THE TANK

SATURATOR · COMPRESSOR



USER MANUAL

VERSION 1.4 · AAX · VST3 · AU

araz AUDIO

ARAZ AUDIO

WELCOME

Thank you for choosing The Tank. It was born in a working studio, out of a simple wish: one box that gives a track weight, colour and control in a few moves, the way a well-loved piece of outboard does.

The Tank pairs a five-voice saturator with a four-voice compressor, adds a gentle high-pass filter in front, a parallel MIX, a measured AUTO GAIN that keeps you honest about level, and an M/S STEREO WIDTH control. Everything sits on one panel, with no hidden pages.

The panel is drawn after mid-century broadcast hardware: real VU meters, a pilot lamp that doubles as bypass, levers, and a window of glowing tubes that breathe with your audio. Behind the looks sits careful modern DSP: 8× oversampled saturation with anti-aliasing on every curve, linked-stereo detection, click-free switching and automatic latency compensation.

> *Turn it up until it sounds big. Turn AUTO GAIN on to check it really is better, not just louder.*



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AT A GLANCE

- 5 saturation characters: Tape, Tube, Iron, Transistor, Fuzz
- 4 compressor types: Opto, FET, VCA, Vari-Mu
- High-pass filter, 0–400 Hz
- INPUT and OUTPUT on one concentric knob
- Parallel MIX, truly clean at 0 %
- Measured AUTO GAIN for level-matched decisions
- STEREO WIDTH 0–200 %, pre or post
- Switchable VU · low-latency TRACK mode
- 52 presets, A/B, 50-step undo
- AAX, VST3 and AU · Apple Silicon & Intel

01

GETTING STARTED

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- macOS 11 Big Sur or later, Apple Silicon or Intel (universal binary).
- A 64-bit host: Pro Tools (AAX), or any VST3 or Audio Unit host such as Logic Pro, Ableton Live, Cubase, Studio One, Reaper or Luna.
- Mono or stereo tracks, 44.1 to 192 kHz.

INSTALLATION

Double-click The Tank Installer.pkg and follow the steps. The installer is signed and notarized by Apple.

It places each format in the standard system folder, where every host looks for it:

AAX	/Library/Application Support/Avid/Audio/Plug-Ins
VST3	/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3
AU	/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/Components

Restart your DAW (or rescan plug-ins) and look for Araz Audio › The Tank. In Pro Tools it appears under *Dynamics* and *Harmonic*.

WHERE THINGS LIVE

User presets	~/Library/Audio/Presets/Araz Audio/The Tank
License	~/Library/Application Support/Araz Audio/The Tank/license.xml

TRIAL & ACTIVATION

The Tank runs as a full-featured 30-day trial from the first time you open it. The preset display shows how many days remain.

To activate, click the preset display and choose Enter Serial Number… (the window also appears once per session during the trial). Type your name exactly as it was registered and paste the serial you received, then press ACTIVATE. Upper/lower case and extra spaces don't matter; spelling does.

Activation works offline and is stored per user. Once activated, the menu shows *Licensed to …*. Click the Araz Audio logo on the panel at any time to see the version, the licensee and the serial.

If the trial ends before you activate, The Tank keeps passing audio unprocessed (with its latency intact, so your session stays in sync) until a serial is entered. Your settings are kept.

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THE PANEL AT A GLANCE

Every control is on the front panel. Hover any knob or the fader to see its exact value; click that value to type a new one.



1 PRESET DISPLAY
Current preset. Click for the preset menu.

2 ◀ ▶
Previous / next preset.

