

THE_SMOOTHER 2

USER MANUAL

Tame harshness, mud and ringing resonances — dynamically,
right on the spectrum.

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What It Is

THE_SMOOTHER 2 is a dynamic, multiband **resonance suppressor** — a de-harsh, de-mud, de-ring processor that finds the frequencies fighting your mix and quietly shows them the door. Not with a static EQ scalpel that gouges your tone forever, but **dynamically**: it only acts the instant a frequency actually rings, then gets out of the way.

Here's the magic. Inside every band you draw, **THE_SMOOTHER 2** continuously listens for **resonant peaks** — frequencies that ring louder than the signal around them — and attenuates *only those, only when they're present*. That harsh 3.5 kHz spike on a vocal, the boxy 350 Hz honk on a snare, the ringing room note under an acoustic guitar — gone, without dulling everything else around it. The non-resonant content sails through untouched. It's the difference between *surgery* and *smoothing*.

And the whole thing happens on one big, beautiful canvas. Almost the entire window is a **live spectrum analyzer** you interact with directly: click empty space to add a band, drag it over the problem area, pull its edges to set the width, and watch the GR readout tell you exactly how much it's doing. Up to **8 fully independent bands**, each with deep dynamic control. Add the **SMART** auto-detector that listens to your audio and hands you problem frequencies on a plate, plus **Delta/Solo** monitoring so you can hear precisely what's being removed, and you've got a de-resonance tool that's as fast as it is surgical.

Why You'll Love It

- **It smooths without dulling.** Dynamic, program-dependent suppression acts only when a frequency actually rings — so harshness, mud and ringing vanish while your tone stays alive.
- **You work on the spectrum, not in a menu.** Draw bands directly onto a live analyzer. See the problem, grab it, fix it.
- **Up to 8 independent bands**, each with its own depth, sharpness, selectivity, knee, attack/release, tilt, stereo behavior, sidechain mode and SMART/MANUAL detection.
- **Three modes per band:** CUT (de-resonance), SHAPE (cuts peaks and lifts dips toward an even target), and LIFT (dynamic enhancement).
- **SMART finds the problems for you** — it listens to your audio and suggests resonances as ready-to-add bands, tuned with the AUTO / VOCAL / DRUMS / BUS / BASS / TARGET profiles.
- **Hear exactly what you're removing** with per-band Delta and Solo plus a global DELTA. No guessing.
- **It can take the music's side.** KEY mode tells the suppressor what key your song is in, so it protects in-key notes and pushes harder on out-of-key ringing — the junk gets caught, the music is spared. Fully opt-in.
- **Zero latency when you need it.** The LIVE quality level adds **0 samples of latency** — record vocals, play and perform right through it. Bounces use their own OFFLINE quality setting (ULTRA by default), so they still get the full high-quality spectral engine.
- **Honest A/B every time** thanks to GAIN MATCH, which measures the level change and sets the output to match, and a clean global Bypass.
- **Mid/Side and per-channel processing** plus per-band sidechain (Unmask / SC Resonance) for surgical stereo and unmasking moves.
- **Scales to your session:** Quality levels from ECO (lightest on CPU) to MAX (highest quality), plus zero-latency LIVE. Multilingual tooltips (EN/DE/FR/ES/IT), in-app docs and an AI assistant when you need a hand.

The Interface at a Glance

There's no wall of knobs here — there's **one big interactive spectrum panel**, and everything happens on it.

