Introduction

This manual contains complete documentation for FabFilter Pro-MB in printer-friendly format. All information in this manual is also accessible via the Help button in FabFilter Pro-MB's user interface.

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About FabFilter Pro-MB

Multiband compression and expansion are very powerful and useful tools, but many people find the concept quite difficult to grasp, or don't know how and when to use it. With FabFilter Pro-MB, multiband dynamics processing becomes intuitive yet powerful at the same time.

The traditional approach to multiband processing is to simply split the whole incoming signal into bands using a set of crossovers. In most cases however, this is overly complicated as you're often only interested in working with a particular frequency range. Instead, we have chosen to approach this from the user's perspective: think bands, not crossovers. You're working on some audio and want to adjust a certain frequency range… so just create a band at that frequency range and start working! The interface clearly reflects that the rest of the spectrum stays untouched.

Next, we have also pushed the limits to achieve the best possible sound. We've gone through a lot of research and developed our own unique Dynamic Phase processing mode. It has virtually the same frequency response as traditional multiband processing, but features zero latency operation, no pre-ringing effects, and only introduces phase changes when actually changing the gain. This mode really makes Pro-MB stand apart! Of course, we have also included an excellent Linear Phase mode and a traditional Minimum Phase mode.

As you've come to expect from FabFilter, Pro-MB has a highly intelligent and intuitive interface, making it easy to create, organize and adjust bands that are freely placed in the frequency spectrum. With its well-thought-out display, designed to achieve an optimal workflow, FabFilter Pro-MB is an absolute time-saver and a joy to use.

Key features

- Up to six processing bands, freely placed anywhere in the spectrum
- Unique Dynamic Phase processing mode plus excellent Linear Phase and traditional Minimum Phase modes
- Any form of dynamics processing, from highly transparent compression, limiting and expansion to pumping upward compression and punchy gating
- Fully customizable per band: lookahead (up to 20 ms), variable knee, variable stereo linking with mid-only or side-only processing, band/free side-chain triggering (external or internal), variable slopes between 6 dB/oct and 48 dB/oct (in Dynamic and Linear Phase mode)
- Intelligent, highly program- and frequency-dependent attack and release curves
- Full Screen mode: with just the click of a button, Pro-MB instantly fills the whole screen, making super-precise adjustments easy and fast
- Choose between normal or large interface sizes
- Unique interactive multiband display, designed for an optimal workflow
- Global dry/wet mix from 0% to 200%
- High-quality audio processing algorithms with 64-bit internal processing where needed
- Up to four times oversampling

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- Accurate and smooth, customizable [real-time frequency analyzer](#) with pre-processing, post-processing and SC options, freeze, tilt, speed and resolution settings, and horizontal spectrum zoom

- Precise output metering

- Retina support on OS X and High DPI support on Windows

FabFilter Pro-MB is available in VST, VST3, AU (Audio Units), AAX Native and AudioSuite formats (all both 64-bit and 32-bit), as well as RTAS (32-bit only), for Mac OS X and Windows.

Windows requirements:	**Mac OS X requirements**:
32-bit: Windows 8, 7, Vista or XP	32-bit: OS X 10.5 or higher
64-bit: Windows 8, 7 or Vista (x64)	64-bit: OS X 10.6 or higher
VST 2/3 host or Pro Tools	AU or VST 2/3 host or Pro Tools
	Intel processor

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Quick start

The installer will copy the FabFilter Pro-MB plug-in into the common VST, VST 3, AU (OS X only) and Pro Tools plug-in folders on your computer. On Mac OS X, the global plug-in folders in /Library/Audio/Plug-Ins are used.

In most cases, your host will then recognize the plugin automatically. However, if the instructions below do not work, see Manual installation instead.

- **Cubase**
  Choose an empty insert slot, for example in the Mixer, and select FabFilter Pro-MB from the menu that appears. To use the MIDI features in Pro-MB, create a new MIDI track and set its output to the Pro-MB instance you have just created. (The VST 3 version of Pro-MB can be found in the Dynamics section.)

- **Logic Pro**
  Choose an empty insert slot on one of your audio tracks, instrument tracks or buses and select FabFilter Pro-MB from the pop-up menu. You will find FabFilter Pro-MB in the *Audio Units -> FabFilter* section (named FF Pro-MB).

- **Ableton Live**
  In Session view, select the track you would like to place FabFilter Pro-MB on, for example by clicking the track name. At the left top of Ableton Live's interface, click on the Plug-in Device Browser icon (third icon from the top). From the plug-ins list, double-click FabFilter/FabFilter Pro-MB, or drag it onto the track.

- **Pro Tools**
  Choose an empty insert slot on one of your audio tracks, instrument tracks or buses and select FabFilter Pro-MB from the pop-up menu in the Dynamics section.

To begin, just open the plug-in, move your mouse above the display and click anywhere to create a first band. Enjoy!
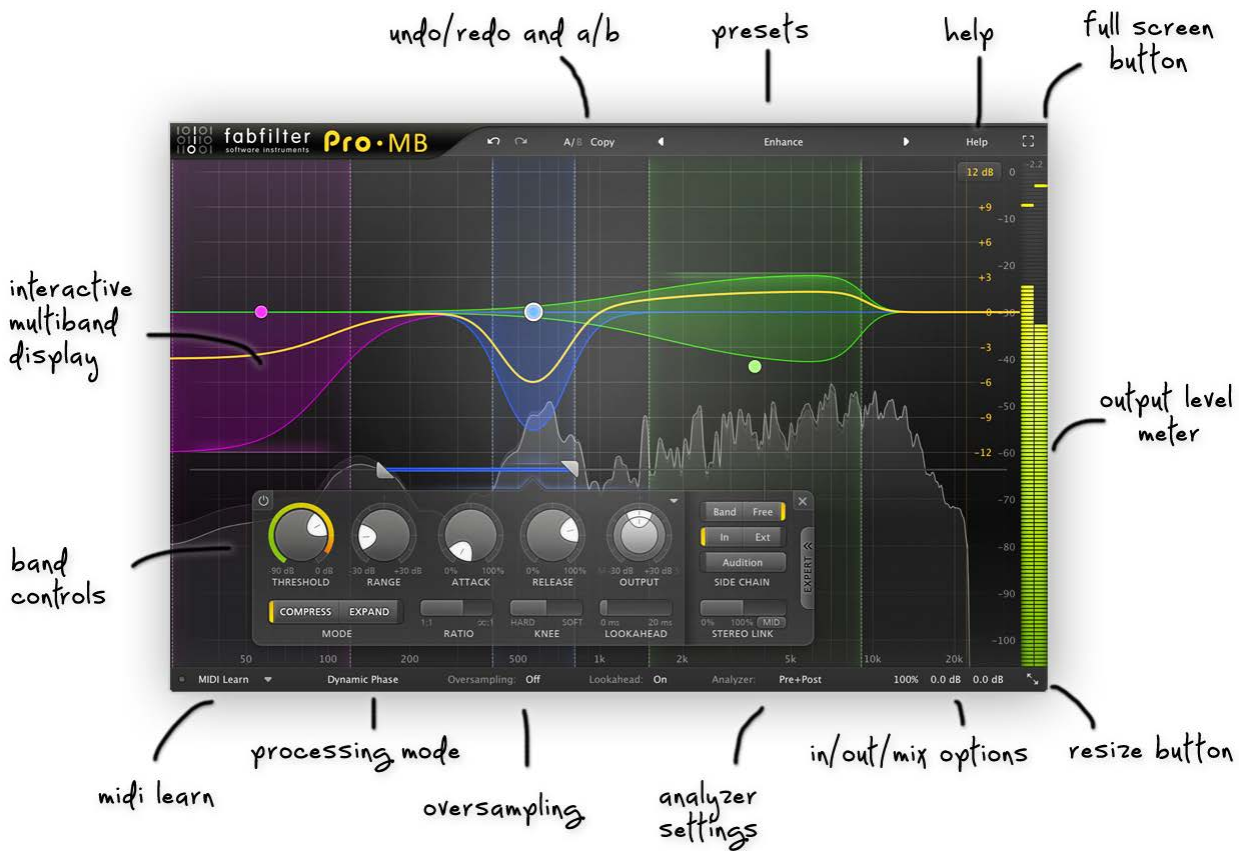

Next: FabFilter Pro-MB overview

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About FabFilter Pro-MB

Overview

The interface of FabFilter Pro-MB is designed to be easy to use while providing all necessary information and controls. It consists of the following elements:

- **Interactive multiband display**
  Using the interactive display, you can easily create, organize and adjust processing bands. See Display and workflow.