3 A / B
Two memories to compare settings.

4 UNDO / REDO
Step back and forward (50 steps).

5 TUBE WINDOW
Glows with the output level.

6 VU METER
Input or output level, 0 VU = −18 dBFS.

7 IN / OUT DISPLAY
Shows what the VU reads. Click a word to switch.

8 METER
VU on the output (OUT) or the input (IN).

9 MODE
MIX: highest quality · TRACK: low latency.

10 PILOT
Click to bypass. Lit = processing.

11 AUTO GAIN
Measured loudness matching.

12 COMPRESSION
Gain-reduction meter in dB.

13 HI-PASS
On/off lever and frequency, 0–400 Hz.

14 SATURATION LEVER
Saturation section on/off.

15 CHARACTER
Tape · Tube · Iron · Trans · Fuzz.

16 DRIVE
Gain into the saturator, 0–10.

17 TONE
Tilt EQ, Dark ↔ Bright, ±5 dB.

18 COMPRESSION LEVER
Compressor section on/off.

19 COMPRESS
Amount of compression, 0–10.

20 TYPE
Opto · FET · VCA · Mu.

21 MIX
Dry ↔ wet (parallel processing).

22 INPUT · OUTPUT
Brass ring: input level. Centre: output level. ±18 dB each.

23 STEREO WIDTH
Mono to 200 %.

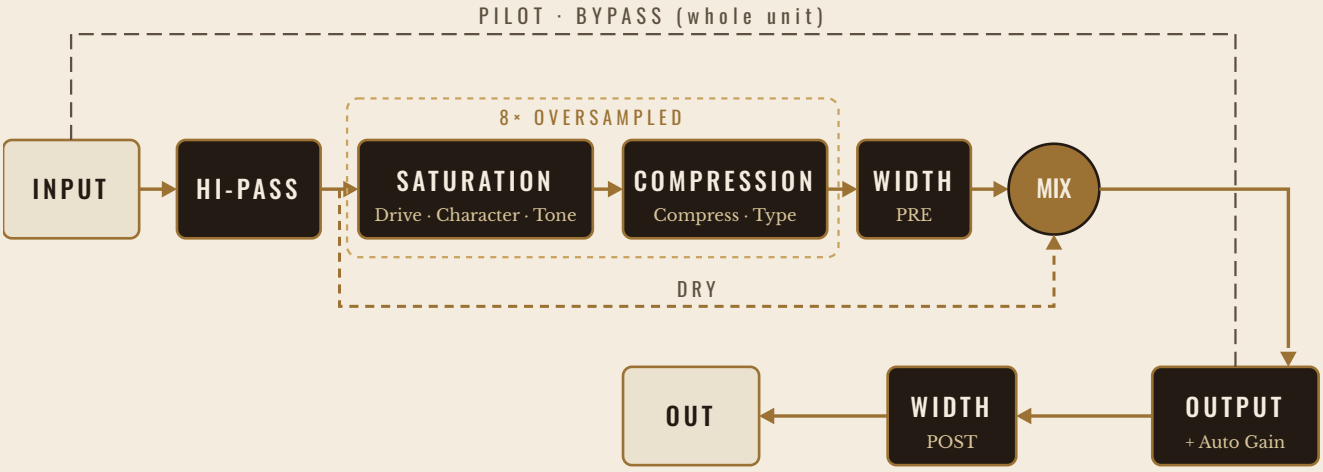
24 PRE / POST
Width before or after the MIX.

25 ARAZ AUDIO LOGO
Click for version, license and contact.

03

SIGNAL FLOW

The Tank processes in this order. The dry signal for the MIX is taken after the HI-PASS, so the filter always acts on the whole sound, just like an input filter on a piece of hardware. The INPUT ring sets the level that reaches SATURATION and COMPRESSION; the dry signal keeps its own level.



GAIN STAGING

The VU meter is calibrated so that 0 VU = −18 dBFS, a common studio reference. The presets and the DRIVE scale are tuned for tracks that peak around −12 to −6 dBFS. Much hotter sources will saturate and compress more; very quiet ones, less.

If a preset feels too strong or too gentle, adjust DRIVE and COMPRESS first. That is what they are for.

If the track itself is too quiet or too hot, use the INPUT ring instead: set METER to IN and turn the ring until the needle moves around 0 VU. That is the level the presets expect.

With AUTO GAIN on, The Tank keeps the output as loud as the input, so you can judge colour and dynamics without being fooled by level.



04

FILTER & SATURATION

HI-PASS

A 12 dB/octave high-pass filter at the very input. The lever turns it on and off; the knob sets the cut-off from 0 to 400 Hz (80 Hz at 12 o'clock). With the lever off, the filter is completely out of the circuit.

Use it to clean rumble and low-end mud *before* it hits the saturator and the compressor, so they react to the music, not to the subsonic energy.

SATURATION

The lever above the section switches saturation and tone on and off without clicks, so you can hear the compressor alone.

DRIVE

Sets how hard the signal hits the saturator, from 0 to 10 (up to +26 dB of gain). Low settings add subtle density; high settings are obvious and loud, which is exactly when AUTO GAIN earns its keep.

TONE

A tilt equalizer centred around 800 Hz. Turn towards DARK to warm up and soften, towards BRIGHT to open up and add air (up to ±5 dB at the extremes). It acts on the saturated signal.

CHARACTER

Five voices, each inspired by a classic way of adding harmonics. They are not circuit clones; they are our take on what makes each one sound the way it does.