- **The spectrum** fills the panel in real time, with a frequency grid (50 Hz to 10k) and dB lines so you always know where you are. The display spans -48 dB up to +6 dB, so you see both the quiet detail and the loud peaks. The shaded area between the incoming and outgoing curves shows what's being cut (or lifted).
- **Bands** appear as colored, numbered (1–8), draggable regions laid over the spectrum. CUT, SHAPE and LIFT bands each get their own tint. Hovering empty space shows a ghost band with a "+" where a new band would land.
- **The band toolbar** floats under the selected band. Top row: previous band, band power (bypass), mode (CUT / SHAPE / LIFT), channel, sidechain (SC), SMART/MANUAL, Delta, Solo, delete, next band. Bottom row: the knobs for that band — DEPTH, SHARP, SELECT, KNEE, ATK, REL, plus BOOST, TILT or CLIP when the mode calls for them.
- **The bottom bar** holds the global controls, left to right: **DELTA**, **GAIN MATCH**, **SMART**, **KEY** (shows **KEY: OFF** or e.g. **KEY: F# MIN**), **QUALITY**, **AMOUNT**, **OUT** and the **GR** readout.
- **The top bar** holds the hint line (left), **PROFILES**, Undo/Redo, the AI Assistant, Documentation, Settings and Bypass (power icon).
- **SMART markers** pop up as clickable suggestions — the brighter and chunkier the marker, the more confident the detection.
- **Scale guides on the spectrum.** With KEY switched ON and the KEY popup open, in-scale note guide lines are drawn across the analyzer — root-note octaves brighter — so you can line bands and SMART suggestions up with the music by eye.
- **Knob gestures:** drag a knob up/down, use the mouse wheel over it, or double-click it to type a value (% , ms or dB).
- **Hints** for whatever is under your cursor appear in the top-left hint line in five languages, and a clear **BYPASSED** overlay covers the UI whenever processing is off.

Controls — In Depth

Suppression Band (add / move / resize on the spectrum)

What it does: Defines a frequency region where the plugin hunts for and processes resonances. Click empty spectrum to add one (centred where you click), drag it horizontally to move it, drag the band edges to resize its frequency range, right-click it (or click the trash icon in the band toolbar) to delete it.

Range/units: Up to 8 bands anywhere between 20 Hz and 20 kHz. Bands sit side by side and never overlap — dragging one into its neighbour pushes the neighbour along, and edges snap together when they get close. Hovering an edge shows its exact frequency.

In your music: This is how you aim. Park a band over 2–5 kHz harshness, 200–400 Hz mud, or sibilant highs — and leave everything else alone.

Pro tip: Start a band wider than you think, then squeeze the edges inward while listening in Delta. You'll *hear* the moment you've boxed in the offending frequency.

Depth (per band)

What it does: Sets how strongly detected resonances are attenuated within the band (in LIFT mode: how strongly dips are lifted).

Range/units: DEPTH knob, 0–100% (new bands start at 50%). You can also drag the band's depth line on the spectrum up/down — a readout shows the percentage while you drag. In CUT mode the fill hangs from the top, in LIFT mode it rises from the bottom. The global AMOUNT scales every band's depth at once.

In your music: Your core "how much smoothing" knob. Low = gentle taming; high = aggressive de-resonance.

Pro tip: Push depth too far on purpose to find the resonance, then back off to the lowest setting that still solves the problem. Subtlety wins on vocals and master bus.

Band Mode

What it does: Switches the band between cutting resonant peaks (**CUT**), both cutting peaks and lifting dips toward an even target (**SHAPE**), or lifting dips only (**LIFT**).

Range/units: CUT → SHAPE → LIFT; click the mode button to cycle. New bands start in CUT. The button is greyed out while the band's sidechain is set to UNM (Unmask).

In your music: CUT de-harshes/de-muds; SHAPE evens a range toward a smooth target; LIFT dynamically fills in frequencies that dip below their surroundings, for brightness or presence.

Pro tip: Use SHAPE on a busy midrange where some notes are too hot *and* others too shy — it pulls the whole range toward an even target instead of only cutting.

Channel Target (per band)

What it does: Selects which channels the band processes. Click the channel button in the band toolbar to open its popup.

Range/units: L+R (both sides, shown as a link icon — the default), L, R, M (mid) or S (side). The popup also holds the **LINK** slider (see Stereo Link) and a balance slider (L/R, or M/S) that shifts the band's

depth toward one side: in the centre (L=R) both sides get the full depth; slide toward one side and the depth fades out on the other.

In your music: Tame harshness only in the stereo sides, or only in the mono center, without touching the rest of the image.

Pro tip: De-ess a wide stereo vocal by targeting **S** only — you'll soften the sizzle in the spread without dulling the up-front center.

Sharpness (per band)

What it does: Controls how narrowly the suppressor targets resonant peaks — effectively the Q / bandwidth of the corrective notches.

