



User Manual

Circuit-style passive program EQ. Tube and transformer colour.

Free & Offline-First: TheTrick is free. No license key and no demo limitations are required. The plugin does not collect telemetry or send usage data. Download it, use it, keep it.

01. INTRODUCTION

TheTrick is a circuit-style passive program EQ. The passive network topology runs as a Wave Digital Filter tree, sample by sample. The tube makeup stage restores the network's ~24 dB insertion loss and adds even-order harmonics. The transformer voicing adds low-end weight. Both remain in the signal path.

KEY FEATURES

- WDF passive network — circuit topology, not curve fitting.
- Eight EQ controls following the passive program EQ control layout.
- Tube and transformer colour remains in the signal path.
- The boost-and-cut interaction emerges from the circuit topology.
- Fixed 2× oversampling on the tube stage.
- Full wet signal path with tube and transformer colour active.
- Free. No license key required.

WHY "THETRICK"?

This passive program EQ design is known for one move: boosting and cutting at the same low frequency simultaneously. On paper it should cancel. It doesn't — because the boost and cut drive two independent LC networks that share a frequency selector. The result is a resonant peak followed by a dip. That's the trick. That's the name.

02. INSTALLATION

TheTrick is available for **Windows** and **Linux**. It is free — download from mouseplugins.com and drop it in your plugin folder.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS & PLUGIN LOCATIONS

REQUIREMENT	MINIMUM SPECIFICATION
Operating System	Windows 10+ or Linux (Ubuntu 20.04+, Fedora, etc.)
Plugin Formats	VST3, CLAP — VST2 is not supported.
Sample Rates	44.1 kHz to 192 kHz
CPU	Any 64-bit x86

PLATFORM	FORMAT	DEFAULT LOCATION
Windows	VST3	C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3\
Windows	CLAP	C:\Program Files\Common Files\CLAP\
Linux	VST3	~/vst3/ or /usr/local/lib/vst3/
Linux	CLAP	~/clap/ or /usr/local/lib/clap/

WHY NO MACOS?

macOS distribution requires Apple Developer ID signing and notarization. We choose not to participate. Our plugins are designed to be offline-first, privacy-respecting, and free from vendor-controlled distribution requirements.

03. INTERFACE OVERVIEW

TheTrick's interface is organized into a spectrum display on top and a three-section control surface below. The UI is resizable — use the zoom control in the Status Footer.

SECTION	PURPOSE
Header Strip	Logo, help, and settings icons.
Telemetry Strip	Level meters (IN/OUT), peak hold, correlation meter.
Spectrum Display	Frequency response curve with IN/OUT traces (20 Hz–20 kHz).
Low Frequency	Boost, Atten, and shared Frequency selector.
High Frequency	Width, Boost, Atten, Frequency selector, Att Freq selector.
Master	Output trim.
Status Footer	CPU, latency, oversampling, sample rate, version, zoom.