TAPE	Soft, rounded saturation that compresses transients the way magnetic tape does. Highs saturate a little earlier, a gentle low-end bump adds weight, and the top end stays smooth.
TUBE	Warm, even-harmonic colour in the spirit of a classic tube preamp. Adds body in the lows and a soft lift in the presence range. The friendliest voice on vocals and keys.
IRON	The sound of a console's transformers being pushed. Low frequencies saturate first, giving bass and kick a thick, solid grip.
TRANS	Transistor saturation: faster and edgier, with emphasis in the upper mids. Brings guitars, snares and synths forward.
FUZZ	Hard clipping for effect. The lows are filtered before the clipper to keep it tight, and the fizz is tamed afterwards. Try it with MIX below 50 % for parallel grit.

05

COMPRESSION

The lever in the header switches the compressor on and off, click-free. Stereo signals are compressed with a linked detector, so the image stays put. The detector ignores the deep lows (below about 70 Hz), which reduces pumping on full mixes.

COMPRESS

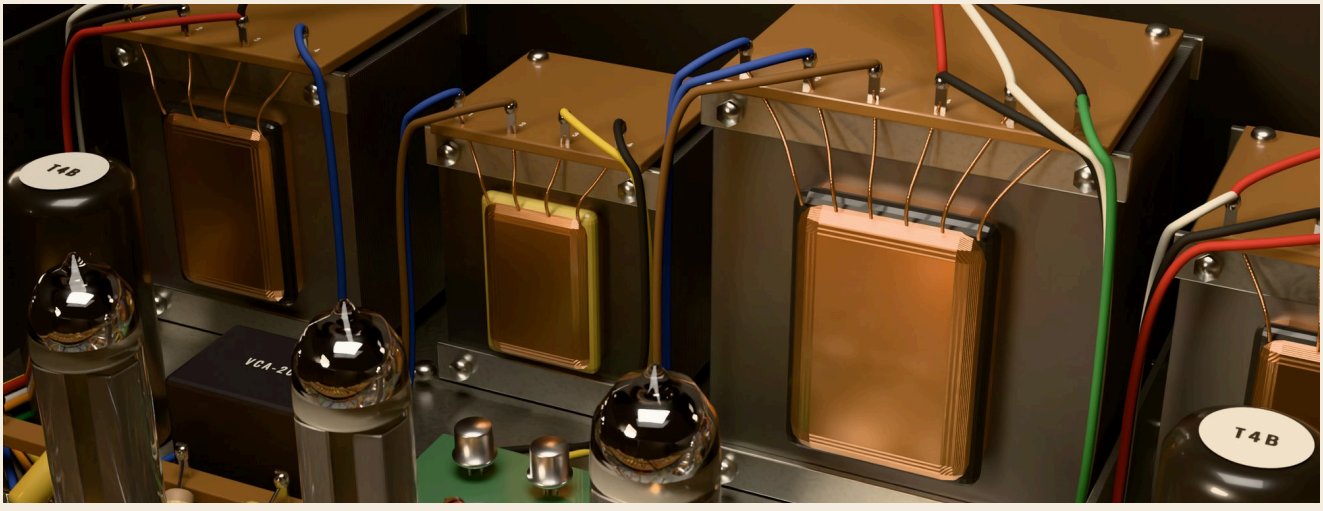
One knob sets the amount, from 0 (off) to 10. Internally it lowers the threshold, from 0 down to −32 dB, while each TYPE brings its own ratio, knee and timing. Watch the COMPRESSION meter: it shows the gain reduction in dB.

TYPE

Four classic compressor behaviours. As with CHARACTER, they are inspired by famous designs, not copies of them.

TYPE	FEEL	RATIO	ATTACK	RELEASE
OPTO	Smooth and musical, in the manner of an optical leveller. Release slows down the longer it works.	3:1, soft knee	**10 ms**	**60 ms → 1.8 s**
FET	Fast and aggressive, with bite and colour. Catches peaks instantly.	6:1	**0.25 ms**	**90 ms**
VCA	Clean bus-style glue and punch. Release adapts to the material.	4:1	**10 ms**	**100 → 420 ms**
MU	Variable-mu tube character: the harder you push, the more it compresses. Dense and warm.	rises with level	**18 ms**	**250 → 850 ms**

Make-up gain: with AUTO GAIN on, the compressor adds its own make-up gain and AUTO GAIN fine-tunes the result. With AUTO GAIN off there is no automatic make-up, so use OUTPUT to set the level yourself.



