

**WHAT IS IT?**

Filter and distortion plug-in with extensive modulation set-up

**CONTACT**

Who: Sugar Bytes  
Web: [www.sugar-bytes.de](http://www.sugar-bytes.de)

**HIGHLIGHTS**

- 1 Sounds... WOW
- 2 Flexible modulation
- 3 Great interface

**PRICING**

Upgrade from WOW1  
**49 euros**



# Sugar Bytes WOW2 | €99

Does version 2 of this much-loved filter and distortion plug-in add enough to justify an upgrade? **Ronan Macdonald** brings the wobble

**SPECS**

**System Requirements**  
**PC:** Windows XP/Vista/7 (32/64-bit), 1GHz CPU, 512MB RAM, VST/RTAS/AAx host  
**Mac:** OS X 10.4+ (32/64-bit), 1GHz CPU, 512MB RAM, VST/AU/RTAS/AAx host

**T**he most obvious area in which Sugar Bytes' WOW2 improves on its predecessor is with the interface. It's been given a

concise, contemporary appearance, with the preset browser permanently open on the left (the option to hide it would be good) and smoothly animated graphics in the centre of each knob for real-time visual feedback on parameter changes. It looks fantastic.

The number of filter types has been boosted from ten to 22. 16 of these are high-, low- and band-pass models, while the other six comprise the 'Special' category, including Comb, Notch and Band Reject. The low-pass set is particularly impressive, with slopes ranging from 12dB/octave up to a razor-sharp 48dB/octave, and various implied classics are represented, including the Moog ladder filter and Korg MS-20. WOW1's dual vowel filter

is still in place, enabling you to mix between two vowel shapes.

The filter itself sounds superb, delivering everything from smooth, gentle shaping to sharp, aggressive frequency mashing. But it isn't the only weapon in WOW2's arsenal: the revamped Drive section (placeable pre- or post-filter) now offers three analogue overdrive algorithms and four digital distortions, ranging in tone from rich, warm and fizzy to harsh, edgy and aggressive. WOW's ever-present top-end attenuation has carried through to this version: even in high-pass mode, it still slices off the extreme highs – an opacity making it unsuitable for surgical work.

**Wobble heads**

WOW2's modulation system is slick and flexible, with four modulators. The first is an envelope follower with an input frequency filter and adjustable Attack

and Decay times. Then an LFO pumps out a wide range of waveshapes (including random), host-syncable from 4/1 up to 1/192, with the option to have the transients in the audio input retrigger the cycle. The 16-step step sequencer also syncs up to 1/192, can be set to progress forwards, backwards, back and forth or randomly, and enables glide to be applied between selected steps. The final modulator is the wobble generator, as also found in Sugar Bytes' Cyclop synth. This is an LFO divided up into 12 segments arranged around a central knob. Each successive segment increases the LFO rate from 2/1 to 1/48 and hosts its own waveform, chosen from a list of 16. By assigning different waveforms to each LFO rate and flinging the knob (and accompanying Phase slider) around, you can create spectacularly complex modulations.

Assigning modulation sources is done using the controls below each modulator in the bottom panel, or by right-clicking any knob or slider to bring up a series of mod depth controls for that parameter. Targets include all five main controls, as well as the two vowel selectors and all other modulator controls – everything, basically.

WOW2 is a marked improvement on the already excellent WOW, primarily due to the added filter types and wobble generator, but also the GUI, which packs an incredible amount of control into a very small space. It's easy to use, sounds amazing, and the preset library gives a wealth of inspirational starting points. There are also some randomising laffs to be had, from the random preset selector to the randomise sequence/waves buttons in the step sequencer and wobble generator which, amusingly, can be assigned as modulation targets. There are cheaper, more feature-packed and higher-precision filter plug-ins, but WOW2 has a wild, upfront sound all of its own, and a particularly pacy, creative workflow. WOW indeed. **FM**

**FutureMusic VERDICT**

**STABILITY** [Progress bar: 10/10]

**VALUE** [Progress bar: 8/10]

**EASE OF USE** [Progress bar: 9/10]

**VERSATILITY** [Progress bar: 9/10]

**RESULTS** [Progress bar: 10/10]

**Enough of a progression to warrant upgrading. A lively addition to any electronic producer's plug-in folder.**