Range/units: SHARP knob, 0–100%, semitone-based (default 50%). Shown in CUT and SHAPE mode.

In your music: High = surgical, pinpoint notches on individual ringing tones; low = broader, gentler smoothing across the band.

Pro tip: For a single ringing note (a resonant guitar body, a tom), crank sharpness for an invisible fix. For general "harshness," keep it lower so it breathes.

Selectivity (per band)

What it does: Sets the threshold for what counts as a resonance versus normal program material.

Range/units: SELECT knob, 0–100% (default 50%).

In your music: How *picky* the band is. High selectivity grabs only the most pronounced peaks; low selectivity smooths more of the spectrum. In LIFT mode it works the other way round: high selectivity lifts only the deepest dips.

Pro tip: If the plugin is acting on material you *want*, raise selectivity until it only catches the genuine offenders.

Knee (per band)

What it does: Shapes how the suppression curve responds as a peak rises above the threshold.

Range/units: KNEE knob, 0–100% (default 50%). Lower = softer, higher = harder.

In your music: Softer knee = gradual, transparent onset of suppression; harder knee = a more decisive clamp once a resonance crosses threshold.

Pro tip: Soft knee for vocals and acoustic sources where transparency is everything; harder knee for drums where you want it to grab decisively.

Attack (per band)

What it does: How quickly the suppressor reacts to a newly appearing resonance.

Range/units: ATK knob, 1–100 ms (default about 50 ms). Turning the knob up makes the attack slower.

In your music: Fast attack catches transient ring/harshness instantly; slower attack lets the initial transient through for a more natural feel.

Pro tip: On cymbals and snares, slow the attack slightly so the stick/transient stays punchy and only the ringing tail gets smoothed.

Release (per band)

What it does: How quickly the suppressor recovers after a resonance passes.

Range/units: REL knob, 10–500 ms (default about 255 ms). Turning the knob up makes the release slower.

In your music: Fast release follows the source closely and snappily; slow release is smoother with less pumping.

Pro tip: If you hear breathing or pumping, slow the release. If suppression lingers and dulls following notes, speed it up.

Selectivity + Attack + Release together

These three are your "dynamics feel." Treat them like a compressor's brain: selectivity sets *what* triggers it, attack/release set *how* it moves.

SMART / MANUAL Detection (per band)

What it does: The SMART/MANUAL button in the band toolbar picks how the band scales its depth.

SMART (the default) scales the depth automatically by how far each frequency pokes above the band's average level: the strongest peaks get the full depth, frequencies that barely stick out get less. **MANUAL** switches that scaling off and reveals the **CLIP** knob.

Range/units: SMART or MANUAL, per band (default SMART).

In your music: SMART is hands-off, program-dependent smoothing that leans in hardest on the worst offenders. MANUAL gives you an even treatment across the band plus a level ceiling.

Pro tip: Leave it on SMART for "set and forget" mix cleanup; switch to MANUAL when you want a band to clamp a range only once it gets too loud.

CLIP (per band, MANUAL mode)

What it does: A level ceiling for the band. Anything in the band louder than the CLIP level is pulled down toward it — how far depends on DEPTH — on top of the normal resonance smoothing. Only shown when the band is set to MANUAL; a dashed line across the band shows the level on the spectrum.

Range/units: -60 dB to 0 dB (default -60 dB).

In your music: Tame a honk, a boomy note or sibillance only when it actually gets loud, and leave the quieter passages alone.

Pro tip: The lower you set CLIP, the more of the band gets caught. Watch the dashed line against the spectrum and set it just under the peaks you want to tame.

BOOST (per band, LIFT mode)

What it does: Maximum amount of lift a LIFT band may apply.

Range/units: 0–24 dB (default 12 dB). Shown only in LIFT mode. SHAPE bands use a fixed lift ceiling of +6 dB instead.

In your music: Caps how much a band can lift, keeping enhancement from running away.

Pro tip: Keep it modest when adding "air" on a master bus — a little dynamic lift goes a long way.

Tilt (per band, SHAPE mode)

What it does: Tilts the band's target curve around the band's centre — warm (left) emphasizes lows, bright (right) emphasizes highs.