06

MASTER SECTION & METERS

MIX

Blends the dry signal (DRY) with the processed one (WET). Anywhere in between gives you parallel saturation and compression in one plug-in. The dry and wet paths are perfectly time-aligned, so there is no phasing. At exactly 0 % (with WIDTH set to PRE) the output is bit-for-bit identical to the input; only the HI-PASS filter, if it is on, and OUTPUT still act.

INPUT · OUTPUT

Two controls on one concentric knob: the outer brass ring is INPUT (the level sent into the saturator and the compressor) and the bakelite centre is OUTPUT (the final level), both from −18 to +18 dB. The value tag tells you which one you are holding (IN or OUT). With AUTO GAIN on, INPUT changes how hard you hit the unit without changing the volume; with it off, INPUT is a plain gain. With SATURATION and COMPRESSION both off there is nothing for it to push.

AUTO GAIN

When the lever is up, The Tank measures the loudness of what goes in and what comes out, and gently corrects the output so they match. Turn DRIVE or COMPRESS as much as you like: the level stays where it was, and you hear only the change in tone and dynamics.

The measurement ignores sub-bass and reacts over about a second; while you turn a control by hand it speeds up, so the level settles almost at once. It pauses during breaks and reverb tails, so when the music comes back the level is already right.

AUTO GAIN never changes how the compressor works (the gain reduction is the same on or off), and OUTPUT always works on top of it.

STEREO WIDTH

A Mid/Side width control on a quadrant fader: MONO (0 %) folds the image to the centre, 100 % leaves it untouched and 200 % doubles the side signal. On mono tracks it has no effect.

PRE (WIDTH → MIX) widens only the processed signal, so the MIX knob also controls the width, and at MIX 0 % the image is untouched. POST (MIX → WIDTH) acts on the whole output, the way a separate width plug-in would.

Double-click the fader, or Option-click it, to return to 100 %.

METERS

- The left VU meter has true VU ballistics, with 0 VU = −18 dBFS. The METER lever chooses what it reads: OUT (the output, as before) or IN (the signal after the INPUT ring: what the saturator and the compressor receive). The lit word under the VU shows which; you can also click INPUT or OUTPUT on it.
- COMPRESSION shows the gain reduction from 0 to 20 dB.
- The tube window glows brighter as the output level rises. It's there for the eyes only: a quick way to see that signal is flowing.

MODE (TRACK / MIX)

MIX is the normal mode: 8× oversampling with linear-phase filters, about 2 ms of latency at 48 kHz.

TRACK is for recording or playing live through The Tank. It uses 4× minimum-phase oversampling and cuts the latency to 5 samples (0.1 ms). Same sound, slightly more aliasing on very hot, bright material. Switch back to MIX to mix and bounce.

METER and MODE are session settings: they are not automated and presets don't change them.

PILOT (BYPASS)

Click the pilot lamp to bypass the whole unit; the lamp goes dark. Bypass is click-free, keeps the plug-in latency so it never shifts your tracks, can be automated and follows your DAW's own bypass button.

07

PRESETS & WORKFLOW

Click the preset display to open the menu: *Init*, the seven FACTORY categories, your own presets under USER › My Presets, and *Save Preset As…*, *Save*, *Rename…*, *Delete*, *Copy / Paste Settings* and *Show Presets Folder*.

The ◀ ▶ buttons (or the mouse wheel over the display) step through every preset, factory and user, in menu order.

An asterisk (*) after the name means you have changed something since loading it.

User presets are plain files in the presets folder, so you can back them up, share them or move them to another Mac.



A / B COMPARE

The A and B keys inside the preset frame hold two independent settings. Press B to try an alternative and A to go back; the active key stays lit. A memory that has never been used starts from *Init*. Use *Copy A → B* or *Copy B → A* in the menu to duplicate one into the other. Both memories are saved with your session.

UNDO / REDO

Every knob turn, lever flip and preset load is a step. UNDO and REDO, or ⌘Z and ⇧⌘Z, move through the last 50 steps. A and B each keep their own history: UNDO in A never brings back something you did in B.

AUTOMATION & CONTROL SURFACES

Every sound control can be automated and mapped to a control surface or MIDI controller from your DAW. Parameters are listed in panel order, with short names for small displays (METER and MODE are session settings and are not automated). In Pro Tools, the usual automation shortcuts work directly on the knobs.

