



The whole channel, one plugin.

A console-style channel strip: input & phase, high/low filters, a four-band EQ, and a compressor and gate/expander sharing one dynamics section, plus a global sidechain and output trim. Live EQ, compressor and gate graphs. Work in linked **Stereo**, or split into two independent lanes with **Left/Right** and **Mid/Side**.



FOUR-BAND EQ

COMPRESSOR + GATE/EXPANDER

STEREO / L-R / M-S

INTERNAL + EXTERNAL SIDECHAIN

VST3 / CLAP

THE STRIP IN 60 SECONDS

1 SET THE LEVEL

Insert on a channel. Set **INPUT GAIN** so the signal drives the strip sensibly, and check **PHASE** when combining mics.

2 SHAPE & CONTROL

Turn on **EQ ON** and shape the four bands; turn on **COMP ON** for dynamics and dial **THRESHOLD / RATIO**; add **GATE ON** to clean the gaps.

3 MATCH & COMPARE

Set **OUTPUT GAIN** to match bypass, then A/B or bypass to check — louder is not the same as better.

Starting from Init, the processing is off. EQ, the dynamics block, and the filter destinations all start disabled — enable each block you want (EQ ON, COMP ON, GATE ON) or load a factory preset to hear something immediately.

01. FIRST MOVE

1 PICK A PRESET

Click the preset name in the header to open the browser. **61 factory presets** cover vocals, guitars, bass, drums and buses — a fast starting point.

2 FILTERS FIRST

Sweep **LO CUT** up to clear rumble and **HI CUT** down to tame fizz. Enable **FILTERS TO INPUT** so the cuts reach the audio.

3 THEN TONE + DYNAMICS

Shape with the EQ, control with the compressor, clean with the gate, and finish with OUTPUT GAIN.

02. ANATOMY AT A GLANCE

HEADER

Power, INIT, preset selector, undo/redo, A/B, copy/paste, menu. Trial chip by the title until activated.

CHARTS

Live EQ curve (with draggable band nodes), plus compressor and gate transfer graphs, and a per-lane meter rail.

ROUTING BAND

Link, Mid/Side, lane selector, and the **EQ → DYN** order toggle.

CONTROL STRIP

INPUT, FILTERS, EQ, COMP, GATE, GLOBAL, OUTPUT panels, left to right.

GLOBAL

Plugin-wide sidechain: **EXT SC** (external key) and **LISTEN** (monitor the key).

FOOTER

Processing rate (1x), latency (0 ms), sample rate, IN/OUT meters, output mode, CPU, version.

03. THE SIGNAL ORDER

Input → Filters → EQ → Dynamics → Output. The **EQ → DYN** toggle in the routing band swaps the whole tone block (filters + EQ) with the dynamics, so you can compress or gate *before* tone-shaping instead of after. The chart parts reorder to match, so what you see follows what you hear.

04. FILTERS & EQ

EQ: SC / TIGHT / BROAD / ON, THEN LOW, LO MID, HI MID, HIGH.

Filters. **LO CUT** and **HI CUT** each carry their own **Off** position at the end of their travel. They act where you route them: enable **FILTERS TO INPUT** for the audio, and/or **SC** to shape only the dynamics detector — independent, so either or both can be on.

Four-band EQ. Turn on **ON**, then shape: LOW and HIGH are shelves that switch to bells (**BELL**); LO MID and HI MID are bells with Q. Drag a band node on the chart to move it. **TIGHT / BROAD** pick a narrower or wider curve voicing. **SC** routes the EQ into the sidechain (independent of ON).



05. COMPRESSOR & GATE

One dynamics section. **COMP ON** is the master for the whole dynamics block — it must be on for either the compressor or the gate to work.

Compressor: **THRESHOLD** sets where it starts, **RATIO** how hard (1:1, 2:1, 4:1, 10:1 or Limiter), **RELEASE** how fast it recovers (0.1, 0.3, 0.6, 1.2 s or Auto), **MAKEUP** restores level. **FAST ATK** catches transients; **PEAK** tightens the detector.