Range/units: TILT knob, -12 to +12 dB per octave, centre = FLAT (default). Shown only in SHAPE mode.

In your music: Steers tonal balance warmer or brighter *while* smoothing.

Pro tip: A gentle bright tilt across a wide SHAPE band on a dull mix adds polish that follows the music instead of a static high-shelf.

Stereo Link (per band)

What it does: Controls how much the left and right channels are linked for processing.

Range/units: LINK slider in the channel popup, 0–100%. It matters when the band processes both sides (L+R).

In your music: High link = matched L/R processing for a stable center image; low link = channels react independently.

Pro tip: Raise the link on lead vocals and bass to keep the center rock-solid; lower it on wide stereo material to let each side breathe.

Sidechain Source (per band)

What it does: Lets a signal on the plugin's sidechain input drive this band. Click the SC button to cycle through the options.

Range/units: **SC** (off, default) → **UNM** (Unmask) → **SCR** (SC Resonance). With UNM, the band ducks this track wherever the sidechain signal is prominent in the band's range (the mode button is greyed out). With SCR, the band looks for resonances in the sidechain signal and cuts those frequencies from this track. When the sidechain is silent in the band's range, the band leaves the audio alone. Route a sidechain to the plugin in your DAW first.

In your music: Let another track trigger or guide suppression — unmask a band so another element cuts through, or carve out what rings in a competing part.

Pro tip: Put THE_SMOOTHER 2 on a synth pad, feed the lead vocal into the sidechain and set a band over the vocal's range to **UNM** — the pad dips to make room only when the vocal needs it.

Band Enable / Bypass

What it does: The power button in the band toolbar bypasses the selected band. It stays on the spectrum, dimmed, with all its settings.

Range/units: On/off per band.

In your music: A/B a single band's contribution without deleting it.

Pro tip: Build several bands, then bypass them one at a time — you'll quickly learn which ones are actually earning their keep.

Delta (per band)

What it does: Solo-listen to *only* what is being removed within this band's range.

Range/units: On/off (default off). Delta and Solo are exclusive per band: switching one on switches the other off.

In your music: Hear exactly the resonance being subtracted so you can dial depth and frequency precisely.

Pro tip: This is your tuning superpower. Drag the band while in Delta until the removed sound is *all problem and no music* — that's the sweet spot.

Solo (per band)

What it does: Auditions only the frequency range of the band, unprocessed.

Range/units: On/off (default off).

In your music: Isolate and zero in on the problem frequency region.

Pro tip: Solo to *find* the offending area, then switch to Delta to fine-tune the fix.

Band Navigation (toolbar)

What it does: The arrows at both ends of the band toolbar step the selection to the previous/next active band, from low to high frequency.

Range/units: Cycles through active bands (wraps around at the ends).

In your music: Quickly edit each band's parameters in turn.

Pro tip: On a complex master chain with many bands, use prev/next instead of hunting on the spectrum — faster and less error-prone.

SMART (auto-detect)

What it does: Listens to your audio and proposes resonant frequencies as markers you can turn into bands. Click **SMART** in the bottom bar to open its popup, pick a source profile, then hit **START LISTENING** while the audio plays — the cell counts up (**LISTENING 4.2s**). Hit **STOP LISTENING** and the suggestions appear as green markers with frequency labels; the cell shows how many are left (**DONE (3 left)**). Click a marker to add it as a band, **right-click** it to dismiss it, and **press and hold the S button** under a marker to audition that range before you commit. **DISCARD PREVIEW** in the popup ends the preview.

Range/units: Up to 8 suggestions. When the suggestions appear, your existing bands are cleared to give you a clean slate — Undo brings them back. Let it listen for at least a second; if nothing is found, a message tells you why (for example **NO SIGNAL DETECTED - IS AUDIO PLAYING?**).

In your music: Problem-frequency detection at the push of a button — a brilliant starting point for de-essing, de-harshing or de-mudding without manual hunting.

Pro tip: Don't accept every suggestion. Press and hold each marker's S button, and only commit the ones that genuinely sound like problems.