- **Band controls**
  The band controls let you adjust the dynamics, level and triggering settings of one more selected bands. See Basic band controls.

- **Level metering**
  At the right of the interface, the output level meter and level read-outs provide an immediate overview of the current output level. See Input and output options.

- **MIDI Learn**
  MIDI Learn lets you easily associate any MIDI controller with any plug-in parameter. See MIDI Learn.

- **Processing mode**
  The Processing mode setting specifies how the incoming signal is split into bands before processing them. See Processing mode.

- **Oversampling**
  The Oversampling setting sets the amount of internal oversampling, which reduces possible aliasing for fast/aggressive dynamics processing and improves high-end frequency response for the Minimum Phase and Dynamic Phase processing modes, at the cost of additional CPU usage. See Oversampling.

- **Analyzer settings**
  Using the Analyzer settings, you can enable and customize the built-in spectrum analyzer that lets you visually judge the effect of processing on the incoming signal. See Spectrum analyzer.

- **Input and output options**
  At the right of the bottom bar, you can bypass the entire plug-in and adjust the initial input and final output levels. See Input and output options.

- **Resize and Full Screen mode**
  Using the Resize button at the far right of the bottom bar, you can choose a desired interface size. In addition, using the Full Screen button at the right top corner, you can enter Full Screen mode, in which Pro-MB fills the whole screen. See Full Screen mode and resizing.

- **Presets, undo, A/B, help**
  With the preset buttons, you can easily browse through the factory presets or save your own settings so you can re-use them in other songs. The Undo, Redo, A/B and Copy buttons at the top of the plug-in interface enable you to undo your changes and switch between different states of the plug-in. Finally, the Help menu provides access to help and version information. See Loading presets and Undo, redo, A/B switch.
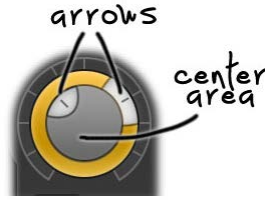
Next:

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Knobs

It is easy to control FabFilter Pro-MB's parameters with the large round knobs. They will light up when you move the mouse cursor around to indicate that you can adjust them. The moment you move the mouse cursor over a knob, a parameter value display will pop up, which shows the name and the current value of the parameter.

All knobs support four ways of control:

1. **Vertical mode**
   Click on the center area of a knob and drag up or down to rotate it. The knob reacts to the speed with which you are dragging, so if you move the mouse slowly, you make precise adjustments.

2. **Rotate mode**
   Grab the arrow of the knob and drag it around. By moving the mouse cursor further away from the knob while dragging it, you can make precise adjustments.

3. **Mouse wheel mode**
   Perhaps the easiest way to make adjustments is by using the mouse wheel when you hover over a knob. This mode works for all the knobs and possible panning rings. (On Windows, you might need to click in the plug-in interface first to make sure it is the active window.)

4. **Text entry mode**
   Double-click a knob to enter an exact value using the keyboard.

Tips

- To reset a knob to its default position, hold down the *Ctrl* key (Windows) or *Command* key (Mac OS X) and click the knob once.

- To fine-tune a value when using vertical drag mode or the mouse wheel, hold down the *Shift* key while dragging or moving the mouse wheel.

- In text entry mode, there are several handy shortcuts. With frequency values, you can type e.g. '1k' to set the value to 1000 Hz. With dB values, you can type e.g. '2x' to get +6 dB (the value that corresponds to two times louder). With all values, you can also type a percentage (e.g. '50%' will put a knob exactly in the middle position).

- Pro Tools note: the RTAS/AS and AAX versions of our plug-ins implement the default Pro Tools keyboard shortcuts for fine tune (*Ctrl*+drag on Windows, *Command*+drag on Mac OS X) and reset to default (*Alt*+click).

- Sometimes, knobs in our plug-in interfaces are linked: these be adjusted simultaneously by holding down the *Alt* key while dragging on one of them. For example, an output level and input level setting of a plug-in could be adjusted simultaneously (in the opposite direction) this way.
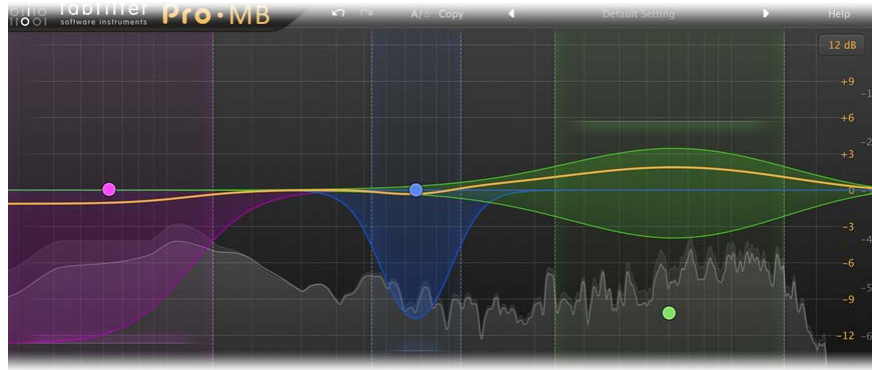

Next: Display and workflow

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Display and workflow

The large display provides an overview all bands and lets you easily create new bands and edit them. Each band visualizes its potential dynamic range, while the thick yellow curve shows the overall dynamic frequency response at the present moment.

Unlike traditional multiband tools, the unique workflow in FabFilter Pro-MB does not require you to divide the entire spectrum in bands. You just create one or more bands at the frequency range that you actually want to work on, and leave the rest of the spectrum unprocessed. We take care of the rest!

Creating bands

* To create the first band, just click anywhere in the display. The band is created with a default width, but you can adjust this with the mouse wheel as you hover over the display.

* To create more bands, hover over an empty area or over an existing band in the display and click the + button at the top.

* Alternatively, you can drag the yellow overall curve or double-click in an empty area.

After creating a band, you can immediately start dragging to adjust it.

Selecting bands

* Click anywhere inside a band to select it.

* Click and drag on the display background to select adjacent bands by dragging a rectangle around them.

* Alternatively, hold down *Ctrl* (*Cmd* on Mac OS X) and click another band to select multiple bands. Hold down *Shift* and click a band to select a consecutive range of bands.

* Click once in an empty area to deselect all bands.

Adjusting and editing bands

* Click the peak dot in the center of a band and drag vertically to adjust the **gain**, or horizontally to adjust the **center frequency**. All selected bands are adjusted in parallel. As you move a band across the spectrum, the other bands are squashed and then moved as well to make space.

* Use the mouse wheel or hold down *Ctrl* (*Cmd* on Mac OS X) and drag vertically to adjust the **width** of a band.

* Hold down *Shift* while dragging to **fine-tune** the settings of the selected bands.

* Normally, dragging is constrained to either a horizontal or a vertical adjustment. To bypass this and drag freely in both directions, hold down *Alt* while dragging.

If you move a band close to another band, it will **snap** to it, and they will start sharing a single crossover. Likewise, you can also snap a band to the display edge. If you want, you can use this to divide the entire spectrum in bands for a more traditional approach to multiband processing.

When hovering over a snapped crossover line, two buttons appear. The **Split** button creates a new band between the two snapped bands. The **Unsnap** button unsnaps the two bands, creating a small empty area in between. This lets you move them independently again.

