

SUPERCHARGER



Manual



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1 Welcome to SUPERCHARGER

SUPERCHARGER is part of Native Instruments KOMplete Instruments & Effects series. It has been designed for use with your host software.

1.1 What Is a Compressor?

Technically speaking, a compressor is an audio processing unit that reduces the dynamic range of an incoming signal, i.e. reduces the level difference between the signal's quiet and loud sections. This way, it can help to increase the perceived loudness of a signal and attract the listener's attention.

For many studio and live music applications, the usage of compressors is inevitable: they let you “glue” the individual instruments of an instrument group together and make them “sit” in the mix more naturally, which is particularly helpful when mixing drum recordings. Compression can also stretch the decay phase of instruments, mostly drums, and add sustain to the tone of the electric guitars.

However, compression can be used for a wide range of applications. Here are just a few examples:

- **Electric guitars and basses:** Compression is applied to picked string instruments in order to smooth the varying intensity of the individual strokes, thus increasing the perceived overall level. At extreme settings, you can get a "wall of sound" effect!
- **Drums:** Adding compression to a bass drum or snare track will add punch and help define its sound in your mix.
- **Vocals:** Adding compression to vocals can make them sound more balanced by levelling the soft and loud sounds in the voice.
- **Mixing/pre-mastering:** A slight compression applied to the overall mix (or some specific subgroups) can add cohesion between the various instruments.

1.2 What is SUPERCHARGER?

SUPERCHARGER is a superb character compressor with a simple but powerful interface, which makes compression easy to use, even for the inexperienced user.

SUPERCHARGER can be used on a channel or a group of channels (often referred to as a 'bus') within your host software. It contains factory presets that lend themselves to compression scenarios you are likely to encounter in your productions.

For example, you might want to use the compressor on an audio channel containing bass in order to make it sound fatter and cut through the mix. Another example would be when mixing drums, where you will want to apply compression on the whole drumgroup in order to 'melt' it together and add extra punch.

2 The Main Interface

This section describes the SUPERCHARGER interface and controls in detail.



The SUPERCHARGER Interface

(1) **Input level indicator:** The Input LED indicator is lit green when the input level is set to the correct volume level.

(2) **Input Trim knob:** This is the first control you should grab when you open up SUPERCHARGER. With this control you can adjust the input signal to the SUPERCHARGER's perfect operating level. If the level is set correctly, the compressor is in its sweet spot, producing the best sound and smooth operation. The **Input Trim** is set correctly when the input level indicator is lit green. If the input signal is too low; the left arrow LED will glow red, whereas if too high, the right arrow will glow red.

(3) **Sidechain LED indicator:** When activated, the **Sidechain** LED illuminates yellow and switches the compressor into external side-chain mode, meaning that the compressor reacts to another source other than its own input. Typically the side-chain input is fed by a bass drum

track as a control signal to trigger the compressor on the bass guitar track. Another example would be where the side-chain input is fed by the bass drum track as a control signal to trigger the compressor on a synth, where the side-chain effect creates an audible pumping effect.

(4) **Gain reduction level meter:** This shows the amount of gain reduction in dB.

(5) **Compress knob:** The more this knob is turned to the right, the more the compression will be applied to the input signal, while remaining at an even loudness level (this works only when the **Input Trim** is set correctly).

(6) **Output level meter:** The **Output** level meter indicates the output volume level (in dB) from the compressor.

(7) **Dirt LED indicator:** When activated, the **Dirt** LED is lit yellow to indicate that the compressor will slightly saturate the input signal. This feature is ideal for giving clean sounds more character, bite and loudness.

(8) **Punch LED indicator:** When clicked, the **Punch** LED is lit yellow to indicate that the compressor will work with a slower attack time. This means that transients will not be caught by the compressor, and will lead to a punchier sound.

(9) **Output knob:** This is the master volume of the compressor.

(10) **Mix knob:** With the **Mix** knob, it is easy to dial in parallel compression (also known as New York Drum compression trick). The uncompressed (dry) signal will be mixed with a compressed version of the same signal. It gives the excitement of a compressed signal without losing its dynamic and transients. If the **Mix** knob is set full left (**Wet**), you only hear the compressed signal, whereas full right is the **Dry** signal only. Every setting in between is a mix of both signals.

3 Using SUPERCHARGER

3.1 Using the Presets

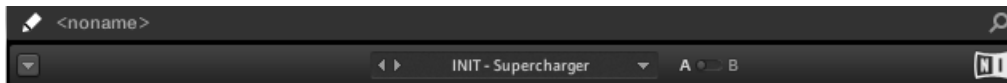
SUPERCHARGER equips you with 15 factory presets for a variety of different compression scenarios. When you open up SUPERCHARGER within your host software, you'll find the preset menu located at the top of the interface.