SMART Source Profile

What it does: Tunes SMART's detection for a specific source type. TARGET uses the sidechain as a reference curve and suggests where your track sticks out against it.

Range/units: AUTO (default), VOCAL, DRUMS, BUS, BASS, TARGET — picked in the SMART popup. The chosen profile shows in the cell (e.g. **SMART - VOCAL**). The popup also has a KEY row (ON/OFF, root, scale) that stays in sync with the KEY popup.

In your music: Tailors auto-detection to the material so suggestions are more relevant.

Pro tip: Use **TARGET** with a reference track on the sidechain to nudge your source toward a sound you love.

Global Delta

What it does: The **DELTA** button in the bottom bar lets you listen to everything being removed across all bands at once.

Range/units: On/off. If any band has its own Delta or Solo on, that takes priority.

In your music: Confirm the overall character of what the plugin is taking out of the mix.

Pro tip: If Global Delta sounds like *music* and not just junk, you're over-processing somewhere — back off the busiest band.

KEY (key/scale-aware suppression)

What it does: Tells the suppressor what key the song is in, so it can weigh *"is this note supposed to be here?"* alongside its usual *"is this peak ringing?"*. Click the **KEY** cell in the bottom bar to open the popup (**KEY - SPARE IN-KEY, SUPPRESS THE REST**): an **ON/OFF** switch, a **ROOT** dropdown (C to B), a **SCALE** dropdown with six scales — Major, Natural Minor, Harmonic Minor, Major Pentatonic, Minor Pentatonic, Blues — and three sliders. In-key resonances (the music) get their suppression depth pulled back by up to the **PROTECT** amount; out-of-key ringing (the junk) gets pushed harder by up to the **BIAS** amount. **TOL** sets how many cents off-pitch a peak can be and still count as in-key, with a gentle falloff so the naturally-detuned upper harmonics of in-key notes (5ths, 7ths) stay protected.

Range/units: ON/OFF (default OFF); 12 roots × 6 scales (default C, Natural Minor); PROTECT 0–100% (default 70%); BIAS 0–100% (default 35%); TOL 5–50 cents (default 25). The cell shows the short form, e.g. **KEY: F# MIN**. KEY settings are saved with your profiles; profiles without KEY settings (older ones and Phil's Profiles) load with KEY off.

In your music: Clean ringing and harshness out of tonal, busy material without ever chewing on the actual notes of the performance — the mask leans against the junk and spares the music.

Pro tip: It's a nudge, not a hard mask — the resonance detection stays in charge and KEY only tilts its decisions on the **cut side** (CUT bands, and the cutting half of SHAPE), so it can never boost anything. It works at full strength between about 120 Hz and 9 kHz and fades out to nothing below 60 Hz and above 15 kHz, where key information stops being meaningful. Turn KEY on and SMART's markers take the key into account too, so the brightest suggestions really are the safest cuts.

GAIN MATCH (Auto-Gain)

What it does: Measures how much quieter (or louder) the processed signal is than the input, then sets the output to match. Click **GAIN MATCH** in the bottom bar to open its popup, hit **START MEASURING** while the music plays (the cell reads **MEASURING**), then **STOP & PREVIEW**. Press **APPLY** to add the measured amount to OUT, or **DISCARD** to drop it.

Range/units: Measured correction up to ±12 dB; OUT stays within its ±12 dB range. Measuring pauses while the global DELTA is on.

In your music: Keeps perceived level constant for fair before/after comparison while smoothing.

Pro tip: Always A/B level-matched — "louder" can fool you into thinking a setting is better when it's just hotter. Re-measure after big changes.

AMOUNT

What it does: Scales the depth of every band at once — one control to dial the whole treatment up or down.

Range/units: 0–100% (default 100%). Drag up/down; double-click resets to 100%.

In your music: Pull the whole effect back a touch without touching a single band.

Pro tip: Set your bands a little heavier than needed, then use AMOUNT as the final "how much" fader.

Output Gain

What it does: Sets the final output level of the plugin (**OUT** in the bottom bar).

Range/units: -12 dB to +12 dB. Drag up/down; double-click resets to 0 dB.