When you hover the mouse over a band, additional controls appear in the display:
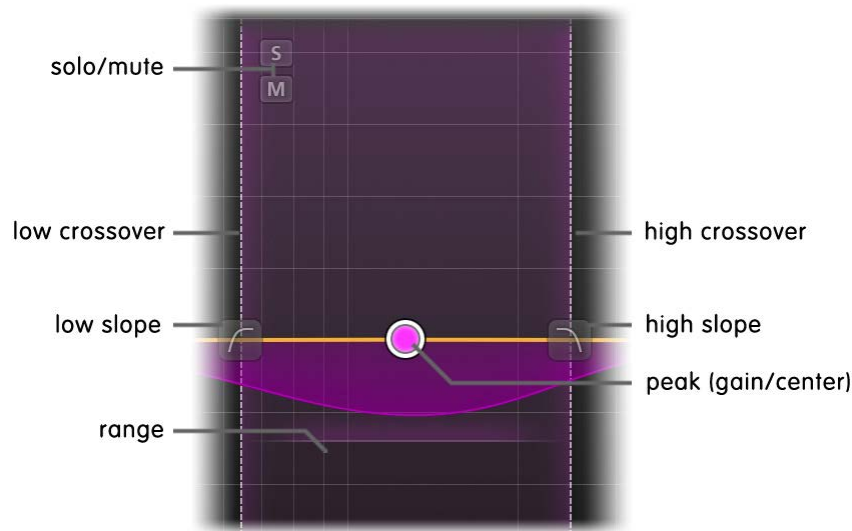
- The **solo/mute** buttons enable you to mute a band or listen to it exclusively. Hold down the solo or mute button to solo or mute a band only temporarily, as long as the mouse button is pressed, To solo or mute a band exclusively, *Ctrl*-click (Windows) or *Cmd*-click (Mac) the solo or mute button.

- The **crossover** lines let you drag each crossover independently. In contrast, dragging the peak dot horizontally changes the center frequency, adjusting both crossovers in parallel.

- The **slope** buttons set the low and high crossover slope for the band. Each crossover can have an independently variable slope value from 6 dB/oct to 48 dB/oct. To change multiple slope values at the same time, click and drag a rectangle around the slope buttons to select more than one.

- The **range** line lets you easily adjust the Range parameter for a band by dragging the line up and down.

In the top-right corner of the display, there is a drop-down button to choose the **display range**: +/- 3 dB, 6 dB, 12 dB or 30 dB. When you are dragging a curve outside the current range of the display, the range will expand automatically as needed.

Horizontal zooming

Sometimes it might be useful to zoom in to a specific frequency for extra precise editing. You can easily do this by clicking and dragging the frequency scale at the bottom of the display, just above the bottom bar. You can do the following:

- Click and **drag up and down** to zoom in and out at the frequency you have clicked on.

- While zoomed in, you can also **drag left and right** to move the frequency scale.

- Just **double-click** the scale to return to its default full range.

Tips

- In **Full Screen mode**, available via the button at the right top of the interface, the display will fill the whole screen so you can make very precise adjustements. See Full Screen mode and resizing.

- You can turn off the automatic adjustment of the display range by clicking **Auto-Adjust Display Range** in the Help menu.

- Note that two display scales are drawn: the yellow scale is adjusted by the Display Range drop-down button and corresponds to the band curves, range and the yellow overall curve. The gray scale is used by the spectrum analyzer and output level meter.

- You can double-click the crossovers, slope buttons and range line to enter a value with the keyboard. When you double-click the peak dot, you start editing the gain of the band; press Tab or double-click on the center frequency in the parameter value display to edit the center frequency instead.

Next: Basic band controls

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Basic band controls

Once one or more bands are selected in the [multiband display](#), controls for the selected bands will appear at the bottom of the display. The band controls will be positioned below the currently selected bands. Note that the arrow at the top of the container has a glow that matches the color of the band it is controlling right now. A subtle yellow glow indicates that you are controlling multiple bands simultaneously.

- The **Threshold** knob sets the threshold level for compression or expansion. Whether the band triggers on signals above or below the threshold depends on both the Range parameter and the current dynamics mode (Compress or Expand): see [Dynamics Mode](#) below. The circular side-chain level meter around the Threshold knob shows the level of the filtered and possibly stereo-linked signal that is used for detection. This feedback makes it a lot easier to choose a proper setting.

- The **Range** knob limits the maximum amount of applied gain change. In addition, the Range knob chooses between downward and upward compression or expansion: see [Dynamics Mode](#) below.

- The **Dynamics Mode** buttons select between compression and expansion. In combination with the Range knob, four different types of dynamic processing are possible: see [Dynamics Mode](#) below.

- The **Attack** knob sets the speed with which gain reduction sets in. Fast attack times are needed when you want to react on transients as fast as possible, for example to achieve limiting (Compress mode) or gating (Expand mode). The Attack knob shows a percentage value from 0% to 100%, because actual attack times are very program dependent, and even depend on the placement of the band in the frequency spectrum.

- The **Release** knob sets the speed at which the compressor/expander recovers from gain reduction. Higher release values will result in more subtle leveling. Like Attack, the Release knob shows a percentage value from 0% to 100%, because actual release times are very program dependent, and even depend on the placement of the band in the frequency spectrum.

- The **Ratio** slider adjusts the amount of compression or expansion that is applied, scaling the dynamic effect of the band on the input signal. For example, when applying compression with a ratio setting of 4:1, three of every four dB above the threshold will be attenuated. In comparison, the Range knob limits the final amount of compression or expansion rather than scaling it.

- The **Knee** slider sets the type of knee to use for the compressor/expander. A soft knee setting causes it to react more gradually around the threshold, somewhat smoothing the dynamic effect.

- The **Lookahead** slider sets the compressor/expander to start reacting up to 20 ms before gain change is actually detected. This is an excellent way to preserve transients, while still avoiding ultra-fast attack times that might cause distortion or aliasing. You can globally enable or disable lookahead with the Lookahead Enabled button in the bottom bar.

- The **Output Level** knob adjusts the final level of the band: this is equal to the gain value controlled by the peak dot for a band in the [display](#). The **Output Pan** ring around the level knob adjusts the panning between mid and side levels of the band, which is very useful in many multiband processing situations. For example, you can easily make the low-end of your signal more mono, or increase high-end stereo width.

- The **bypass button** at the left top lets you easily bypass the currently selected bands. While a band is bypassed, it is dimmed in the display and the bypass button itself glows red. You can temporarily bypass a band by holding down the mouse on the bypass button.

- The **delete button** at the right top removes the currently selected bands. If you have accidentally deleted some bands, you can easily restore them using the [Undo](#) button at the top of the plug-in interface.

- The **band preset button**, just left of the delete button, opens a drop-down menu that lets you save and load specific settings for a band. You can simply overwrite the *Default* preset to change the default settings for new bands.

- The **Expert button** at the right enables or disables the [expert controls](#) for all bands.

Dynamics Mode

FabFilter Pro-MB can apply any kind of dynamics processing per band, using the Dynamics Mode buttons in combination with the Range knob. When the Dynamics Mode is set to Compress, use either a negative or positive range to apply downward (normal) or upward compression. The same applies to Expand mode. Here are diagrams to visualize the four different combinations:

Downward compression

Using Compress mode in combination with a negative Range will result in normal, downward compression. The dynamic range of the signal is reduced by attenuating peaks that exceed the specified threshold level.

Upward compression

Using Compress mode in combination with a positive gain does the opposite of normal compression: instead of reducing peaks above the threshold, it adds gain as soon as the level drops below the threshold. So this reduces the dynamic range from the noise floor up instead of from the peaks down. Upward compression can be very useful to add loudness and body, while leaving the transients untouched. Also, when used with extreme range, ratio and release values, you can achieve creative pumping effects.

Downward Expansion

When using Expand mode in combination with a negative range, the signal will be attenuated as soon as it drops below the threshold, increasing the perceived dynamics of the signal around the threshold. This is the most common type of expansion and with higher ratio and range values, it's often called *gating*.

Upward Expansion

Expand mode in combination with a positive range will again do the opposite of normal expansion: instead of attenuating the signal when it drops below the threshold, it will add gain as soon as the signal exceeds the threshold, emphasizing the peaks in the audio. So this increases the dynamic range from the threshold up instead of from the threshold down. Upward expansion is a great way to enhance transients. For example, you can easily increase the impact of a snare in a drum loop using upward expansion.

Tips

- If multiple bands are selected, the band controls will adjust all selected bands simultaneously.

