NORN

MANUAL



Three cards from a deck of thirty, three strange effects in a row

Plip Plop Studio · version 0.1

Norn is a stereo effect that deals cards. It draws three from a deck of thirty, each card an effect of its own, and plays the three in a row. It comes as a VST3 and CLAP plug-in for Windows and macOS, an Audio Unit for macOS, and a Max for Live device for Ableton Live.

1. Insert Norn as an effect on a track or a return: drums, a guitar, a synth, a voice.

2. A fresh Norn has three cards face down and lets your sound through untouched.

3. Click the die in the top right corner. Three cards come down one after another, from left to right, and the sound changes as each one lands.

4. Drag a card up for more of its effect, down for less.

5. Roll again for a new chain. Save your project and the three cards stay, with their settings and Mix.



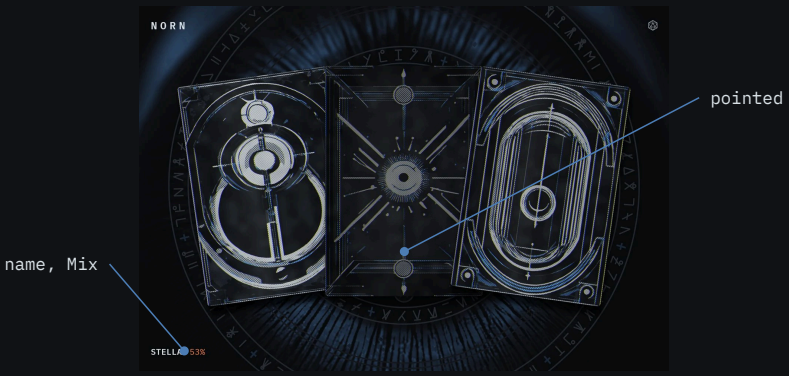
Three cards in a fan over a faint summoning circle, drawn on a dark eye: the black under the cards is its pupil, and the two rings of letters turn slowly. Each card is one place of the chain: the first on the left, the third on the right.

Playing it

Drag a card up or down to change its Mix, with Shift for fine moves. The mouse wheel steps it, a double click brings it back to 70%. The further down a card goes, the darker it gets, until at 0% it is all but black. Click the die to draw.

Reading it

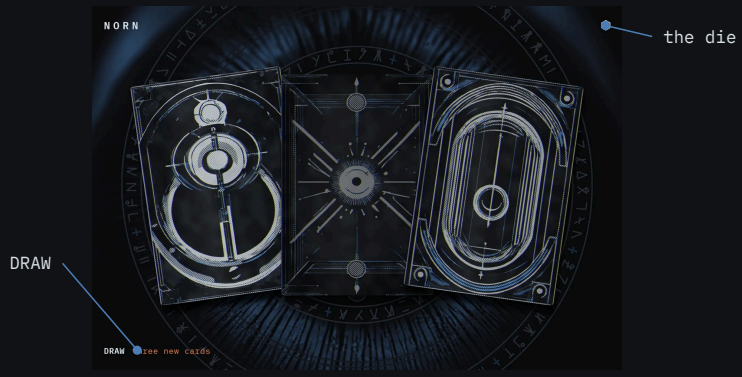
Point at a card and it grows a little, while its name and Mix show in the status bar at the bottom. Point at the die and the bar says DRAW.



Version and size

Click NORN at the top left for the version, the formats and the date of the build; click again, click outside or press Esc to close it. Drag the edge of the plug-in window in your DAW to resize it from 1× to 4×; the size is saved with the project.

Every roll deals all three places anew; there is no lock. A fuse runs round each card from the bottom, and where its two flames meet the card lands: the left one first, then the middle and the right, a fifth of a second apart. The sound changes with the picture.



What comes with a card

Its Mix: one card of the three comes in faint (about 17%), one at about half (53%) and one strong (84%), each a few per cent either way, in a different order every time. And its two hidden settings, A and B, anywhere between 0 and 100%, so the same card rarely sounds the same twice.

Choosing a card yourself

The die never asks. To put a card of your choice in a place, set the parameter Card 1, 2 or 3 in your DAW; the window shows it at once.

No cards



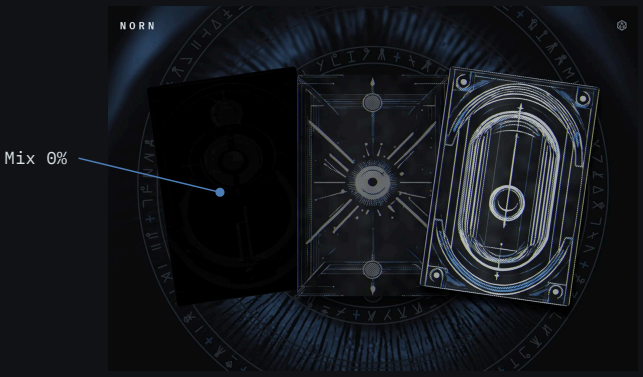
A new Norn starts with its three places empty, cards face down: the sound passes untouched until the first roll. Only cards saved in a project load with it.