In your music: Make-up or trim level after processing.

Pro tip: Use GAIN MATCH to set it for you, or nudge it by hand to bring the smoothed signal back to unity before it hits the next plugin.

GR Readout

What it does: Shows the live amount of gain reduction being applied across the spectrum (**GR -2.4 dB**). It turns green once the plugin is working by more than about half a dB.

Range/units: dB, read-only.

In your music: Your instant readout of how hard the plugin is working.

Pro tip: Watch it while you A/B: if GR keeps climbing but you can't hear an improvement, back off DEPTH or AMOUNT.

Quality Mode

What it does: Selects processing/analysis quality; higher settings use more CPU for cleaner, higher-resolution suppression. Click **QUALITY** to open the popup. It has two rows: **REALTIME** (what you hear while playing back) and **OFFLINE** (used when you bounce or export). **LIVE** is a special option: the detector keeps running for analysis and control, but the audio flows through a zero-latency filter bank instead of the spectral engine — **0 samples of latency** instead of one full analysis window. The honest tradeoff, stated right in the UI: a touch softer, reacts slightly later. Global and per-band **Delta** and per-band **Solo** still work in LIVE, and detection scales with your session's sample rate, so it holds up at 88.2 and 96 kHz.

Range/units: ECO, NORMAL, HIGH, ULTRA, MAX, LIVE in each row. Defaults: REALTIME = NORMAL, OFFLINE = ULTRA. A caption strip describes each level in plain words — hover to see what it trades before you commit.

Level	What the plugin says
ECO	Lightest on CPU.
NORMAL	Balanced quality and CPU.
HIGH	Finer detail. More CPU and latency.
ULTRA	Extra clean. Best for offline bounces.
MAX	Highest quality. Best for offline bounces.
LIVE	Zero latency for tracking and live. A touch softer, reacts slightly later.

In your music: Trade CPU (and, in LIVE, a hair of resolution) against latency and detail — from zero-latency tracking to mastering-grade suppression.

Pro tip: Use **LIVE** in the REALTIME row to record vocals or perform through the plugin with no latency; run ECO/NORMAL while arranging; bump to ULTRA/MAX for the mixdown or master. Leave OFFLINE on ULTRA or MAX and your bounce gets the full engine regardless.

Bypass (top bar)

What it does: Disables all processing and shows a "BYPASSED - CLICK ANYWHERE TO RE-ENABLE PROCESSING" overlay.

Range/units: On/off (default processing ON; power-icon button).

In your music: Instant true A/B of the whole plugin.

Pro tip: Bypass frequently while mixing. If the bypassed version sounds better, your settings are doing harm, not help.

Profiles / Preset Browser

What it does: Saves and loads complete band configurations. Click **PROFILES** in the top bar.

Range/units: Two lists: **PHIL'S PROFILES** (factory) and **YOUR PROFILES**. The factory set: BALANCE IT, DE-HARSH, DE-MUD, BRIGHTEN, TILT UP, GOLDEN MASTER, SMOOTHEN IT, NOSESPRAY. Search, save your own (with a category: VOCALS, DRUMS, BASS, GUITAR, MIX or MASTER) and open your profiles folder right from the browser. A profile stores all 8 bands plus the KEY settings; AMOUNT, OUT and QUALITY stay as they are.

In your music: Recall task-specific starting points instantly.

Pro tip: Load DE-HARSH or DE-MUD as a launchpad, then drag the bands onto *your* actual problem frequencies — a preset is a head start, not a destination.

UI Zoom

What it does: Scales the plugin interface.

Range/units: Drag the grip in the bottom-right corner, 0.5x to 3.0x (as far as your screen allows), or click it for a list of fixed sizes. **Reset Zoom** lives in Settings.

In your music: Resize the window for comfort or fine detail work.

Pro tip: Zoom in when drawing narrow surgical bands so you can place edges precisely.

Undo / Redo

What it does: The arrow buttons in the top bar revert or reapply recent edits to the suppressor panel.

Range/units: Up to 50 steps back/forward.

In your music: Experiment freely, step back instantly.

Pro tip: Go aggressive while exploring — Undo means there's no penalty for trying a bold fix.