- If you hold down the *Alt* key while dragging a band's Output Level knob, the Output Pan ring will simultaneously be adjusted in such a way, that **make-up gain** is applied according to the current [Stereo Link](#) Mid-only or Side-Only processing amount. For example, when using 100% mid-only processing, holding the *Alt* key while dragging the band's Output Level to +6 dB, will also set the panning to "-6 dB Side". This ensures the side signal stays unchanged, only adding make-up gain to the mid signal.

- If lookahead is disabled, [oversampling](#) is turned off, and the [processing mode](#) is set to Dynamic Phase or Minimum Phase, FabFilter Pro-MB works without any latency. When lookahead is enabled, the latency will be 20 ms, plus possible additional latency for Linear Phase processing and oversampling.
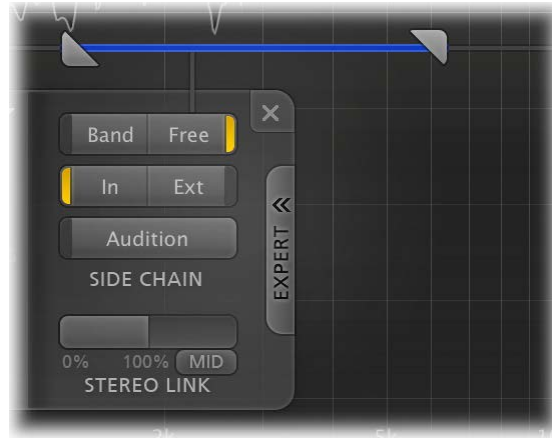

Next: [Expert band controls](#)

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Expert band controls

Next to the normal [band controls](#), FabFilter Pro-MB contains additional expert controls, enabled by the *Expert* button at the right of the floating band controls. These consist of advanced yet highly useful side-chain triggering and stereo-linking options.

- The **Band/Free** buttons select the frequency range of the trigger signal: either the band input signal itself (which is the default setting, used when Expert mode is off), or a freely chosen range anywhere in the spectrum. Enabling Free mode will reveal side-chain filtering controls just above the band controls. It uses intelligent and adaptive filtering, which makes triggering on narrow frequency ranges a lot easier.

- The **In/Ext** buttons choose between the internal, normal plug-in input, or the external side chain input. For more information on connecting the external side chain in various hosts, see [External side chaining](#).

- The **Audition** button lets you listen to the filtered and stereo-linked signal that will be used to trigger dynamics processing for this band. You can turn Audition mode on or off with a single click, but you can also click-and-hold the button to temporarily audition the trigger signal.

Stereo linking and mid-only/side-only processing

The Stereo Link slider sets the amount of stereo linking for the trigger input signal, and also selects between normal stereo processing or mid-only/side-only processing.

The first half of the slider range sets stereo linking from 0% (fully unlinked, channels operate independently) up to 100% (fully linked, resulting in the same gain reduction for both channels).

By dragging the slider further, the band will eventually process only the mid-signal (mono content of the processed audio), or only the side-signal (stereo content of the processed audio). Using the small Stereo Link Mode button at the right bottom of the Stereo Link slider, you can toggle between the two.

Mid- or side-only processing can be very useful, especially during mastering. For example, bass or lead vocals are often placed in the center of the stereo image, so only processing the mid-signal will leave all stereo content untouched, ensuring the most transparent end result possible.

To better understand the working of these settings, enable the Audition button. You can now directly hear the effect of stereo linking and mid-only or side-only processing!

Tips

- When triggering on a very specific frequency, choosing a very narrow range in Free mode often works better than the default Band mode.

- When using mid-only or side-only processing, hold down the *Alt* key while adjusting the Output Level knob for a band to easily apply make-up gain. For example, when using 100% mid-only processing, holding the *Alt* key while dragging the band's Output Level to +6 dB, will also set the panning to "-6 dB Side". This ensures the side signal stays unchanged, only adding make-up gain to the mid signal.

- The Stereo Link slider is of course only enabled in the stereo version of FabFilter Pro-MB.

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Processing mode

The Processing Mode button in the bottom bar selects the algorithm that is used to split the incoming audio into bands to be able to process them separately.

While developing FabFilter Pro-MB, we have gone through a lot of research and developed our own unique Dynamic Phase processing mode. It has virtually the same frequency response as traditional multiband processing, but features zero latency operation, no pre-ringing effects, and only introduces phase changes when actually changing the gain. This mode really makes Pro-MB stand apart! Of course, we have also included an excellent Linear Phase mode and a traditional Minimum Phase mode.
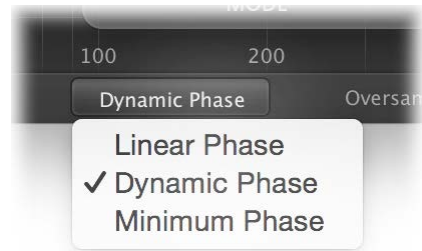
Linear Phase

In Linear Phase mode, the resulting spectrum after splitting the signal into bands and summing them together again, is always guaranteed to have a flat phase response.

FabFilter Pro-MB's linear phase implementation guarantees an excellent frequency response, even at the lowest frequencies! Also, note that changing crossover frequencies in Linear Phase mode sounds just as smooth as when using the other modes, no zipper effects whatsoever. This might sound trivial, but it is actually quite unique in linear-phase processing.

Linear phase processing will give much more transparent results than the traditional Minimum Phase method, at the expense of quite a bit of extra latency and possible pre-ringing artifacts (which are an inevitable side-effect of any kind of linear phase processing).

Minimum Phase

Minimum Phase mode uses a traditional way of splitting the signal into bands using filters. This does not introduce extra latency, but it will introduce static phase changes at the crossover frequencies instead. Especially when using higher slopes, these phase effects will become very apparent and often unpleasant, which makes this method virtually unusable for mastering purposes. The only exception to this, is using the 6 dB/oct slopes throughout. This also does not introduce static phase changes and is therefore very suitable for mastering. With narrow bands, it is even capable of steeper filtering than you would expect!

Dynamic Phase

Finally, the unique Dynamic Phase mode gives you the best of both worlds: it results in a flat/linear phase response when no gain processing is applied, but does not introduce latency or pre-ringing artefacts (like linear-phase processing) or static phase distortion (like minimum phase processing). Minor phase effects will only be introduced when the gain of a band is actually changed. This is possible because the input signal is not actually split into bands, but is treated with intelligent dynamic filtering, offering almost the exact same frequency response as with linear phase and minimum phase processing.

Dynamic Phase is by far the most transparent mode, suitable for both mastering and mixing, so we have chosen this as the default processing mode for new plug-in instances. Note that Dynamics Phase mode closely approximates the behavior of "normal" multiband processing, but in some cases, like muting all bands, or placing bands next to each other, it works slightly differently.

Tips

- You can customize the default processing mode setting (and other default plug-in settings) used for new plug-in instances via the preset menu, by choosing Options > Save As Default.
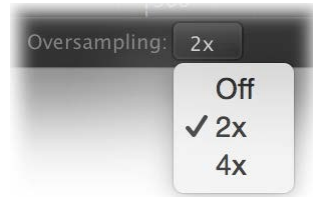
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Oversampling

The dynamics algorithms often need to make very quick changes to the audio when compressing or expanding. These sudden changes can introduce a small amount of **aliasing**, which causes distortion and generally reduces the quality of the audio signal.

Oversampling is a way to reduce that aliasing by running the internal process at a sample rate that is two or four times higher than the host's sample rate. Additionally, this will also improve the frequency/phase response for high frequencies (near the Nyquist frequency at half the sample rate) in the Dynamic Phase and Minimum Phase processing modes.

When should I use oversampling?

You need it more when the compression or expansion is more aggressive and apparent. Usually, this is the case when using lower Attack and Release and/or higher Ratio and Range settings.

Of course, in return for a reduction of possible aliasing/distortion, the plug-in will use more CPU power when using oversampling. In addition, oversampling introduces a small latency, in addition to any [processing mode](#) or [lookahead](#) latency.

Tips

- Do you want to use zero-latency processing? Disable oversampling and lookahead in the bottom bar, and use either Dynamic Phase or Minimum Phase processing.

