

Shark Optical

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Shark Optical?

An optical-inspired compressor for smooth level control on vocals, bass, guitars, keys and groups. Its two main controls are Peak Reduction and Gain; a program-dependent recovery gives sustained material a gradual return.

How do I get started?

Load Init - Clean Start. Leave Mix at 100%, Output Trim at 0 dB and Stereo Link on. Raise Peak Reduction until the GR meter shows useful movement, then adjust Gain to compare at a similar level. Around 2-5 dB of gain reduction is a useful listening starting point, not a rule.

Does Gain drive the compressor harder?

No. Gain is after the compression detector. Peak Reduction controls the amount of compression. Gain 50 is unity; its 0-100 scale maps to -40 to +40 dB.

What is the difference between Compress and Limit?

Compress uses a soft-knee response with an approximately 3:1 ratio. Limit increases the ratio to approximately 20:1. Limit is a firmer dynamics mode, not a brickwall or true-peak limiter.

Everyday workflow

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What does HF Emphasis change?

Fully clockwise, FLAT, gives the detector a full-band signal. Turning counter-clockwise reduces bass influence so higher-frequency energy has more relative influence. This changes detection; it does not directly equalize the audio.

How do Mix, Gain Match and Stereo Link work?

Mix blends dry and compressed audio. Gain Match slowly compares RMS levels and compensates after the blend; allow it a few seconds to settle. Stereo Link makes both channels follow the louder detector. Switch it off for independent left/right compression.

What presets and comparison tools are included?

There are 60 factory entries, including Init, START HERE, instrument groups and the Pro Engineer Presets section. Compare A/B/C slots, use undo/redo, mark favorites and save user presets. Named banks are preset labels, not claims of third-party endorsement.

Which formats and setup does this version support?

The project targets macOS 12 or later and AU/VST3 in mono or stereo. It has no MIDI requirement and reports zero processing latency. Use a compatible installed build in your DAW; source ZIPs must be built first. This guide does not claim Windows, AAX or universal-binary certification.