Gate / expander: turn on **GATE ON** too. The **EXP** button toggles Expander (gentle) vs Gate (decisive). Set **THRESHOLD** so only the noise is caught, **RANGE** for how far it closes, and **RELEASE / HOLD** for the timing.

06. STEREO, L/R + M/S IN 30 SECONDS

Linked Stereo (default). **Link** on — one set of controls drives both channels, single chart.

Independent L/R. Turn **Link** off. Edit Left and Right on their own; the chart stacks the two lanes and the strip re-tints to the selected lane.

Mid/Side. Turn **Link** off and **M/S** on. Edit the Mid (centre) and Side (width) signals independently. Pick the lane from the selector or by clicking its chart row.

07. SIDECCHAIN

Internal key. By default the dynamics react to the channel's own signal. Shape that key with **FILTERS** → **SC** and **EQ** → **SC** so the compressor/gate respond to a chosen frequency region.

External key. Route a source to the plugin's sidechain input in your host, then turn on **EXT SC** in GLOBAL — duck a bass from a kick, or a pad from a lead. Tap **LISTEN** to hear the key while you set the threshold, then turn it off.

08. COMPARE HONESTLY

A / B

The header has an **A / B** toggle carrying the full state. Tweak A, click B to switch, then flip between them to compare without committing.

POWER / BYPASS

The header **power** button (host bypass) passes audio through unprocessed. Match **OUTPUT GAIN** to bypass first so the comparison is fair.

09. USEFUL STARTING POINTS

From Init, enable each block a recipe uses (EQ ON, COMP ON, GATE ON) and a filter destination (FILTERS TO INPUT / SC), or start from a factory preset.

GOAL	MOVE	TIP
Lead vocal	LO CUT ~100 Hz, HI MID lift, COMP 4:1, EXP on	Low RANGE on the expander tidies breaths.
Tight drums	COMP 4:1 or 10:1, FAST ATK + PEAK on	Use FILTERS → SC (LO CUT) so lows don't trigger it.
Bass control	LOW shelf, COMP 4:1, HI CUT for buzz	Switch LOW to BELL to target one note.
Duck under a lead	EXT SC on, key = lead, COMP threshold to taste	LISTEN to confirm the key, then off.
M/S polish	Link off, M/S on, air the SIDE HIGH band	Keep the Mid lane cleaner and controlled.

10. RECIPES

Vocal front-and-centre: LO CUT ~100 Hz (FILTERS TO INPUT on) · gentle HI MID lift · COMP ON, RATIO 4, RELEASE Auto · GATE ON in Expander with a low RANGE · match OUTPUT to bypass.

Tight drum bus: COMP ON, RATIO 4:1 or 10:1 with FAST ATK + PEAK · firm HIGH shelf for air · FILTERS → SC with a LO CUT so the low end doesn't pump the compressor.

Bass weight and control: LOW shelf for weight (BELL to target a note) · COMP RATIO 4, RELEASE 0.1-0.3 s · HI CUT to remove buzz · MAKEUP to restore level.

Duck a pad under a lead: route the lead to the sidechain input · EXT SC on · set COMP THRESHOLD and RATIO for the dip · LISTEN to confirm, then off.

11. INSTALL

FORMAT	FILE	DEFAULT LOCATION
VST3	CambridgeChannelStrip.vst3	Linux ~/.vst3/ · Windows C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3\
CLAP	CambridgeChannelStrip.clap	Linux ~/.clap/ · Windows C:\Program Files\Common Files\CLAP\
Standalone	CambridgeChannelStrip (Linux) · .exe (Windows)	Run from the extracted folder.

System: Windows 10+ 64-bit or Linux 64-bit (glibc 2.35+). Stereo in / stereo out with an optional stereo sidechain input. v1 reports **0 samples** latency (no oversampling). macOS is not supported.

Activation: load the plugin, click the trial chip in the header, paste your licence key and activate locally — no internet needed. The full feature set, parameter reference and host notes are in the Cambridge Channel Strip **User Manual**.

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