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Full Screen mode and resizing

With just the click of a button, the Pro-MB interface will fill up the whole computer screen so you can make ultra-precise adjustments and get the best view on the spectrum analyzers.

To exit Full Screen mode, just press Escape or click the Full Screen button again.

Resizing

In addition to Full Screen mode, you can also customize the normal interface size using the Resize button at the right of the bottom bar. You can choose between Medium (the original size of Pro-MB), Large or Extra Large. Once you have selected a size, it will automatically become the default size for new plug-in instances.
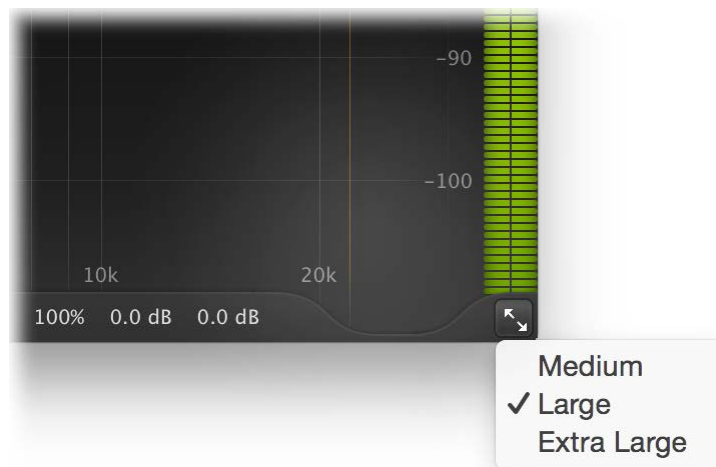
Tips

- When using the VST3 plug-in, you can resize the plug-in interface by just dragging the window edges to any size you like. Of course you can always go back to one of the predefined sizes with the resize button.

- The Large and Extra Large interface options will be greyed out in the Resize button menu if the current display is too small to support them.
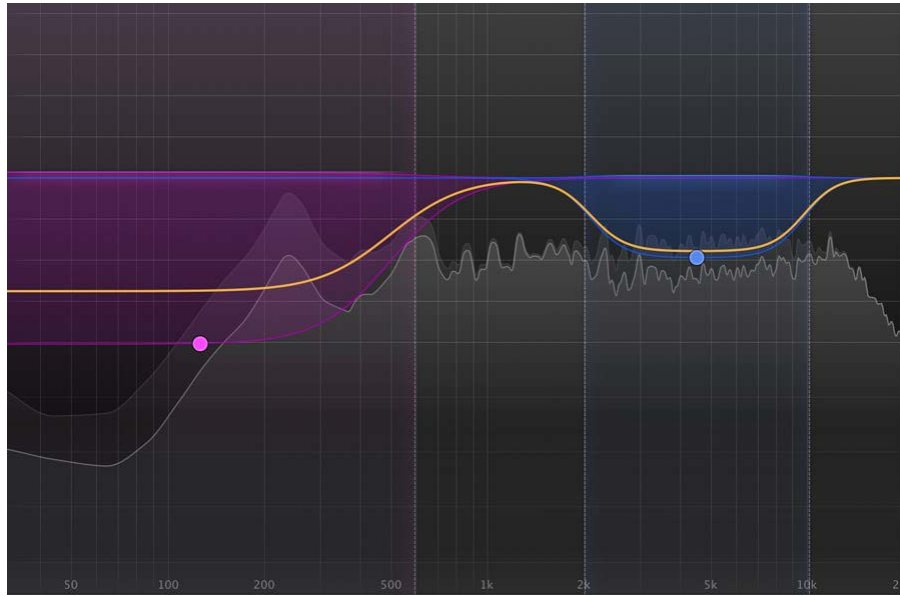

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Spectrum analyzer

To help you judge the effect of the different dynamics processing bands on the incoming audio signal, FabFilter Pro-MB includes a powerful real-time frequency analyzer.

The spectrum analyzer can be customized via the analyzer settings panel, which pops up automatically when you hover above the Analyzer button in the bottom bar. It offers the following options:
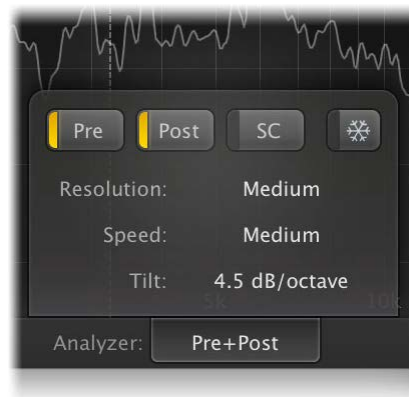
- Using the **Pre**, **Post** and **SC** buttons at the top of the analyzer settings panel, you can choose to enable/disable the pre-processing, post-processing and side-chain spectrum visualization. Note that when global bypass is enabled, the plug-in won't receive or handle any audio, so the spectrum analyzer is disabled as well.

- The **Resolution** setting determines how precise the spectrum analyzer works. Higher resolution settings allow more precision in the low-frequency area, but because more incoming samples are needed to calculate a single spectrum, the update rate will be lower which generally results a slower attack time. The **Low** value corresponds to a resolution of 1024 points, **Medium** to 2048, **High** to 4096, and **Maximum** to 8192 points.

- The **Speed** setting selects the release speed of the spectrum. A fast release shows dynamic changes more clearly, while a slow release gives you more time to examine the spectrum before it disappears.

- The **Tilt** setting tilts the measured spectrum around 1 kHz with a specified slope, expressed in dB per octave. The default setting of 4.5 dB/oct results in a natural looking spectrum, resembling best how loudness is perceived by the human ear.

- Using the **Freeze** button at the left bottom of the panel, the spectrum will stop falling and show the maximum over time. While Freeze is enabled, a blue line at the top of the Analyzer button in the bottom bar indicates this state as well.

The spectrum analyzer uses the gray gain scale at the righthand side of the multiband display, ranging from -100 to 0 dB.

Horizontal zooming

Sometimes it might be useful to zoom in to a specific frequency. You can easily do this by clicking and dragging the frequency scale at the bottom of the display, just above the bottom bar. You can do the following:

- Click and **drag up and down** to zoom in and out at the frequency you have clicked on.

- While zoomed in, you can also **drag left and right** to move the frequency scale.

- Just **double-click** the scale to return to its default full range.

Tips

- When skipping through presets, the current analyzer settings are not changed, but they are saved in songs.

- Hold down the Freeze button to freeze temporarily until you release the mouse button again.

- If desired, you can make the analyzer panel 'sticky' by clicking the Analyzer button once. Click it again to hide the panel.

Next: Input and output options

See Also
Overview
Display and workflow

Input and output options

At the righthand side of the interface, FabFilter Pro-MB offers a high-resolution output level meter. At the top of the meter, the maximum output level is displayed together with a clipping indicator. Simply click the level reading to reset it. Note that the level meter uses the gray display scale, ranging from -100 to 0 dB.

At the right bottom of the interface, you'll find the bypass, mix, input level and output level controls, all accessed via a single output button. As soon as you hover the mouse above the output button, a panel will pop up, giving you access to the following settings:
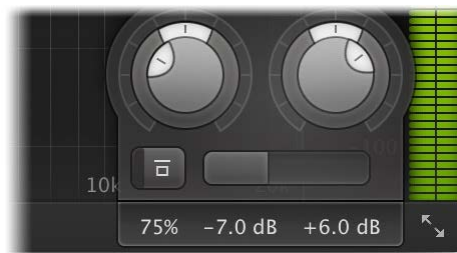
- The **Input Level/Pan** knob at the left adjusts the level and L/R panning of the input signal before any processing is applied. You can use this as an alternative to changing the threshold of all bands.

- The **Output Level/Pan** knob at the right adjusts the level and L/R panning of the final output signal. This lets you compensate globally for any gain added or removed by dynamics processing.

- The **Global Bypass** toggle button to the left of the Mix button bypasses the entire plugin. While most hosts already provide the ability to bypass plug-ins, our internal global bypass feature is guaranteed to correctly compensate the latency of the plug-in and it also applies soft bypassing to avoid clicks. While the plug-in is bypassed, the display dims and a red light glows in the bypass button itself. The top of the output button in the bottom bar is also highlighted in red.