Settings / AI Assistant / Documentation

What it does: The gear opens Settings (hint language, Show Tooltips, Reset Zoom, a Tutorial link and the version number). The robot icon opens the in-app AI Assistant chat, and the book icon opens this documentation inside the plugin.

Range/units: Open/close panels (no audio effect). Languages: English, Deutsch, Francais, Espanol, Italiano.

In your music: In-app help and configuration whenever you're stuck.

Pro tip: Ask the AI assistant how to handle a specific source — it's faster than alt-tabbing to a browser mid-flow.

Visual Feedback & Metering

THE_SMOOTHER 2 is built to be *read*, not just heard:

- **Live spectrum analyzer** across the whole panel (-48 dB to +6 dB) with a frequency grid so you always know exactly where each band sits; the shading between the input and output curves shows what's being cut or lifted.
- **Colored band regions** distinguish CUT, SHAPE and LIFT bands at a glance, each numbered 1–8, with a ghost-band preview where a new band would land.
- **Live readouts while you edit:** the exact frequency when you hover a band edge, the depth percentage while you drag the depth line, and a dashed CLIP line on MANUAL bands.
- **GR readout** in the bottom bar shows the live attenuation being applied — your instant readout of how hard the plugin is working.
- **SMART markers** encode detection confidence in their brightness and thickness — chunkier means surer — and a committed suggestion flashes green as it becomes a band.
- **Delta and Solo** states get their own colors so you always know what you're listening to.
- **Multilingual hints** (EN/DE/FR/ES/IT) explain whatever's under your cursor, and a clear **BYPASSED** overlay leaves no doubt when processing is off.

How to Use It — Real-World Workflows

De-harsh a vocal

1. Insert **THE_SMOOTHER 2** on the vocal. Set **Quality** to **HIGH**.
2. Click **SMART**, choose **VOCAL**, hit **START LISTENING** while the vocal plays, then **STOP LISTENING**.
3. Press and hold the **S** button under the marker around 2–6 kHz to confirm it's the harshness, then click the marker to add it as a band.
4. Turn on the band's **Delta** and adjust **DEPTH** and **SHARP** until you hear only the harsh ring being removed — not the vocal's body.
5. Set **ATK** medium-fast, **REL** moderate, switch **Delta** off, and trust the **GR** readout. Toggle **Bypass** to confirm the win. (Or start from the **DE-HARSH** profile and drag the band onto your exact frequency.)

De-ess without dulling

1. Add a band over the sibilant highs (often 5–9 kHz).
2. Crank **SHARP** for a narrow notch and set a fast **ATK**.
3. Set the channel to **S** (or leave it on **L+R**) so the up-front center stays bright.
4. Raise **SELECT** until it only grabs the "ess," not every cymbal or breath.
5. Use **Delta** to verify you're only removing sibilance, then dial **DEPTH** to taste.

Clean mud off a bus or bass

1. Load the **DE-MUD** profile, or add a band over 200–500 Hz.
2. Keep **SHARP** lower for broad, musical smoothing.
3. Leave the band on **SMART** so it leans in hardest where the mud builds up.
4. A/B with **Bypass** after a **GAIN MATCH** — you want clarity, not just a thinner sound.

Polish the master bus

1. Insert on the master, **Quality** to **ULTRA** or **MAX**.
2. Try **BALANCE IT** or **GOLDEN MASTER** as a starting profile.
3. Add a gentle wide **SHAPE** band with a slight bright **TILT** for dynamic polish.
4. Raise **LINK** to keep the center stable, and use the global **DELTA** to confirm you're only removing genuine offenders.

Track or perform with zero latency (LIVE)

1. Open **QUALITY** and set the **REALTIME** row to **LIVE** — the plugin now adds **0 samples of latency**.
2. Add a band (or run **SMART**) over the harshness you want gone while you record.

3. Record or perform through it: what you monitor is exactly what gets printed, in time — no lag.
4. For the final bounce there's nothing to change: the **OFFLINE** row (ULTRA by default) takes over when you bounce, for the cleanest result.