MOUSE & KEYBOARD

Drag	Turn a knob (up/down or left/right) or slide the fader.
⌘ or ⇧ + drag	Fine adjustment.
Mouse wheel	Adjust the control under the pointer.
Double-click	Return a knob to its default (fader: 100 %).
⌥ Option-click	Return to default (Pro Tools convention).
Hover	Shows the exact value above a knob or the fader.
Click the value	Type a new value: “120 Hz”, “0.2k”, “−4.5 dB”, “dark 2”, “50 %”, “mono”, “off”…
⌘Z / ⇧⌘Z	Undo / redo.
Drag the corner	Resize the window (60–160 %). The size is remembered.

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FACTORY PRESETS

52 starting points in seven categories. Load one, then adjust DRIVE and COMPRESS to your source. All factory presets use AUTO GAIN, INPUT at 0 and WIDTH at 100 %, PRE.

PRESET	HP	CHARACTER	DRIVE	TONE	COMP	TYPE	MIX
DRUMS							
Kick - Thump & Click	off	Iron	4	+1	4	FET	100 %
Kick - Fat Sub Glue	off	Tape	3.5	-1.5	3	Opto	100 %
Snare - Crack	80 Hz	Trans	5	+2	6	FET	100 %
Snare - Fat Body	60 Hz	Tape	5	-1	4	VCA	100 %
Toms - Boom	50 Hz	Tube	4	-1	4	Opto	100 %
Overheads - Silk Glue	120 Hz	Tube	2	+0.8	3	Mu	100 %
Room - Smash It	100 Hz	Iron	6	+0.5	9	FET	100 %
Drum Bus - Tape Glue	off	Tape	4	0	3	VCA	100 %
Drum Bus - Parallel Punch	off	Iron	5	+0.5	8	FET	40 %
Hi-Hat - Tame the Sizzle	200 Hz	Tape	3	-2	2	Opto	100 %
BASS							
DI - Warm Tube	30 Hz	Tube	4	0	4	Opto	100 %
Amp Grit	35 Hz	Iron	6	+1	4	FET	100 %
Fuzz Bass	30 Hz	Fuzz	5	+0.5	3	FET	50 %
Smooth Opto	30 Hz	Tape	2	-0.5	5	Opto	100 %
Pick Bass Bite	40 Hz	Trans	5	+1.5	5	FET	100 %
Synth Bass Weight	off	Tape	5	-1	4	VCA	100 %
808 Saturation	off	Tube	6.5	0	2	Mu	100 %
VOCALS							
Clean Polish	90 Hz	Tube	2	+1	4	Opto	100 %
In Your Face	100 Hz	Iron	5	+1.5	7	FET	100 %
Telephone	400 Hz	Trans	7	+5	6	FET	100 %
BGV Tuck	150 Hz	Tape	3	-1	5	Opto	100 %
Male Lead Warmth	80 Hz	Tube	4	+0.5	5	Opto	100 %
Female Lead Air	110 Hz	Tube	3	+2	4	Mu	100 %
Rap Upfront	100 Hz	Iron	4	+1.2	6	FET	100 %
Breathy Ballad	90 Hz	Tape	2	+1.2	3	Opto	100 %
Radio Voice	180 Hz	Iron	5.5	+2.5	7	VCA	100 %
Distorted Scream	150 Hz	Fuzz	6	+1	5	FET	70 %
Spoken Word / Podcast	90 Hz	Tube	2	+0.8	6	Opto	100 %