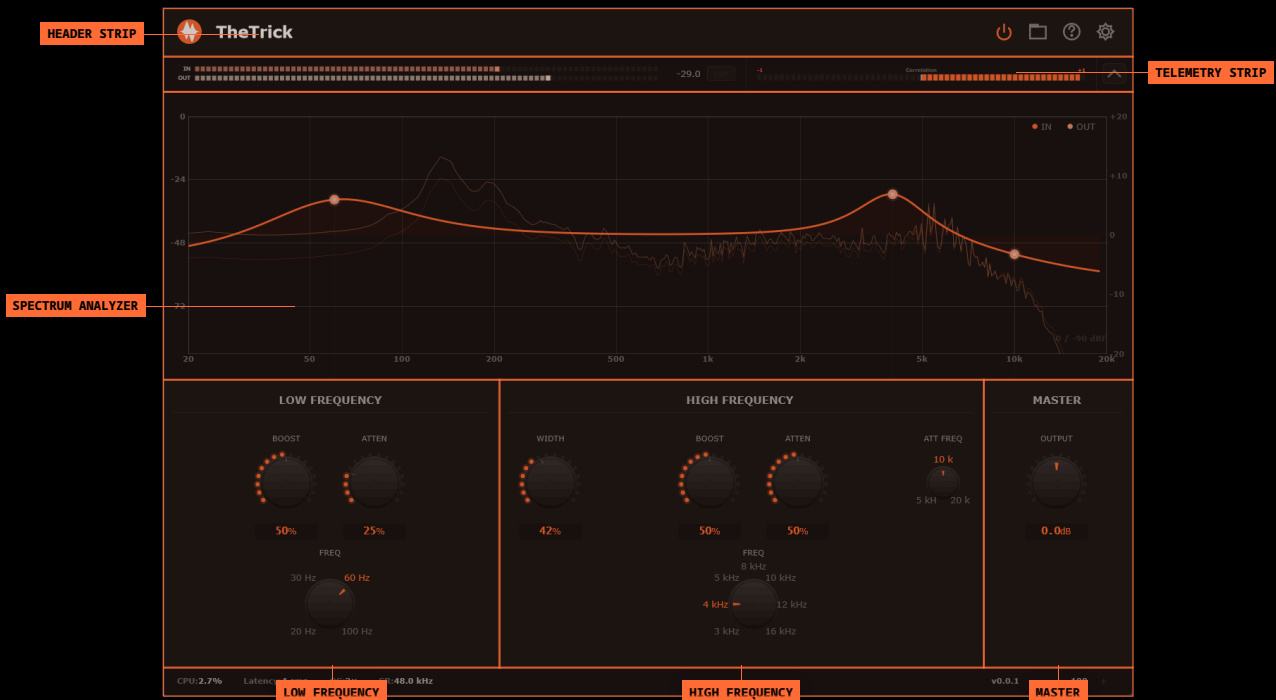


FIG. 1 – INTERFACE OVERVIEW: SPECTRUM DISPLAY AND CONTROL SECTIONS

04. LOW FREQUENCY SECTION

The LF section contains three controls that follow the passive program EQ control layout. Boost and Atten drive two **independent LC networks** behind a **single shared frequency selector**. This coupling is what makes the boost-and-cut move work.

LF BOOST

Range: 0–100%. Adds a resonant low-shelf boost at the selected LF Frequency. Both the height and Q of the boost increase as the knob turns up.

VALUE	CHARACTER
0%	Off — no boost
30%	Subtle low-end body, barely audible on its own
50%	Definitely audible — adds body and weight
80%	Flagship low end — obvious and characterful

LF ATTEN

Range: 0–100%. Pulls down an LC network centred slightly *above* the LF Frequency. When used alone, it's a broad low-shelf cut. When used **together with LF Boost at the same frequency**, it creates the resonant peak-then-dip shape.

VALUE	CHARACTER
0%	Off — no attenuation
20–40%	Useful range for the boost-and-cut move
60%+	Obvious low-mid scoop — thins the sound

LF FREQUENCY

Values: 20 / 30 / 60 / 100 Hz (default 60 Hz). Stepped rotary switch shared by both LF Boost and LF Atten. Changes are applied immediately — do not automate rapidly through transients.

Pick by source: 20 Hz for sub-heavy material, 30 Hz for 808s, 60 Hz for kicks and male vocals, 100 Hz for snare and bass.

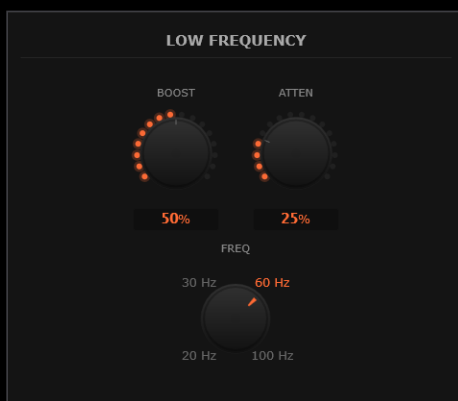


FIG. 2 — LOW FREQUENCY SECTION

05. HIGH FREQUENCY SECTION

The HF section has **two independent networks**: a resonant boost and a shelving cut. Unlike the LF section, they have separate frequency selectors.

HF BOOST

Range: 0–100%. Drives a resonant RLC tank at the selected HF Frequency. This is a *peaking* response — the energy lives around the corner frequency, not above it.

VALUE	CHARACTER
35%	Air — subtle presence lift
50%	Present — source steps forward
70%	In your face — aggressive, characterful

WIDTH

Range: 0% (broad) to 100% (sharp). Controls the Q of the HF Boost peak. Only meaningful when HF Boost is above 0%. At 0% the peak is wide and broad; at 100% it is narrow and aggressive.

HF FREQUENCY

Values: 3 / 4 / 5 / 8 / 10 / 12 / 16 kHz (default 5 kHz). Seven positions. Stepped switch.

