

Silver Apple

Oscillation Fuzz

First, I would like to thank you very much for your purchase. Shoe is a small single person operation and every sale is highly valued. It is my goal to provide products that are as versatile as possible while retaining a user-friendly interface. Since I am currently building most effects to order (and all of them by hand) you will likely have had the opportunity to select from different features that appeal personally to you and your musical needs. This manual covers the most common of those options and may continue to grow as others are developed both through research and in concert with the musicians who use Shoe pedals.

THE BASICS

The Silver Apple belongs to the category of fuzzes referred to as "oscillating fuzz." If you have used one before, you may find the controls to be familiar in function (though no other oscillating fuzz of which I am aware is tuned quite like the Silver Apple). The interface is aimed at providing only the most useful ranges of control and, as such, is more forgiving than some other fuzzes of this type. Typically, it also utilizes a mixture of Germanium and Silicon transistors that provide a good balance of smoother tonality and stability. Other transistor options are, of course, available if specified and your Silver Apple may use other transistor types if requested. All versions of the Silver Apple, however, are capable of familiar classic fuzz tones, wild self-oscillation, singing leads, gated synth-like sounds, and glitchy game-like effects.

POWER: The Silver Apple is an NPN device, which means that it uses a standard boss-type power supply with negative center polarity. You may safely operate the Silver Apple up to 18 volts. Lower voltage supplies will typically result in a softer tone while higher voltages between 12-18 volts will tend to produce a tighter, punchier sound. The Silver Apple is optimized to work with a common 9 volt adaptor, so the controls will react somewhat differently if you raise or lower the voltage of the pedal and you will likely need to adjust your settings. You should always use a well-regulated supply to reduce any unwanted noise. I have had very good luck with Fulltone Noise-Free supplies but a typical One-Spot or regulated Boss-type adaptor should also work well.

Please note that the Silver Apple (like every Shoe pedal except under special circumstances) does not use batteries. Therefore, there are no user-serviceable parts inside the enclosure. If your pedal ever develops a problem in its operation, please contact me at shoepedals@gmail.com and arrange a repair.

CONTROLS

LVL: This is a control familiar to any pedal-user. Quite simply it sets the output level of the fuzz. The Silver Apple is quite loud at maximum volume with no diode clipping engaged, so you should start from the minimum (full counter-clockwise position) and adjust to taste. For live use you may want to use higher output levels than at home.

GAIN: This knob controls the overall fuzz saturation of the pedal. It is normal for this knob to crackle as the transistor it controls re-biases itself. On the minimum setting you will still achieve an overdriven or fuzzy sound depending on your settings, but you will also have a less compressed sound. It is recommended to start at the minimum gain setting and work your way up to the level of fuzz you desire. On the maximum setting you will achieve extremely fuzzy, distorted, and wild noisy sounds. Personally, I set this knob somewhere in the middle for my own use.

TUNE: This knob is active only in "ALL NOISE" mode. It is used to tune the pitch of the pedal's self-oscillations. You may tune to a specific note (say, in the key of the song you are playing) or simply set it to create siren-like stabs of noise. At the fully clockwise setting, you will actually achieve no oscillation in ALL noise mode and you may use this as a way of getting to a second more open fuzz setting. As you turn the knob to the left, oscillations will appear and their pitch will drop as you continue to turn towards the counter-clockwise position.

NOISE/MORE NOISE: If your pedal has both of these knobs, they will both share a function but will operate in different ranges. NOISE stands for NOISE GATE. As you adjust this knob towards the right, you will cut off more and more background noise and you can also stop the pedal from self-oscillating while you are not playing any notes. You will also achieve more gated and compressed sounds as you turn this knob up, creating staccato notes, pinched sounds, and synth-like fuzz. As a starting point, when tuning the pedal, start with the VOLT knob all the way clockwise and the NOISE knob all the way counter-clockwise. In order to achieve noise-free sounds (which do not oscillate or produce noise when you are not playing) you should turn the knobs in opposite directions to one another. That is, as you lower the VOLT knob, you should raise the NOISE knob's value until it cuts off the oscillations you have introduced. Then you can reproduce that sound but it will be triggered only when you play. If you desire full-on wild oscillations, simply turn the NOISE knob all the way to the left. Your Silver Apple has bleed through protection switching so when you bypass the pedal it will stop oscillating and you will not hear any noise as is sometimes the case in other oscillating fuzzes.

MORE NOISE has the same basic effect as NOISE, but is a fine gate control. If your Silver Apple has this feature, I would recommend setting it in the middle of its sweep, adjust the NOISE knob so that you hear a bit of background noise or oscillation coming through and then use the MORE NOISE knob to dial in the most sensitive gate action to maximize sustain and pick response.

