

Doepfer — A-140

- [Manual PDF](#)
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[Doepfer A-140 ADSR Manual \(PDF\)](#)

Creative Uses of the Doepfer A-140 ADSR

The A-140 is a classic envelope generator, but its feature set and flexibility open it up to far more than just shaping amplitude. Here are some creative patch ideas and modular pairings—ranging from standard to experimental—based on the controls and features described in your manual.

1. Drum and Percussive Patch Tweaker

Modules:

- VCO (e.g., Doepfer A-110, Make Noise STO)
- VCA (e.g., Intellijel Quad VCA)
- LPG (e.g., Make Noise Optomix)

Patch Idea:

Use the A-140's fast attack/decay and short release (set Time Range to 'L') to sculpt snappy envelopes for drums or percussion. Mult the envelope output:

- One goes to VCA for volume shaping. - The other (perhaps through a level scaler/attenuator) goes to LPG CV or even directly to the VCO PWM input for subtle timbral 'thwack.'
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2. Negative Envelope Modulation

Modules:

- Any VCO/VCF/VCA with CV input
- Mixer/attenuverter for blending

Patch Idea:

Use the **Inverse Output** to create 'reverse' envelope paths. Patch this to pitch or filter CVs for pitch drops, inverse filter sweeps, or gating against other modulations. Mix with the standard envelope for complex, unusual shapes.

3. Envelope Re-Triggering: Pseudo-LFO

Modules:

- LFO (with square or pulse output; e.g., Doepfer A-145)
- Sequencer with trigger out (e.g., Make Noise Pressure Points, Arturia BeatStep Pro)

Patch Idea:

Send a slow, repeating gate to the A-140's **Gate input**. Use a faster clock or LFO to the **Retrig** jack; this will re-trigger the envelope while the main gate stays high. The result is a clustered, multi-peaked envelope—perfect for trills, tremolos, or rhythmic filter effects.

4. Dual Peak/Cliff Envelopes

Modules:

- Stackcables/mults
- Any module requiring dynamic CV

Patch Idea:

Split the envelope into two destinations, but run one through a CV inverter or attenuverter, or use the built-in Inverse Output. Then, send these two shapes to two different parameters (e.g., filter cutoff and resonance, or FM

amount and VCA). They'll move in opposite directions, creating dramatically evolving tones.

5. Self-Patching for Envelope Shaping

Modules:

- CV mixer, stackable cables

Patch Idea:

Patch the Inverse Output of the A-140 back to an attenuverter, then into its own Decay or Release CV (with an external utility module). This allows for voltage-controlled envelope stages—making the A-140 a pseudo-complex envelope source.

6. Complex Sound Design: AM/FM & PWM Animation

Modules:

- Multiple A-140s
- Two VCOs
- VCF
- Audio/CV mixers

Patch Idea:

Use one A-140 as a classic envelope and a second (or a different modulation envelope, e.g., A-141) to animate VCO FM amount, pitch, PWM, or even VCF resonance simultaneously. Cross-patch inverted/normal envelopes for evolving, life-like textures—especially useful in pads, industrial, or cinematic patches.

7. Slow Automation / Macro Moves

Modules:

- Any slow LFO or sequencer
- Polarizer/attenuverter

Patch Idea:

With the A-140's Time Range set to 'H' (high, up to minutes), use the envelope as a one-shot slow automation source to sweep parameters over long timescales: gentle filter fades, evolving wavefolder depths, sweeping reverb sends, or even gradual crossfades between timbres.

8. Triggered Slew/Lag Effects

Modules:

- Slew limiter/portamento (like Doepfer A-170)
- Random or stepped CV source

Patch Idea:

Feed gates or random triggers to the Gate input. Use the resulting envelope to modulate a slew limiter's rate or as a CV source to smooth/shape random voltages, mimicking organic attack/decay gestures in your modulations.

Bonus: Envelope Following

While the A-140 doesn't act as an envelope follower, you can trigger it with audio-rate gates (via comparators or external processing) to generate stepped audio-controlled modulation, effectively 'following' the contour of the input signal in discrete steps.

More Inspiration

- **Pair with a S&H (Sample & Hold):** Envelope gating S&H clock for rhythmically-synced random voltages.

- **ADSR Sculpts Effects CVs:** Shape delay/verb send, wavefolder CV, or granular density for expressive/morphing responses.
 - **Patch to Non-Traditional Places:** Use the envelope to modulate sequencer rate, bitcrushers, or even video synth modules.
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