PRESET	HP	CHARACTER	DRIVE	TONE	COMP	TYPE	MIX
GUITARS							
Acoustic Sparkle	100 Hz	Tube	2	+1.8	3	Opto	100 %
Nylon Warmth	80 Hz	Tape	2.5	-0.5	3	Opto	100 %
Electric Rhythm Glue	90 Hz	Iron	3	0	3	VCA	100 %
Clean Sheen	100 Hz	Tube	3	+1.5	4	Opto	100 %
Lead Sustain	90 Hz	Trans	6	+0.5	6	FET	100 %
Fuzz Box	120 Hz	Fuzz	7	0	3	FET	80 %
KEYS & SYNTHS							
Piano Warmth	40 Hz	Tape	3	-0.5	3	Mu	100 %
Rhodes Bark	50 Hz	Tube	6	+0.5	4	Opto	100 %
Organ Grit	50 Hz	Iron	6	0	3	VCA	100 %
Pad Glue	60 Hz	Tape	2	0	3	Mu	100 %
Synth Lead Bite	80 Hz	Trans	5	+1.5	4	FET	100 %
Lo-Fi Keys	200 Hz	Trans	5	-3	5	VCA	100 %
MIX & MASTER BUS							
Mix Bus Glue	off	Tape	2	0	2	VCA	100 %
Vari-Mu Master	off	Tube	1.5	+0.2	2	Mu	100 %
Tape Machine	off	Tape	4	0	off	—	100 %
Console Sum	off	Iron	2.5	0	off	—	100 %
Parallel Crush	off	Iron	6	+0.5	10	FET	25 %
Loudness Push	off	Tube	3	+0.5	5	FET	100 %
FX & CREATIVE							
AM Radio	300 Hz	Trans	6	-2	6	VCA	100 %
Walkie-Talkie	400 Hz	Fuzz	6	+4	8	FET	100 %
Blown Speaker	120 Hz	Fuzz	9	-1.5	4	FET	100 %
Dirty Sampler	60 Hz	Trans	8	-2.5	5	VCA	100 %
Pumping Room	60 Hz	Iron	4	0	10	VCA	100 %
Cassette Dust	50 Hz	Tape	6	-3.5	3	Opto	100 %



09

TIPS

Judge with AUTO GAIN on.
Louder always sounds better. With AUTO GAIN on you hear only what the processing really does.

Parallel smash.
Push COMPRESS high with FET, set MIX around 25–40 %. Punch and density, with the natural transients still there.

Saturation only.
Flip the COMPRESSION lever off to use The Tank as a pure colour box, or SATURATION off for a clean compressor.

Filter first.
On vocals, guitars and overheads a HI-PASS around 80–150 Hz lets everything else work harder without muddiness.

Mix bus.
Start from *Mix Bus Glue* or *Vari-Mu Master*: DRIVE below 3, COMPRESS around 2, gain reduction of 1–2 dB on the meter.

Tracking through it.
Set MODE to TRACK while you record or play live through The Tank, then back to MIX before you bounce.

Wide but safe.
WIDTH in PRE mode widens only the processed sound, so the mono core of your track stays solid.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The Tank doesn't appear in my DAW.
Rescan plug-ins or restart the DAW. Make sure you are looking under the manufacturer Araz Audio. Pro Tools needs the AAX version, Logic the AU version.

It passes audio but does nothing.
Check the pilot lamp (bypass), the SATURATION and COMPRESSION levers, and the MIX knob. If the display says DEMO EXPIRED, enter your serial.

My serial isn't accepted.
Type the name exactly as it appears in your license email. Case and spacing don't matter; spelling and accents do. Paste the serial rather than retyping it.

The level jumps when I switch AUTO GAIN.
That's expected: AUTO GAIN removes the loudness the processing adds. Turn it off and use OUTPUT if you prefer to set level by hand.

Can I use it on mono tracks?
Yes. WIDTH simply has no effect on mono.

There is too much delay when I record.
Set MODE to TRACK. The latency drops from about 2 ms to about 0.1 ms.



10

SPECIFICATIONS

Formats	AAX (Pro Tools), VST3, Audio Unit · 64-bit · Universal (Apple Silicon & Intel)
System	macOS 11 or later
Channels	Mono and stereo
Sample rates	44.1 – 192 kHz
Oversampling	MIX: 8× (44.1/48 kHz), 4× (88.2/96 kHz), 2× above, linear phase · TRACK: 4× (44.1/48 kHz), 2× (88.2/96 kHz), 1× above, minimum phase
Latency	MIX: about 2 ms · TRACK: about 0.1 ms (5 samples) at 48 kHz · reported to the host and compensated automatically
Meter	VU, 0 VU = −18 dBFS, switchable input / output
Hi-pass	12 dB/oct, 0 – 400 Hz, on/off
Drive	0 – 26 dB
Tone	Tilt EQ, ±5 dB
Compression	Threshold 0 to −32 dB · Opto, FET, VCA, Vari-Mu · linked stereo
Input · Output	−18 to +18 dB each, on one concentric knob
Mix	0 – 100 %
Stereo width	0 – 200 % (M/S), pre or post mix
Presets	52 factory presets, unlimited user presets, A/B, 50-step undo
Licensing	Name + serial, offline activation · 30-day full trial



The photographs in this manual imagine The Tank as a physical rack unit: a 7U, 19-inch chassis with two channels of tubes and transformers. They are concept renderings; The Tank is a software plug-in.

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THE TANK · SATURATOR · COMPRESSOR

ESTUDIO ARAZ · LA SERENA · CHILE