Key-aware mix cleanup

1. Click the **KEY** cell, switch it **ON**, and set the song's **ROOT** and **SCALE**.
2. Add your de-harsh / de-mud bands as usual (or use SMART — its markers now take the key into account).
3. Raise **PROTECT** so in-key notes are spared and **BIAS** so out-of-key ringing gets caught harder; nudge **TOL** up if the material is a little detuned.
4. A/B with **Bypass** — you're clearing the junk without dulling the actual notes.

Pro Tips & Creative Techniques

- **Find with Solo, fix with Delta.** Solo isolates the region so you can spot the problem; Delta lets you tune the removal until it's pure problem and no music.
- **Let SMART do the hunting,** but always audition (press and hold the S button) before committing — the brightest markers are the safest bets.
- **Build a band, then bypass it.** If the band-bypassed version sounds better, delete it. Restraint is the whole game with a de-resonance tool.
- **SHAPE + TILT = dynamic tone shaping.** A wide SHAPE band with a warm or bright tilt evens out a range *and* steers its color, all program-dependent.
- **Mid/Side for stereo de-harshing:** target S to soften wide sizzle while keeping the mono center punchy and present.
- **Unmask to carve space:** sidechain a band to a competing element so it ducks only when that element needs room — far more transparent than static EQ carving.
- **Use CLIP as a level ceiling** — switch a band to MANUAL and set CLIP just under the peaks you want to tame, so the band only clamps when that range gets too loud.
- **AMOUNT is your master fader for the effect.** Dial in bands a little heavy, then pull AMOUNT back until it disappears into the mix.
- **Save your moves.** When a band setup nails a recurring source (your go-to de-ess, your vocal de-harsh), save it under YOUR PROFILES and recall it in seconds next time.
- **Let KEY take the music's side.** On tonal, busy material, turn KEY on and lean on PROTECT/BIAS so the suppressor cleans ringing and harshness without ever chewing on the actual notes — it only works on the cut side, so it can only ever protect or push, never boost.
- **Go LIVE to track and perform.** LIVE in the REALTIME row is 0-latency — monitor and record straight through it, and leave the OFFLINE row on ULTRA or MAX so your bounce gets the full spectral engine.

Quick Start

1. **Insert** THE_SMOOTHER 2 on a harsh, muddy or ringing track.
2. **Play** the audio and watch the live spectrum.
3. **Click SMART**, pick a source profile, hit **START LISTENING**, then **STOP LISTENING** and click a suggested marker to drop a band on the problem.
4. **Turn on Delta** for that band and nudge **DEPTH** and **SHARP** until you hear only the offending resonance being removed.
5. **Run GAIN MATCH**, then **Bypass** to A/B — confirm it sounds cleaner, then keep playing. Done.

Specs

- **Plugin type:** Dynamic multiband resonance suppressor (de-resonance / de-harsh / de-mud / de-ring processor), with optional key/scale-aware suppression.
- **Bands:** Up to 8 independent, each in CUT / SHAPE / LIFT mode, drawn directly on a live spectrum (20 Hz–20 kHz).
- **Key-aware (KEY):** optional key/scale setting — 12 roots × 6 scales (Major, Natural Minor, Harmonic Minor, Major Pentatonic, Minor Pentatonic, Blues) with PROTECT / BIAS / TOL — that protects in-key notes and pushes harder on out-of-key ringing, on the cut side only.
- **Quality modes:** ECO, NORMAL, HIGH, ULTRA, MAX and LIVE (0-latency), set separately for REALTIME playback (default NORMAL) and OFFLINE bounces (default ULTRA).
- **Latency:** one analysis window at ECO–MAX (reported to your DAW for compensation); **0 samples in LIVE.**
- **Sidechain:** input for UNM (Unmask) and SCR (SC Resonance) bands and the SMART TARGET profile.
- **UI:** Single interactive spectrum panel, 1100×550 at 100% size, 0.5x–3.0x zoom, multilingual hints (EN/DE/FR/ES/IT), in-app docs and AI assistant.
- **Formats:** VST3, AU (macOS), AAX (macOS and Windows). No standalone version.

Stuck, or found something this manual doesn't cover? Write to me at philspeiser.com/support. I answer support myself.