

No Stairway

A neural amp modeling console for guitar and bass — load any Neural Amp Modeler capture, drop tune on the fly, and shape it through modeled cabs and a tone stack, all in one plugin.

Formats • AU, VST3 (macOS) Version • 2.0 Manufacturer • Smash Happy Audio

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What No Stairway is for

No Stairway is a complete amp console built around Neural Amp Modeler (NAM) capture technology — load any NAM capture and it becomes your amp block, with modeled cabs, a tone stack, drop tuning, and a noise gate wrapped around it. Guitar and Bass each get their own dedicated page, since a bass signal chain needs a genuinely different topology, not just a different EQ curve on the same guitar path.

Guitar & Bass pages

GUITAR

Your NAM capture drives modeled guitar cabs (or a loaded user impulse response) into a tone stack EQ — a single, full-range amp path.

BASS

A two-way split: a clean low band (simple one-knob compression and level, latency-matched to stay in time with the modeled path) runs in parallel with a high band through its own NAM capture into bass-specific cabs and EQ — so the fundamental stays clean while the amp character lives in the highs.

Switch pages from the header; each page keeps its own loaded capture, cab, and EQ settings independently.

Tuner, Drop & Gate

A built-in tuner sits at the front of the chain on both pages. **Drop** retunes your signal on the fly — play in standard and let Drop deliver a lower tuning without physically retuning your instrument; the tuner still reads your input's real pitch, not the shifted output. **Gate**, with a **Tight** control for how aggressively it clamps down, keeps noise and hum out of the signal before it hits the amp model.

The amp block

Load any Neural Amp Modeler capture with **LOAD**, or step through your library with the prev/next arrows. **Gain** and **Master** control drive into the model and final output level — on captures that support it, Gain becomes a genuine playing-dynamics condition rather than a simple pre-gain trim, and the amp display shows which mode a loaded capture supports. A **Quality** switch (Eco/Full) trades a touch of modeling fidelity for lower CPU load on capable captures.

Cab & tone stack

Choose a modeled cabinet — Modern 4x12, Brit 2x12, Tweed 1x12 — or load your own impulse response as a User IR. **Cab Blend** mixes the cab into the signal; at 0% the amp runs Direct, completely bypassing cab modeling. A five-band EQ (100/400/800/2k/4k, ± 12 dB) shapes the final tone.

TONE3000 & My Tones

Press **TONES** to open the built-in TONE3000 browser and search, favourite, and download NAM captures without leaving the plugin. Everything you download lands in your local **My Tones** library, which the amp panel's prev/next arrows cycle through alongside anything you've added manually.

Presets

Five starting points — Clean, Crunch, Lead, Modern Metal, DI Direct — set the console's knob state (the amp's actual tone still comes from whatever capture is loaded). Save your own full presets to build a personal library on top of them.

Specifications

Formats	Audio Unit, VST3
Platform	macOS, Apple Silicon
Amp modeling	Neural Amp Modeler (NAM), dual-mono, any compatible capture
Pages	Guitar (single-path), Bass (dual-band split)
Cabs	Modern 4x12, Brit 2x12, Tweed 1x12, User IR, Direct
EQ	5-band, 100/400/800/2k/4k Hz, ± 12 dB
Tone browser	Built-in TONE3000 search, favourites, and download
Channel configuration	Mono or stereo in / stereo out

Troubleshooting

A TONE3000 capture I downloaded won't load

Check the download actually landed in your Models folder — the prev/next arrows and the TONES browser both read from the same location, so if it's not showing up there, retry the download from the browser.

The tuner reads the wrong note after engaging Drop

That's expected — Drop retunes the output, but the tuner deliberately reads your actual input pitch so you can still tune your instrument normally while Drop is engaged.

Gain behaves differently between two captures

Some NAM captures support playing-dynamics conditioning on the Gain control (the amp display shows "GAIN: A2 CONDITION"); others only support Gain as a simple pre-model drive ("GAIN: DRIVE"). Check the capability chip on the loaded capture's display to see which mode you're in.

CPU usage is higher than expected

Switch Quality to Eco on captures that support it — it's shown as an enabled option only when the loaded capture actually supports the lower-cost mode.