The Preset Menu

For those using SUPERCHARGER within Native Instruments MASCHINE 2 software, to reveal the presets menu:

- ▶ Click on the pen icon in the top left corner of the interface.



The Menu bar is located at the top of the interface

The compressor's default preset is the *INIT - Supercharger*. By default, this has no (or little) compression applied. It is recommended that you spend some time familiarizing yourself with the factory presets, and ultimately testing them out on your tracks. Whether its bass, vocal, snares, you'll be able to find a preset that's tailored to your compression needs.

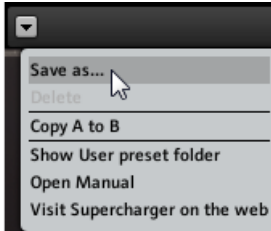


Experiment with adjusting the parameters within SUPERCHARGER's presets to find more unique compression settings.

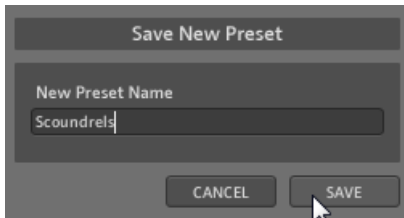
Saving and Deleting Presets

To save a preset:

1. Click the drop-down arrow to the very left of the Menu bar to open the File menu. Select *Save as...* from the File menu:



2. Enter the name of your preset in the area under the label **New Preset Name**:



3. Click the **SAVE** button to finish the process and close the dialog box.



If you wish to remove a preset you no longer want, you can delete it by selecting *Delete* from the File menu. Please note: you are not able to delete factory content.

Loading Presets

In the center part of the Menu Bar, you will see the Preset menu. To navigate through presets, either:

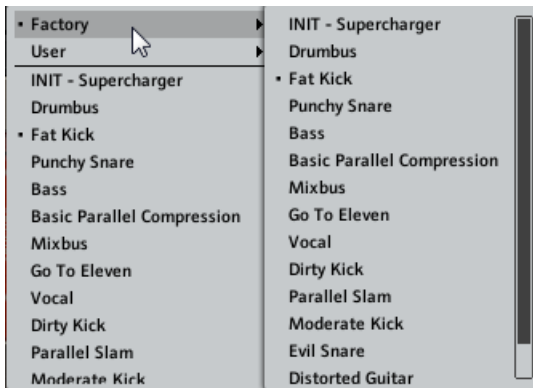
- Click the left and right arrows to cycle through and load the presets one at a time, or
- Click the drop-down menu to view a list of available presets.
- When using the second option, a preset is loaded when you click its name.

Loading a Saved Preset

When you save a preset, the Preset menu is automatically split in two submenus, one containing *Factory* presets and one containing *User* presets. By selecting a preset from the *User* submenu, the list of presets you have saved is brought to the front of the Preset menu and displayed below the *Factory* and *User* options.



By loading one of the presets from the *Factory* submenu, the factory presets are brought back to the front.



A/B Comparisons

SUPERCHARGER offers an **A/B** comparison system to help you fine-tune your compression settings. You'll find this located to the right of the Preset Menu.



The A/B comparison switch

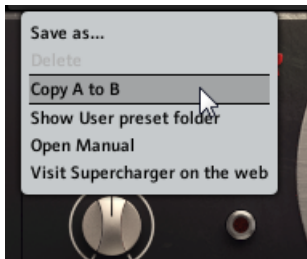
This feature provides two slots into which you can enter different parameter settings. You can then quickly switch between the two slots to compare the settings and use whichever you prefer.

By default, you edit the parameters of slot A. To **switch to slot B**:

- ▶ Click the **A/B** switch
- You will now be editing and listening to the parameters of slot B, until you click the **A/B** switch again.

Copying to another Slot

SUPERCHARGER provides you with the feature to copy compression settings between slots **A** and **B**. Copying to another slot is particularly useful when, for example you have already saved a set of compression parameters as a preset, but wish to further adjust the parameters, and perform **A/B** comparisons without altering the saved preset.



The Copy A to B menu option

To copy the settings of slot A to B:

- ▶ Go to the file menu on the left side of the Menu bar and select *Copy A to B*

Other Functions

The File menu also has the following options:

- *Show User preset folder*: opens a system window in the location of where your presets are saved. Note that you can rename your presets by changing the file names.
- *Open Manual*: opens this PDF document reference.

- *Visit Supercharger on the web:* opens your default web browser and takes you to the SUPERCHARGER page on the Native Instruments website.

4 Credits

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