate USB adapter instead and it goes away.

There's no power switch. Spotykach starts the moment it has power, and stops when you take it away — which is also, in practice, how you clear the decks: **the buffers empty on a power cycle**, and nothing you've recorded survives unless you saved it to the SD card.

What the First Twenty Seconds Look Like

Startup takes about twenty seconds and shows you all of it, so a panel busy with light for a while is not a panel that is stuck. In order:

- Every LED fades up in white, starting at the top of the panel and travelling to the bottom.
- Both rings turn amber, briefly.
- Deck A's ring turns cyan and lights from the six o'clock position, moving clockwise. When it completes the circuit it changes to whatever colour that deck's mode switch is set to.
- Deck B immediately repeats the same pass.

When Deck B finishes, the unit is ready.

IMPORTANT

If you're using an SD card, **insert it before powering up**. Spotykach looks for the card at startup and won't see one added later.

KEEPING FIRMWARE CURRENT

Firmware on this instrument is under active development, and the printed quick manual that came in the box already lags what your unit does. Updating is a one-time job with no ongoing maintenance, and it's the difference between the documentation describing your instrument and describing a different one.

The process uses the USB-C connection and the rear **reset** button. Firmware images come from Synthux; check their firmware page for the current release and the install steps that go with it, since the procedure can change between versions.

FIRMWARE

This guide is written against **firmware v1.2.0**, verified on the unit. Where a source and this guide disagree, the guide follows what the hardware actually does — several claims in the printed manual describe earlier firmware and are no longer true of the shipping instrument.

THE RESET BUTTON

The small recessed button on the rear panel does two different jobs depending on how long you hold it:

- **Short press:** reboots the unit. Equivalent to a power cycle, and it clears the buffers the same way.
- **Long press:** puts the unit into firmware-update mode, ready to receive an image over USB-C.

You won't need it in normal playing. It's here so that you recognise it when the update instructions call for it.

IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG

A few things that look like faults and aren't:

- **A high-pitched whine on USB power** — a ground loop from the computer. Use a separate adapter.
- **No on/off switch** — there isn't one, and adding one would need a board redesign. A USB cable with an inline switch is the usual workaround.
- **The card isn't recognised** — it was probably inserted after power-up. Power down, insert, power up. Cards up to 32 GB formatted FAT32 are known good; larger may work but hasn't been tested.
- **Nothing records** — this is almost never a power problem. Bring mix down so you can hear the input, and give the source more level; in reel and drift, recording won't start until the signal crosses the -40 dB threshold.

— End of Addendum — Power & Firmware Update —