- The **Mix** slider enables you to mix between the dry and processed signals, scaling the overall dynamic and static gain changes for all bands. Because the Mix slider ranges from 0% to 200%, you can also choose to increase overall gain processing instead of fading it out!

Tips

- You can directly adjust the mix, input gain or output gain by clicking and dragging the button text vertically. You can also double-click the button text to directly enter a value using the keyboard.

- If desired, you can make the output options panel 'sticky' by clicking the output button once. Click it again to hide the panel.

- By holding down the *Alt* key while dragging, input and output level can be adjusted simultaneously in the opposite direction.

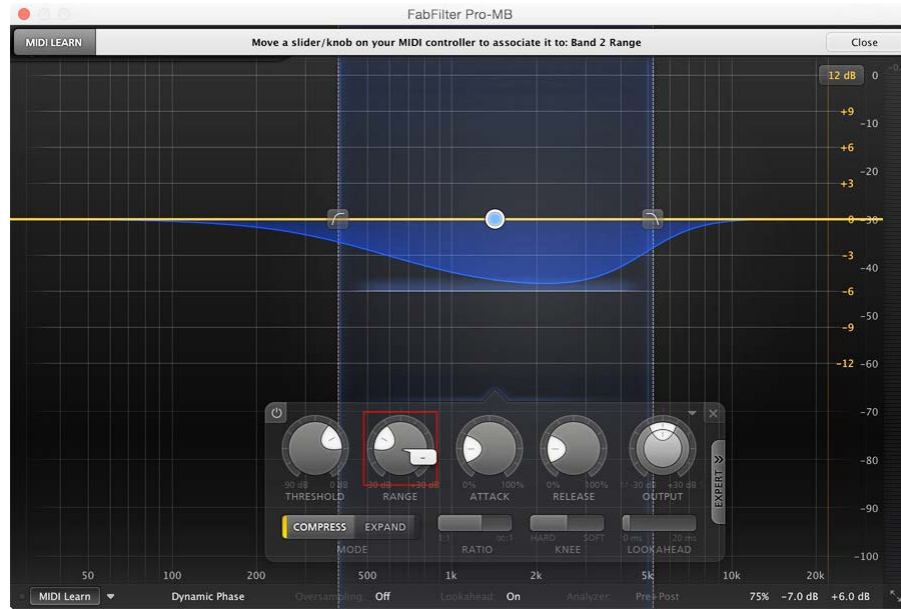- You can reset the level meter peak read-outs by clicking them.

Next: MIDI Learn

See Also
Overview
Knobs

MIDI Learn

Controlling FabFilter Pro-MB's parameters directly with MIDI is very easy using the MIDI Learn feature. With MIDI Learn, you can associate any MIDI controller with any parameter.

Click the **MIDI Learn** button in the bottom bar to enter MIDI Learn mode. The interface dims and the parameters that can be controlled are highlighted. Each parameter has a small text balloon that displays the associated controller number. Now do the following to associate a controller number with a parameter:

1. Touch the control of the desired parameter in the interface that you wish to control. A red square will mark the chosen parameter.

2. Adjust the slider or knob on your MIDI keyboard or MIDI controller that you want to associate with that parameter.

That's it! The parameter will now be controlled with the MIDI controller. You can now go back to step 1 to associate a different parameter. Note that there is no warning when you associate a different knob with a controller number that is already used. It will just be replaced.

To exit MIDI Learn mode, click the MIDI Learn button again, or click Close at the top of the interface.

Click the small menu drop-down button next to the MIDI Learn button to access the **MIDI Learn menu**:

- **Enable MIDI**
  This globally turns MIDI control of parameters on or off: useful in hosts that automatically send all MIDI events on a track to all effect plug-ins associated with that track as well.

- **Clear**
  This submenu shows all parameter associations and lets you delete individual associations or clear all associations in one step.

- **Revert**
  Reverts to the last saved MIDI mapping (or the state when the plug-in was started).

- **Save**
  Saves the current MIDI mapping so Revert will go back to this state. The current mapping is automatically saved when closing the plug-in.

Routing MIDI to effect plug-ins

For MIDI Learn to work properly, the plug-in need to actually receive MIDI of course. Depending on your host, it can be quite difficult to route MIDI data to effect plug-ins. Here's how to do it in the most important hosts:

- **Logic Pro**
  Instead of adding FabFilter Pro-MB to one of the insert slots, create a new **Instrument Track**, and click on the Instrument slot. Then choose **AU MIDI-controlled Effects** > FabFilter > FF Pro-MB. Now, the plug-in receives MIDI. To get audio into the plug-in, click the '**Side Chain**' drop down menu in Logic's plug-in header and choose the actual input track. Next, you can mute that original track, so you only hear the audio through the plug-in. The only downside is that plug-ins with an external side-chain cannot use it anymore.

- **Cubase**
  Simply create a new **MIDI track** and set its output to the Pro-MB instance you would like to control via MIDI.

- **Pro Tools**
  Create a new **MIDI track**. From the MIDI input drop down menu, choose your MIDI device (if not already selected) and from the MIDI output drop down menu, choose FabFilter Pro-MB -> channel 1 for the instance you would like to control.

- **Ableton Live**
  First of all, create a new **MIDI track**. From the 'MIDI from' drop down menu, choose your MIDI device (if not already selected). Then, in the 'MIDI to' drop down menu, choose the Audio track that has FabFilter Pro-MB on it. NOTE: only the first plug-in on any
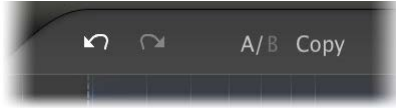
track can receive MIDI!

See Also
Overview

Undo, redo, A/B switch

The Undo and Redo buttons at the top of the FabFilter Pro-MB interface enable you to easily undo changes you made to the plug-in. With the A/B feature, you can quickly switch between two different states of the plug-in.

- The **Undo** button at the left will undo the last change. Every change to the plug-in (such as dragging a knob or selecting a new preset) creates a new state in the undo history. The Undo button steps back through the history to restore the previous states of the plug-in.

- The **Redo** button cancels the last undo command. It steps forward through the history until you are back at the most recent plug-in state.

- The **A/B** button switches from A to B and back. Before switching, the current state of the plug-in is saved, so if you click this button twice, you are back at the first state. The button highlights the currently selected state (A or B). In the example above, the A state is active.

- The **Copy** button copies the active state to the inactive state. This marks the current state of the plug-in and allows you to go back to it easily with the A/B button. After clicking Copy, the button disables itself to show that both states are equal, so there is nothing to copy anymore.

Notes

- If the plug-in parameters are changed without using the plug-in interface, for example with MIDI or automation, no new undo states are recorded.

- The Undo and Redo buttons will disable themselves if there is nothing to undo or redo.

Next: Loading presets

See Also
Overview

Loading presets

FabFilter Pro-MB comes with a selection of excellent factory presets that provide many useful multiband setups for different scenarios and types of audio.

- To load a preset, click the preset button. The presets menu will appear with all available presets. Click a menu item to load that preset. The currently selected preset is highlighted with check marks.

- To explore the presets one by one, click on the little arrow buttons to the left and right of the main preset button. This will load the previous or next preset in the menu.

The preset button shows the name of the current preset. If you have changed the preset by adjusting one or more parameters, the name is dimmed to indicate that this is not the original preset anymore.

Tips

- The **Default Setting** preset is loaded automatically when FabFilter Pro-MB is started. To change the default settings, simply overwrite this preset by clicking **Options > Save As Default** in the presets menu.

- To open a preset outside the presets folder, click **Options > Open Other Preset**. This might be useful if someone sends you a preset by e-mail, for example.

- If somehow the factory presets are lost or not installed properly, click **Options > Restore Factory Presets** in the preset menu to restore them.

MIDI Program Change and Bank Select

Loading a presets can also be done via MIDI, using Bank Select and Program Change messages. Click **Options > Enable MIDI Program Changes** in the preset menu to enable or disable this feature. When enabled, the corresponding bank/program numbers are shown in front of the preset name (for example: *(2/65) My Preset*). This means that you can load that preset by first sending a Bank Select message to select bank 2 and then sending a Program Change message to select program 65.

