

SPLITFIRE

RUBATO · Getting Started

A slice-and-loop performance sampler for Reason. Record audio, slice it, and play it back through three pitch engines with looping, stutter and tape character.



The Rubato front panel.

This quick-start gets you from an empty rack to your first sliced loop in a couple of minutes. For the complete control reference, see the **Rubato Operation Manual**.

What Rubato does

Rubato captures audio into an internal buffer, finds the transients so the recording is split into **slices**, then lets you play that material from a MIDI keyboard or the sequencer. The same buffer can be played two ways:

- **Pitch mode** — the whole recording is treated as one instrument and transposed across the keyboard, like a sampler patch.
- **Slice mode** — each key (or a CV) selects an individual slice, so you can re-sequence a loop, finger-drum hits, or scrub through it live.

On top of that sit a flexible looper (plain loop or seamless crossfade loop), a rhythmic **stutter** engine, tape-style **Drag / Wow** character, an amp envelope and a multimode filter. Three **pitch engines** — Tape, Time and Pro — trade CPU for fidelity when you transpose or time-stretch.

The three-step workflow

Almost everything in Rubato follows the same order:

<p>1 RECORD</p> <p>Arm REC, set a length, capture audio into the buffer.</p>	<p>2 SLICE</p> <p>Transient detection divides the take into playable slices.</p>	<p>3 PLAY</p> <p>Trigger it in Pitch or Slice mode and shape it with the controls.</p>
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Make your first sliced loop

You'll need an audio source feeding Rubato's inputs — a drum loop from a player device or another instrument works well. On the back of the unit, patch a stereo signal into **IN L/R**.

1. Set **LENGTH** to the number of bars you want to capture (e.g. 4/4 for one bar, or a longer value for a phrase). The display shows the current length.
2. Click **REC**. Recording is armed; if Record Quantize (**REC Q**) is on, capture starts on the next bar so it lands in time. The **IN/REC** indicator lights while audio is coming in.
3. Play your source. Rubato records into the buffer and stops automatically when the **LENGTH** is reached. The waveform appears in the display with slice markers.
4. Press **PLAY** to choose Pitch or Slice mode, and engage **SLICE** to work with the detected slices. Turn **TRANS** to taste — higher sensitivity finds more transients and creates more slices.
5. Play notes on your keyboard. In Slice mode, walking up the keys steps through the slices from your **ROOT** note upward; in Pitch mode the keys transpose the whole take.
6. Set **MODE** (loop) to **Loop** and hold a note — the slice repeats. Switch to **Loop X-Fade** and raise the loop **XFADE** knob for a seamless sustained loop.
7. Not happy with the take? **UNDO** reverts the last recording; **CLR** empties the buffer so you can start again.

Tip — instant rhythmic variations

Once you have slices, tap the **STUTTER** button while a note plays and turn **RATE**: Rubato re-triggers a small window of the slice for roll/glitch effects. **WIN** sets how big that window is.

Reading the display

The central screen shows the recorded waveform with coloured markers — **green** for the play-region start, **red** for the live playhead, and **amber** for the end. Below it, two status lines summarise the current state:

Display field	Meaning
READY / REC	Recorder state — idle, armed, or capturing.
PITCH / SLICE	Active play mode.
TAPE / TIME / PRO	Which pitch engine is selected.
LOOP / 1-SHOT / XFADE	Loop mode at the right edge of the top line.
POLY / MONO	Voice mode.
FIX / RT	Performance mode — fixed, or real-time follow.
10/4, FWD, X1.0	Record length, direction and playback speed.
RT · SNAP · QNT	Loop-length real-time, snap, and quantize toggles.

Essential controls at a glance

Control	What it does
START / END	Trim the played region inside the buffer.
ROOT	The key that plays the material at its original pitch.
SPEED / DIR	Playback rate and forward/reverse.
LEN / MODE / XFADE	Loop length, loop behaviour, and crossfade amount.
DRAG / WOW	Tape-style pitch drift and wow/flutter character.
ATTACK / REL	Amp envelope; CUTOFF / RESO / TYPE shape the filter.
VOL	Output level.

Where to next

That's the whole loop: record, slice, play, shape. The **Operation Manual** covers every control in detail — the three pitch engines, voice modes, the full looper and stutter engines, character and filter sections, and the complete CV / Gate and Combinator automation list on the back panel.