VOLT: This is the heart of the Silver Apple's sound. It acts exactly as the TUNE knob does in ALL NOISE mode, but is active by default rather than when the ALL NOISE switch is depressed. In ALL NOISE mode the VOLT and NOISE knobs are bypassed, so you should adjust them in the standard mode.

VOLT is a precisely-tuned voltage/current reduction control. With VOLT at its maximum level, the pedal will not oscillate. As you turn the knob counter-clockwise, the current (and voltage) going to the pedal are reduced and the fuzz will begin to produce self-oscillation. This can produce a wide range of textures and tonalities unachievable by any other means. In general, the farther clockwise you turn the VOLT knob, the glitchier, less stable, and darker the sound will become. Adjust the NOISE knob in conjunction with VOLT to achieve a wide variety of fuzz sounds from classic rock fuzz, to sitar textures, to all out madness.

ALL NOISE (Footswitch): This is a feature unique to the Silver Apple (as far as I know, anyway). In the standard version, ALL NOISE is a momentary footswitch that bypasses the normal VOLT and NOISE controls while simultaneously engaging the TUNE knob and activating full oscillation. Hence, ALL NOISE. This means you are able to activate a preset oscillation at will as long as you hold your foot on switch. When you release the switch, you will instantly return to the setting you have dialed in on the NOISE and VOLT knobs. This is useful for accentuating certain passages in a lead, instantly switching to thick distorted sounds during chords you would like to imbue with huge destructive sustain and also can be played as an instrument of its own, interjecting siren-like screeches and analog synth stabs (which works very well in conjunction with delay and reverb pedals, by the way). You may also play the pedal itself this way by using the tune knob to manually change the oscillation pitch and pressing the ALL NOISE switch with your other hand to turn the note on and off. Alternatively, this is also available as a latching switch so that you can use ALL NOISE mode as a sort of preset. Have fun and experiment with your new instrument/effect!

BYSPASS (Footswitch): Turns the pedal on or off. All Shoe pedals use a True Bypass switching system.

Other Optional Controls

CLIP IT: This is a popular alternate option that can be requested as a replacement to the MORE NOISE or GAIN knobs. CLIP IT is a three-way selector switch that allows you to introduce distortion-style breakup into the Silver Apple's fuzz tones. In the center position, CLIP IT bypasses the clipping section and you have the standard Silver Apple sound. The other two positions can be occupied by any of the following clipping options. It should be noted that any clipping section will also reduce the output of the effect. This is not much of a problem with the Silver Apple as it has plenty of volume on tap to make up for the difference, but be prepared to readjust the LVL knob when clipping is engaged.

ASYMMETRICAL: This is my standard clipping section. It consists of one silicon diode and one Green LED. This produces a natural mild breakup sound and can soften the pedal's sound.

SYMMETRICAL SILICON: This uses two matching silicon diodes to clip the signal. This is the method used in many popular distortion pedals and gives a grittier more compressed sound useful for many styles of music.

SYMMETRICAL GERMANIUM: This option produces a lower-fidelity distortion that can range from very smooth to nasal and nasty. This is the clipping method used in many vintage distortion devices and is useful for older-type distortion and drive sounds, especially on lower gain settings.

NOTE: Clipping modes (especially symmetrical germanium) will also affect the way the pedal oscillates, so you should re-adjust the voltage and noise knobs to taste if you switch clipping modes.

TONE: Tone controls are also available on the Silver Apple. These can either be a simple low pass filter (like a guitar tone control) or something in the style of a "muff-type" tone stack.

VOLT EXP.: This option allows you to use an expression pedal to control the VOLT parameter.

LOW CUT: This switch reduces the pedal's bass response when activated, producing a more nasal sound good for vintage fuzz sounds and cutting leads.

OCTAVE: It is possible to have an octave fuzz effect (like the one used in the Frog Octave) built into your Silver Apple at additional cost. This switch would activate that effect and could take the place of either the GAIN of MORE NOISE knob. Additionally, it could replace the ALL NOISE footswitch as either a momentary or latching effect if you wish to use this feature instead of ALL NOISE mode.

PEP TALK

This is a lot to take in at once, but don't worry. Shoe pedals are designed with the idea of turning your guitar or bass into another sort of instrument, so keep this in mind. All pedals should be treated as new instruments and you may need to adjust your playing style to fully realize their potential. After playing with all the knobs and using this guide as a reference, you should be able to master the basic operation of the Silver Apple in a relatively short period of time. Have fun!

CJM Venter