Important: All the presets in your preset folder are numbered automatically, starting with bank 0 and program 0. This way, you are able to access any of the presets via MIDI. However, this also means that when you add new presets to the menu, bank/program numbers of other presets might change. Be aware of this when recording program changes in a session!

Next:

See Also
Overview

Saving presets

You can easily extend the included presets with new settings to build your own library of presets for FabFilter Pro-MB that you can reuse in various projects. This is also a good way to copy settings across multiple instances of FabFilter Pro-MB in a session.

To save the current setting as a preset, click the preset button, and then click *Save As*. A standard Save dialog will appear. Type a name for the new preset and click *Save* to finish.

In the Save dialog, you can also rename and delete existing presets and create a new folder to store presets in. New folders will show up as new categories in the preset menu. (On Mac OS X, this should be done with the Finder.)

See How presets are stored to determine the preset folder location and learn more about factory presets.

Next: How presets are stored

See Also
Loading presets
Overview

How presets are stored

Presets for FabFilter Pro-MB are stored in separate files with the .ffp extension (for FabFilter Preset). All presets reside in subfolders in the main preset folder. The subfolders will show up as separate categories in the preset menu. You can also further divide the subfolders into categories.

You can manage the preset files just like other files on your computer. The easiest way to do this is in the Save dialog that appears if you are saving a preset. The preset menu will automatically reload itself with the changes when the dialog is closed.

Furthermore it is very easy to share your newly created presets with other users since FabFilter presets use the same file format on both Windows and Mac OS X.

The default location of the main preset folder is *My Documents\FabFilter\Pro-MB* for Windows, and *~/Library/Audio/Presets/FabFilter/FabFilter Pro-MB* for Mac OS X. To change this location, first copy all presets to the desired new location, and then click **Options > Change Preset Folder** in the preset menu and select the new folder.

Restoring factory presets

If you have accidentally lost the factory presets, you can easily restore them by clicking **Options > Restore Factory Presets** in the preset menu. This will install all factory presets again.
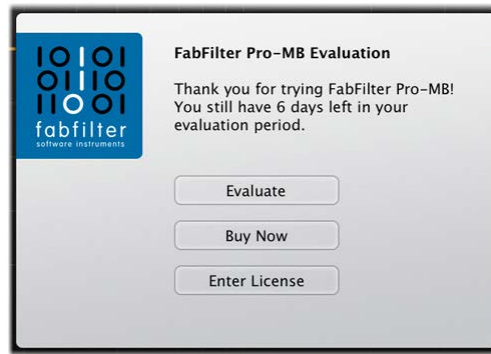

Next: Purchasing FabFilter Pro-MB

See Also
Saving presets
Overview

Purchasing FabFilter Pro-MB

Once you have downloaded and installed the evaluation copy of the FabFilter Pro-MB, you may evaluate it during 30 days. Every time you start the plug-in, you will see the following dialog:

While there are still days left, you can click **Evaluate** to start working with the plugin. If you want to keep using FabFilter Pro-MB after the evaluation period, you must buy a copy in the online FabFilter Shop by clicking the **Buy Now** button in the evaluation dialog.

- Go to the FabFilter Shop and purchase FabFilter Pro-MB now

We accept credit cards from all major companies, check payments, wire payments, and PayPal. The FabFilter Shop uses secure connections and encryption: therefore your personal information is completely safe.

Within a few minutes after you have purchased your copy, you will receive an e-mail containing your personal license key. You use this license key to turn the evaluation copy into a fully registered version without the evaluation dialog and the 30-day trial restriction.

Note: If the evaluation period has expired but you didn't have the chance to properly evaluate the plug-in, you can request a new evaluation period by contacting us at info@fabfilter.com .


Next: Entering your license key

See Also
Support
License agreement

Entering your license key

After you have purchased FabFilter Pro-MB in the online [FabFilter Shop](#) ⤢, you will immediately receive an e-mail containing your personal license key. This license key will turn the evaluation version into a fully registered plug-in.

- Start FabFilter Pro-MB and click **Enter License** in the evaluation dialog, or click Enter License on the Help menu if the plug-in is already running.

- Copy the license information from the e-mail you have received and paste it into the text field. Make sure that you are copying the entire license key including the *Product* and *Licensee* lines! If you are not sure what text to copy, just copy and paste the whole e-mail.
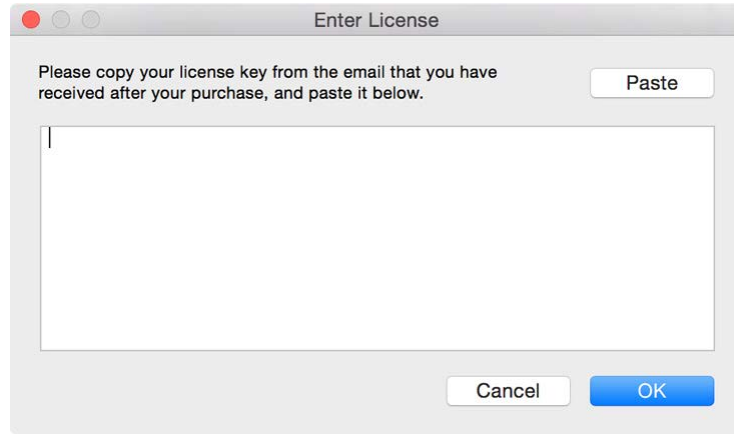
After you have entered your license information, you will need to restart the plug-in host, so make sure you save your settings if needed. From now on, you will be able to use FabFilter Pro-MB for an unlimited period of time with full support via e-mail.

Tips

- After your purchase, you can always retrieve your license key again by logging into your [personal FabFilter account](#) ⤢. Here you can also keep track of all your orders and take advantage of great discounts when buying other FabFilter plug-ins!

- To deauthorize your license key and remove it from the computer, click **Deauthorize** on the Help menu. If you temporarily needed to install your license on another computer, or if you have transferred your license to someone else, this is the way to deinstall your personal license key safely.

Next: [Support](#)

See Also
[Purchasing FabFilter Pro-MB](#)
[Support](#)
[License agreement](#)

Support

If you need help with problems or questions, and the help file does not provide an answer, please visit the support pages on our web site.

- Go to FabFilter Support 🗗

From here, you have direct access to the customer support forum, very useful tutorial videos for all FabFilter plug-ins, online and PDF versions of all our help files, and a section with extra downloads (such as presets, controller templates, older plug-in versions).

For sales-related questions and technical support, you can also contact FabFilter directly at info@fabfilter.com.

Reporting a bug

If you have encountered a bug in FabFilter Pro-MB, first of all make sure that you are using the latest version of the plug-in, which you can find at www.fabfilter.com/download 🗗. You can easily check the version of FabFilter Pro-MB that you are using by clicking Help > About in the plug-in interface. If the bug is still present in the latest version, please send us an e-mail at info@fabfilter.com and include as much technical information as possible: operation system and version, host software and version, steps to reproduce the bug, etc. Thanks in advance!

Next: Manual installation

See Also
Overview
About FabFilter

Manual installation

When installing FabFilter Pro-MB, the installation program will try to copy the plug-in into the appropriate plug-ins folders, and in most cases your host will recognize FabFilter Pro-MB automatically. Otherwise, please follow these instructions:

Windows

On Windows, most hosts have their own VST plug-ins folder. So if you are using Windows and your host does not recognize FabFilter Pro-MB, you need to locate the proper plug-ins folder for your host first (it is usually shown in the Preferences or similar dialog). Then, copy the file *FabFilter Pro-MB.dll* from *C:\Program Files\FabFilter\Pro-MB* (or *C:\Program Files (x86)\FabFilter\Pro-MB* if you are using a 32-bit host on 64-bit Windows) to the plug-ins folder that you have found and restart the host so it can reload all its plug-ins. For the AAX version of Pro-MB, copy the *FabFilter Pro-MB.aaxplugin* folder to the common Pro Tools AAX plug-in folder on your computer; for the RTAS version of Pro-MB, copy the *FabFilter Pro-MB.dpm* and *FabFilter Pro-MB.dpm.rsr* files to the Pro Tools RTAS plug-in folder on your computer.