Thirty cards: twenty-two Major Arcana, four Aces and four Knights, each an effect of its own. Halls and dark distances, echoes that answer and echoes that sail away, time that stops, turns back or climbs for ever, sound that multiplies, crumbles or burns.

Each card has a Latin name, shown in the status bar when you point at it. Which card does what, this manual does not say: you find out at the table, three cards at a time. Some cards follow the tempo and the beat of your song.

The pictures are the deck's own, drawn for Norn: one symbol on every card, no figures, no words.

And every card keeps one secret of its own. What it is, this manual will not tell you either.



Each card has its own Mix, from your dry sound to its effect alone. The three play in a row: the second card hears what the first made of your sound, the third hears both.

Each card

A limiter a little above the loudest moment of what the card hears, remembered for about two seconds, lets its tails and echoes live while nothing jumps out. A card that plays louder than what came in is slowly turned down, never up.

The whole chain

At the output a limiter keeps the sum just under full scale, whatever three cards are on the table.

No clicks

A new card fades in as the old one fades out. Every place keeps the last eleven seconds of what it heard, so a new card plays from its first moment, even with the bar that has just gone by.

Thirteen parameters for your DAW: per place Card, Mix and the two hidden settings, and Draw. All of them can be automated.



DRAW

click

The die. A click deals three new cards, with their Mix and their two hidden settings. From your DAW the parameter Draw does the same when it goes from off to on, also with the window closed.



CARD 1–3

— or one of 30

Which card lies in each place, or none (—). The die sets them; from your DAW you can also pick a card yourself, by name. An empty place lets the sound through untouched.



MIX 1–3

0–100%

Each card's dry sound against its effect, in the window by dragging the card up or down. A double click brings it back to 70%.



PARAM A 1–3

0–100%

The first of a card's two hidden settings, dealt with the card. What it changes depends on the card.



PARAM B 1–3

0–100%

The second hidden setting. Automate A and B slowly and the same card wanders through its own sounds.

Automate the fate: map Draw to a button or a pad and let the deck deal a new chain at the start of every section, or write Draw into an automation lane. The draw happens in Norn itself, so it works with the window closed.

Automate a card's Mix for it to come and go, or switch cards by automating Card 1–3. A project keeps its cards, their Mix and their hidden settings.

Norn in Ableton Live

The Max for Live device holds the same deck and the same sound in a smaller window: three cards in a fan, the die in a square on the right. Point at a card and it comes to the front, with its name and Mix on a small badge.

After the device opens, it prepares the rest of the deck in the background: the die's badge counts CARDS up to 30 and a thin bar runs along the bottom. The cards of your set and the ones you draw play at once.

Live shows seven parameters, Card 1–3, Mix 1–3 and Draw: map them, automate them, put them in a rack's macros. The hidden settings are saved with the set.

Norn comes as a ZIP with VST3 and CLAP for 64-bit Windows, VST3, AU and CLAP for macOS 10.15 or later (Apple Silicon and Intel) and the Max for Live device Norn.amxd. Extract it first and close your DAW.

Plug-in

1. Windows: copy the folder Norn.vst3 into C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3 and the file Norn.clap into C:\Program Files\Common Files\CLAP.

2. macOS: copy Norn.vst3, Norn.component (the AU) and Norn.clap into the VST3, Components and CLAP folders of Library/Audio/Plug-Ins in your home folder.

3. Open the DAW and rescan plug-ins: Norn is listed under Plip Plop, Fx.

Max for Live

The device needs Live 12 Suite, or Live 12 Standard with Max for Live, on Windows or macOS: Norn.amxd is the same file for both.

1. Copy Norn.amxd into your User Library, for example into Presets/Audio Effects/Max Audio Effect/Plip Plop. The library is Documents/Ableton/User Library on Windows and Music/Ableton/User Library on macOS, unless Live's Settings, under Library, say otherwise.

2. Live lists Norn in the browser under User Library: drag it onto a track or a return.

To update, close the DAW and replace the files; to uninstall, delete them. An update keeps the cards saved in your projects and sets.

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Studio	Plip Plop
Website	plipplop.studio
Version	0.1 · VST3, AU and CLAP, Windows and macOS · Max for Live, Live 12
Built with	JUCE, Max 9

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