Pick by source: 3–5 kHz for vocal presence and guitar bite. 8–10 kHz for drum overhead air. 12–16 kHz for sparkle and mastering top.

HF ATTEN

Range: 0–100%. Shelving high cut, completely independent of HF Boost. Has its own frequency selector.

VALUE	CHARACTER
15–30%	Removes fizz without losing air
50%+	Obvious darkening

HF ATTEN FREQUENCY

Values: 5 / 10 / 20 kHz (default 10 kHz). Corner frequency of the HF atten shelf. 20 kHz is the safety net. 10 kHz removes fizz. 5 kHz is a strong darkening move.

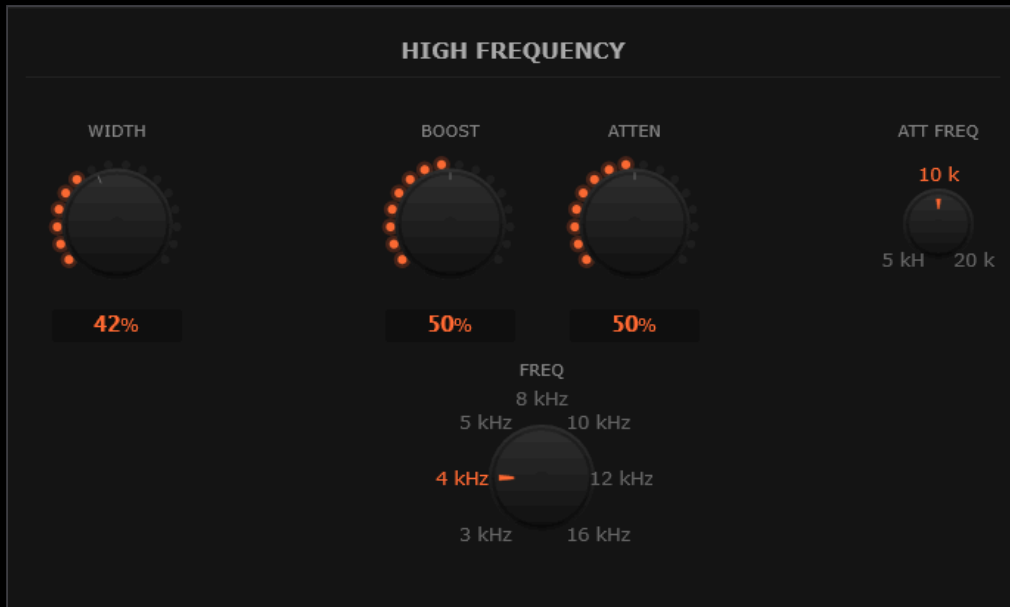


FIG. 3 – HIGH FREQUENCY SECTION

06. MASTER SECTION

OUTPUT

Range: -12.00 to +12.00 dB (0.01 dB step). Post-everything gain trim. The plugin passes through at roughly unity with all EQ controls off. Use Output to *pull down* after boost moves, not push up.

BYPASS

The power button in the Header Strip. When bypassed, the input passes directly to the output.

07. THE BOOST & CUT MOVE

The move that named the plugin: set LF Boost and LF Atten to non-zero values at the same LF Frequency, simultaneously.

WHY IT DOESN'T CANCEL

LF Boost and LF Atten drive **two topologically independent LC networks** that share a frequency selector switch. The boost produces a resonant peak centred on the LF Frequency. The cut produces a broader shelf centred slightly *above* it. The combined curve is a narrow low-end lift followed by a scoop in the low-mids.

The perceptual result: a low end that feels bigger at the bottom and tighter above it. Cleaner kicks, defined bass, vocals that sit lower without getting muddy.

HOW TO FIND IT

STEP	ACTION	WHAT YOU HEAR
1	Pick LF Frequency for the source	—
2	Set LF Atten to 40%	Low-mids scoop out, track feels thinner
3	Bring LF Boost up from 0%	Bottom fills in — stop around 30–60%
4	Adjust LF Atten (20–50%)	Tune scoop width and depth
5	Pull Output down 1–3 dB	Match bypass loudness

SWEET SPOTS BY SOURCE

SOURCE	LF FREQ	LF BOOST	LF ATTEN	OUTPUT
Kick / male vocal	60 Hz	45%	35%	-3 dB
808 / sub bass	30 Hz	40%	30%	-2 dB
Snare / bass DI	100 Hz	50%	40%	-4 dB
2-bus	30 Hz	20%	20%	-1 dB

Watch out: Past 70% on either control, the move stops being subtle. Fine on drums, usually too much on a 2-bus.