Mac OS X

On Mac OS X, plug-ins are installed in the standard plug-in folders in the system Library folder. These are the *only* possible correct locations:

- Audio Units: */Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/Components*
- VST/VST3: */Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST* and */Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3*
- RTAS: */Library/Application Support/Digidesign/Plug-Ins*
- AAX: */Library/Application Support/Avid/Audio/Plug-Ins*

Note: AU and VST/VST3 plug-ins may be placed in the user's Library folders under *~/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins* as well.

If you still have problems, contact [FabFilter Support](#) 🗗.

Next: [VST plug-in versions](#)

See Also
[Quick start](#)
[Support](#)

VST plug-in versions

FabFilter Pro-MB is available in both VST 2 and VST 3 formats. They can be installed and used both at the same time. The VST 3 format offers easy side-chaining and is more CPU-friendly in some cases, but it can only be used by hosts that support it, for example recent versions of Cubase, Studio One or FL Studio. The VST 2 format is compatible with a larger variety of hosts.

VST 2

For the VST 2 format, there are two versions of the FabFilter Pro-MB plug-in, a mono and a stereo one:

- *FabFilter Pro-MB:* Stereo version of the plug-in
- *FabFilter Pro-MB (Mono):* Mono version of the plug-in

Note: The VST 3 version of the plug-in automatically adapts itself to both mono and stereo tracks.

Next: External side chaining

See Also
Quick start
Manual installation

External side chaining

FabFilter Pro-MB offers the possibility of feeding an external signal to its side chain, so that you can make it trigger on a different signal than the audio it is actually processing. Feeding a signal to a plug-in's side-chain inputs works slightly different in various hosts. This topic describes the procedure for some of the most popular hosts around: Cubase, Logic Pro, Ableton Live and Pro Tools.

To explain how it works, we use a scenario with two tracks. The first one contains the audio that we want to process with Pro-MB, which we'll call the *main track* from now. The second track contains the audio that we want to route to Pro-MB's external side-chain input and use as trigger signal. We'll call this track the *side chain track*.

After setting up everything according to the instructions below for your host, you can check whether everything is routed correctly. Play the audio and enable FabFilter Pro-MB's Audition button to listen to the side-chain signal. While auditioning, the real-time display and metering show the side-chain level, so you can easily set a correct trigger threshold. Afterwards, disable the Audition mode again. Now, you'll hear that Pro-MB on the main track will react to the sound of the side-chain track. Of course, you can fine-tune the plug-ins settings to customize the effect.

Cubase

- Open Cubase and create a new empty project.
- Add two audio tracks that we'll use as main track and side chain track.
- Add audio files on both the main track and the side chain track. You can simply drag audio files from a Finder/Explorer window onto a track.
- Open the Mixer. In the main track, click on an empty insert slot and select the VST 3 version of FabFilter Pro-MB in the Dynamics menu (note the VST 3 icon which looks like ///).
- Open FabFilter Pro-MB's interface and set Side Chain to *Ext*.
- In the plug-in header, click on the Activate Side-Chain button (right of the R/W buttons) to enable the external side chain in Cubase.
- At the top of the Mixer, set the output for the side chain track to the side-chain input of FabFilter Pro-MB.

Logic Pro

- Open Logic Pro and create a new empty project via File > New…
- Add two audio tracks (via Track > New…) that we'll use as main track and side chain track.
- Add audio files on both the main track and the side chain track. You can simply drag audio files from a Finder/Explorer window onto a track.
- Select the main track and add Pro-MB in the first Insert effect slot.
- Open FabFilter Pro-MB's interface and set Side Chain to *Ext*.
- In the right top corner of the plug-in interface header, in the 'Side Chain' menu, choose the side chain track. Now, the signal from the side chain track is sent to FabFilter Pro-MB's external side-chain input.

Ableton Live

- Open Ableton Live and start with an empty arrangement. We'll use Track 1 as the side chain track and Track 2 as the main track.
- From the folder menu's on at the left top of Ableton Live's interface, drag different audio clips to the first empty slots of Track 1 and Track 2.
- From the VST (or Audio Units) plug-in menu, also at the left top of Ableton Live's interface, drag FabFilter Pro-MB onto Track 2, the main track.
- Open FabFilter Pro-MB's interface and set Side Chain to *Ext*.
- In Track 1 (the side chain track) in the 'Audio To' menu select 'Track 2' instead of the default 'Master'. Now, an extra menu appears right below: choose 'FF Pro-MB 3/4' instead of the default 'Track In' to route the track's signal to FabFilter Pro-MB's external side chain inputs.

Pro Tools

- Open Pro Tools and start a new empty session.

- Create two audio tracks that we'll use as main track and side chain track. Add audio files to both track.

- Open the Mix window to display the tracks with their Insert slots and Sends slots.

- In the first 'Sends' slot of the side chain track, choose 'Bus 1'. The track view for Bus 1 will open: set its level slider to 0.0 dB so the bus actually produces audio!

- In the first 'Inserts' slot of the main track, choose Dynamics > FabFilter Pro-MB.

- Open FabFilter Pro-MB's interface and set Side Chain to *Ext*.

- Now, in the 'Key Input' menu of the plug-in interface (just above the FabFilter logo), choose bus > Bus 1 instead of the default 'no key input'. Now, the audio from the side chain track is routed to Pro-MB's external side chain input via Bus 1.

Next: License agreement

See Also
Quick start
Manual installation

FabFilter Software License Agreement

1. Disclaimer

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We encourage you to distribute the evaluation copy and give copies to friends, as long as there is no payment involved.

You may not reverse engineer, reverse compile, or disassemble any of the files in the distribution.

You are not allowed to distribute or copy the full version of any FabFilter product. The license key that you receive when purchasing it is personal and confidential and may not be disclosed. The full version is a commercial program. It is a violation of international copyright laws to give copies to other people. You may give them the evaluation copy, so they can purchase the program on their own.

3. VST plugin technology

VST is a trademark of Steinberg Soft- und Hardware GmbH.

Next: Acknowledgements

See Also
Purchase FabFilter Pro-MB
Support

Acknowledgements

Thanks to all beta testers for helping us to fine-tune and finish FabFilter Pro-MB!

Some of the factory presets were created by external sound designers:

- bManic (bM)

- Stephan Müsch (SM)

- Mark den Hartog / Zownd (Zwd)

Visit the FabFilter sound designers page ⬀ to read more about each sound designer.

Next: About FabFilter

See Also
Purchase FabFilter Pro-MB
Support

About FabFilter

Beautiful sound. Fantastic workflow. These are the foundations of FabFilter. We create powerful audio plug-ins with superb sound quality and innovative interfaces.

A unique perspective

At FabFilter, we make the best possible tools for music production and audio processing. To achieve this, we continually rethink and challenge industry standards: we've never been afraid of reinventing the wheel. Considering every little detail, we tune our algorithms and interfaces until they sound perfect, look amazing and feel great to work with.

It's the sound that counts

Above everything else, you need superb sound quality. That's why we put a lot of effort into developing unique audio processing algorithms, ranging from our famous resonating filters to transparent high-end EQ and dynamics processing.

Innovative interfaces, great design

Every FabFilter plug-in has an easy-to-use, well-designed interface aimed at providing unsurpassed workflow. Our plug-ins focus on the task you're performing at that specific moment: they expose the features you need, when you need them. And because of our special attention to design, you'll be delighted every time you open a FabFilter plug-in.

Don't take our word for it

We always set the highest standard for sound quality, usability and design to make truly great products that raise the bar on what audio software can do. That's why we're very happy with the praise we've received from users and press alike:

"In the decade since the release of its first plug-in, One, FabFilter has made an indelible mark on the music production landscape." —Computer Music magazine

"While many other software developers are busy trying to model hardware, FabFilter is leaving them in the dust by being visionaries and reaching into the future. FabFilter stuff is just on another level." —Jeff Sanders

"FabFilter has an enviable reputation for making easy-to-use, powerful tools." —Music Tech magazine

FabFilter was founded in 2002 by Frederik Slijkerman and Floris Klinkert, and is based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

See Also
Support
FabFilter web site