

Slick-9k mk2 Nebula Compressor



General Info

These programs are 'based off of' a pair of rack mounted, ultra clean and clear compressors, which are essentially remakes of the channel compressors that were found in the famous '9k' desks. These are very transparent compressors, but if they do add any color to the sound it might be a slight slickness to the high end (some character also shows through the attack and release behavior). With several dBs of gain reduction, other compressors can start to sound congested in the mids/bass, but these still sound clear and open. They can also be used to give very snappy attacks to percussive elements. These qualities have translated well to the Nebula realm. Two modules were sampled in a stereo configuration.

Both hard and soft knee modes have been sampled and are available. The hard knee mode uses peak detection, and soft knee uses RMS, further differentiating the two. There's also, as kind of a bonus, a 'variable knee' program, which allows you to transition between the hard and soft knees with a 'knee' control (the detection mode also transitions as you adjust this control). This gives you some interesting possibilities, and you may find yourself preferring a blend of the two modes, rather than one of them alone, in most cases. There's also a 'pass-through' program that works like the typical Nebula preamp style programs, useful for getting some tone of the hardware without any compression. Lastly, there are skins (thanks Max!) for both Nebula 3 and 4 which allow you to quickly and easily switch between lite, standard, full harmonic, and SHQ quality modes.

Installation

Just copy the .n2p files to your Nebula 'Programs' folder, and the .n2v files to the 'Vectors' folder. [See the skin install guide contained in the skins .zip for info on how to install them.](#)

Nebula Category Locations

This doesn't matter if you're using the Slick9k skins, as you should be, but the compressor programs are found in the 'COM' category in Nebula, then in the 'CC4', 'CC5', 'CC8', and 'CC9' sub-categories, for the 44.1, 48, 88.2, and 96khz sets respectively. CC stands for 'Cupwise Compressors'. The pass-through programs are placed in the 'PRE' then 'CW4', 'CW5', 'CW8, and 'CW9' categories. I've been placing the pass-through programs from all of my libraries there, so that anyone who has several of my libraries will accumulate a nice collection of preamp style pass-through programs, all in the same place.

Lite, Standard, Full Harmonics, and SHQ

This time around there are 4 different quality options. All are perfectly safe to render with, but here are the differences:

- **Lite-** Uses much less CPU than the other options, due to having no harmonics and shortened impulse lengths. It's really good for using in your mix until you're ready to render, but you actually can render with this if you want the cleanest compression. It won't hurt your audio- there's nothing detrimental about the quality.
- **Standard-** Adds a couple orders of harmonic distortion. It uses more CPU than lite.
- **Full Harmonics-** This version has 8 orders of harmonic distortion, and can give you a more rich or 'saturated' sound if you have a higher input level (going over -18dBFS) and lots of compression (10dB or more). It uses more CPU than standard, so you may or may not be able to run these versions live depending on your CPU. It still doesn't use nearly as much CPU as SHQ. If you can't run them live, you should still be able to switch to them for rendering and they won't take nearly as long to render as SHQ.
- **SHQ-** For rendering only. Do not attempt to run these live while mixing. Has full harmonics, and also full lengths for all kerns. This difference is subtle to my ears and more noticeable with bassy inputs where you may hear a little more harmonic excitement with SHQ vs full harmonic programs. SHQ also provides the most accurate bass frequency response. Standard and Full Harmonic programs are just fine for rendering, so it's really up to you to decide if you like SHQ and want to use it. If you have the extra time to spare and want to render with them, go for it.

Controls

Attack- Variable from .2 to 200ms, which is extended beyond the hardware's limit.

Release- Variable from .1 to 4.5 seconds.

Input- The input control can be useful for dialing in how much harmonic saturation you want, when using the Full Harmonics programs. With input levels above -10dB, you start getting very noticeable levels of distortion.

Thresh- Threshold control.

Ratio- Sets the compression ratio, from 1:1 to 10:1. 10:1 can be used for limiting.

Knee- Only found in the variable knee programs. It transitions between soft and hard knees. At 0% you get full soft knee, at 100% you get full hard knee. Hard knee uses peak and Soft uses RMS detection modes, so the 'knee' control also transitions between those.

Ahead- It allows you to add a look-ahead of up to 1.5ms.

Hi-Pass- A high pass filter on the internal side-chain used for the detection.

MakeUp- Allows up to 25dB of gain after compression.

Wet- This is a typical Dry/Wet mixer control. The value is the % of wetness.

Trim- This is an input drive control only found in the pass-through program, which compensates with the opposite amount of output adjustment. For example, if you boost input by 6dB, the output is lowered by 6dB. This helps keep a somewhat steady level, allowing you to more easily hear the difference in effect you get by having different input drive levels.

Dist- Only in the pass-through program. This control directly adjusts the level of the harmonics that the program creates.

General Usage Tips/Ideas:

- Don't forget about the 'wet' control. Try settings that squash the input as much as possible, with fastest attack and fast release times, adjust makeup gain to bring the level up to match the input as close as possible, then adjust the wet control downward to bring back in some dry signal. With some inputs this can provide a really nice effect.
- My favorite results with bass drums usually seem to come from mid-way positions on the 'knee' control, using the variable knee programs. This provides a blend of both hard and soft knees, which isn't possible with the hardware.
- **You get the best results with the input RMS levels usually around -12 to -18dBFS. If you get too close to 0dBFS you can get nasty distortion.**

V2.4 – use this version number to keep track of updates. If the manual posted at my site has a higher version number than the one you have, your set probably isn't up to date.

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The skins were made by Max!

Huge thanks to Max Ponomaryov, aka azzimov for the awesome skins!

fb.com/azzimov

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