08. SPECTRUM DISPLAY

The top half of the interface shows three layers of information, all sharing the same 20 Hz–20 kHz frequency axis:

LAYER	WHAT IT SHOWS
IN trace	Live input spectrum (lighter, before the passive network).
OUT trace	Live output spectrum (brighter, after tube and transformer stage).
EQ curve	Analytical EQ shape overlay with node dots at active band frequencies. The filled area shows the magnitude of the current setting.

The IN and OUT traces show live spectral content. The EQ curve is a static overlay computed from the current knob positions — it updates instantly as you turn a control, even with no audio playing.

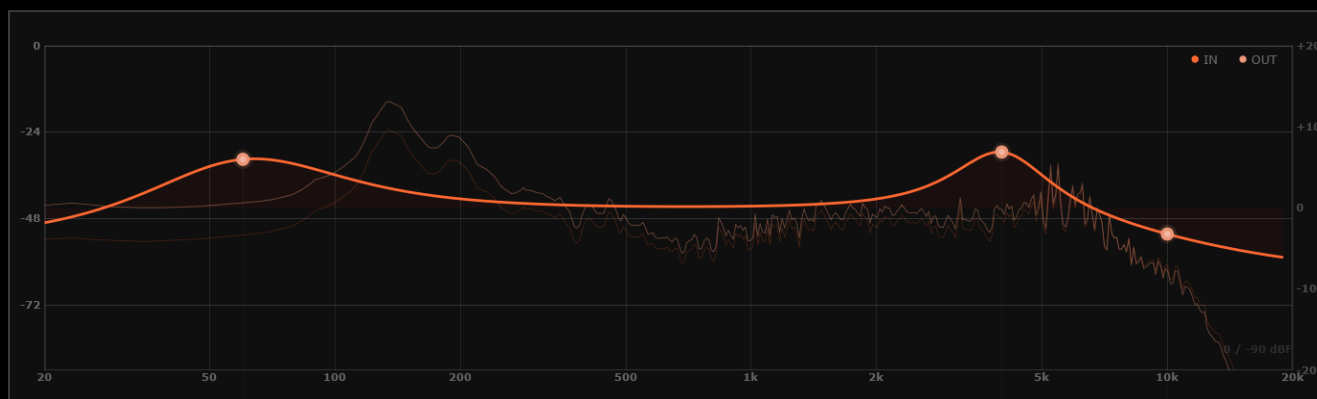


FIG. 5 – SPECTRUM DISPLAY WITH FREQUENCY RESPONSE CURVE

09. SETTINGS PANEL

Opened from the gear icon in the Header Strip.

AUDIO ENGINE

SETTING	BEHAVIOUR
Clip Latch	How long the CLIP indicator stays lit (1s default).
Corr. Speed	Correlation meter response time (Smooth default).

PREFERENCES

SETTING	BEHAVIOUR
Accent Color	Accent colour picker for the UI.
Theme Mode	Dark or Light theme.
Show Power Button	Display the bypass power button in the header.
Tooltips	Show hover hints on controls.

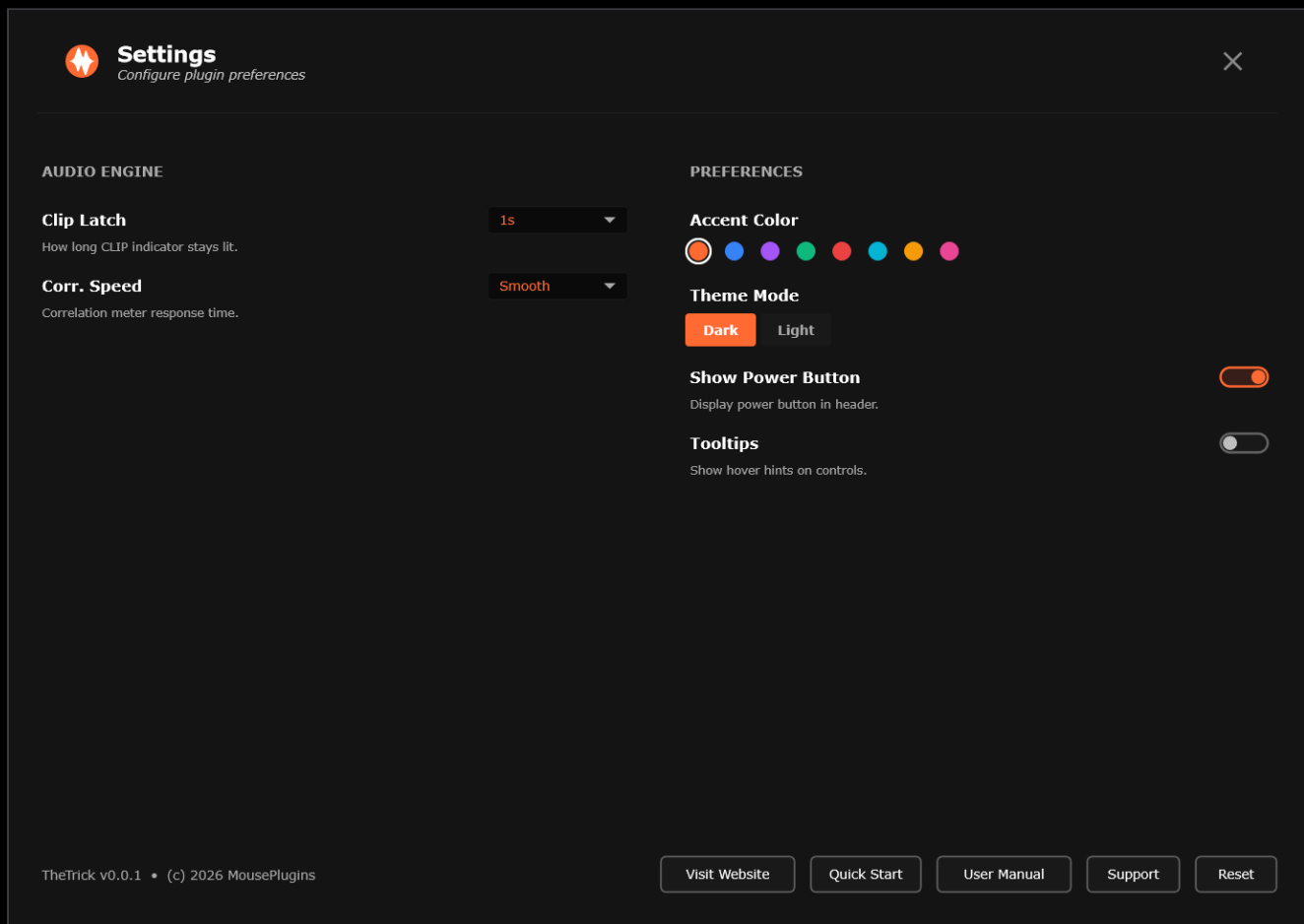


FIG. 6 – SETTINGS PANEL

10. SIGNAL CHAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

TheTrick is a program EQ with tube and transformer character. It is not neutral — any signal passing through picks up coloration. Placement matters.

Option A: Program EQ (Recommended)

Source → Comp / DeEss → **TheTrick** → Limiter → Output

Dynamics before so the EQ reacts to a controlled signal. Peak-catcher after.

Option B: Mastering Colour

Source → **TheTrick** → Bus Compressor → Limiter → Output

Useful mastering-style placement. Pre-pad Output to -3 dB before pushing LF Boost.

Option C: The Boost & Cut

Source → **TheTrick** (LF Boost + LF Atten both up) → Saturator → Output

Start at -3 dB Output, level-match by ear. Stack harmonics downstream.

STARTER VALUES

PARAMETER	SAFE START	PUSH IT	DANGER ZONE
LF Boost	0%	40%	80%
LF Atten	0%	30%	70%
HF Boost	0%	35%	70%
HF Atten	0%	25%	60%
Output	0.0 dB	-3 dB	-6 dB

Anti-Patterns:

- Don't use TheTrick as a surgical EQ — 4 LF and 7 HF positions are broad tone-shaping bands.
- Don't push Output up to compensate for boost — TheTrick gets loud fast. Pull Output *down* and compare properly.
- Don't automate frequency selectors rapidly — stepped switches click. Automate Boost/Atten instead.
- Don't place TheTrick after a brickwall limiter — the tube adds harmonics, undoing the limiting.

TheTrick is a product of MousePlugins. Free plugin.

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