

Master Plan 2



THREE YEARS IN THE MAKING

We released Master Plan almost four years ago. We knew it sounded amazing. We knew it was straightforward to get that amazing sound without twiddling forever. What we didn't know was how by the end of the year, we'd be in major studios all over the world, on the templates of producers and mixers that make the most listened to music on the planet.

Between then and now, I spent a lot of time researching the cutting edge of saturation, filters, analysis, and other DSP for new products, but was always in the background talking to Stan about how we could take this research and apply it to the next iteration of Master Plan.

What you see and hear today is a tool we're extremely proud of, pulling all that together into a single package with all the circuits you need to bring out the absolute best out of your mix: to push it as loud as you want, to finesse it as clear as you want, to give it just the right touch of bounce, grit, life, and soundstage... whatever it takes to elevate the mix until you hear *every* last bit.

-Sam

THE HUD & FACEPLATE

Master Plan 2 is divided into 2 sections. The HUD, which contains all metering, settings, and other *moving* elements, and the faceplate, which contains the controls that generally use to change the sound. The exceptions are the DC offset, Snapshot, and True Peak controls at the top of the HUD.

The different HUD pages have combinations of meters that help you focus on certain tasks when mastering your mix. If you're tired of looking at stuff, select the "ears only" mode, which displays only the LUFS in and LUFS out.

Unless you're focusing on a particular task, the "full meters" page provides all you need for most mastering tasks. The other meters are named based on functionality: "spectrum" for tone, "gain" for gain reduction and waveform shape, and "reference" for comparing your mix to another.

THE MOVES – KNOBS & SLIDERS

CLICK	Toggles buttons on and off. Clicking a label for a control on the faceplate enables/disables that circuit. Click SILK to cycle through 1x, 2x, 3x, and off.
CLICK AND DRAG	Changes the value.
SCROLL OVER	Changes the value.
DOUBLE-CLICK	Opens up a text entry box so that you can type in the value you want. Press ENTER to lock in the value, or ESC to cancel.
HOLD SHIFT	Slows down the movement of the control for finer adjustments. For thick's COLOR , blends between the saturation colors instead of snapping to each one.
ALT/OPTION-CLICK	Resets any control to its default value.
HOVER	Displays help text for that control, if you hold still for a short while. When you move the mouse again, the help will disappear. You can disable help text in settings.
RIGHT-CLICK	Enables/disables a circuit that has a label, as if you had clicked the label.

THE MOVES – CHARTS & METERS

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| CLICK | Resets meter readings and held peaks. In FULL METERING , clicking a chart toggles between displays. |
| SCROLL OVER | Changes the time scale for the chart. Scrolling over a waveform or the gain chart zooms in and out. Scrolling over a meter or analyzers speeds it up or slows it down. |
| ALT/OPTION-CLICK | Resets a chart to its default timescale. |
| HOVER | Displays help text for that chart, if you hold still for a short while. When you move the mouse again, the help will disappear. You can disable help text in settings. On some charts, this will also display the x/y values. |

SPECIAL MOVES

INPUT

The indicator moving on the outside of input shows where you can set the dial so that input is approximately -18 dB RMS, or -6dB peak. Click the indicator to move the knob to this position. Doing this will help you get consistent results through MasterPlan 2's nonlinear stages (saturation and dynamics control).

OUTPUT

The indicator moving on the outside of output shows where you can set the dial so that the output matches the input. Click the indicator to move the knob to this position. It will stay there for a "frozen" gain match. When **UNITY** is enabled, the output knob always follows the indicator.

REFERENCE

You can drag and drop an audio file on the screen when the reference view is open. After a short while, beat detection will help you automatically snap loops to the reference track. You can move loop handles while holding shift to ignore the grid. You can scroll to zoom the track and click outside the loop to drag the whole track around.

A/B/C SNAPSHOTS

Selecting a snapshot causes all subsequent changes to be saved into the snapshot. You can then switch between snapshots to compare configurations, or automate the snapshot parameter to switch configurations between song sections seamlessly. Drag one snapshot onto another to copy its settings before continuing to edit. At any time, you can type backslash (\) to randomly select a snapshot for blind testing (just don't look at the screen!).

OLD SCHOOL

The original Master Plan is still here. Go to the settings screen and select it using **VERSION**.

LOGO

The Master Plan logo is a shortcut for changing the look and feel of the plugin. Click to toggle between black and white faceplates, right-click to toggle between light and dark HUD modes, and scroll the mouse to select a color. All of these are available in the settings screen as well.

PARAMETERS

AURA	Adjust the magic behind Master Plan 1's sound.
BODY	Bring out weight and detail for a fuller sound.
BYPASS	Latency-compensated bypass. When turned on, the signal passes through Master Plan without any changes other than keeping the same latency as when bypass is turned off.
CALM	Adjust the amount of the reactive Calm circuit.
CLEAN	Clear up low-end muddiness.
COLOR	Explore different flavors of saturation.
DC	Add or remove the DC offset before the limiter.
GLOW	Glue the mix together without compression.
HIGH	Add air and shine, or soften the top end.
HIGH COMP	Sets the threshold for gentle high-band compression.
IN	Set the input level. Click the indicator around the dial to jump to the suggested starting gain.
LOUD	Bring your master forward with more loudness and impact.
LOW	Add warmth and weight, or keep the low end lean.
LOW COMP	Sets the threshold for gentle low-band compression.

MID	Bring the heart of the mix forward, or make a little room.
MID COMP	Sets the threshold for gentle high-mid compression.
MID FREQ.	Choose where to shape the midrange.
OUT	Set the output level. Click the indicator around the dial to match input loudness at a fixed level.
PRESENCE	Adjust the limiter's character from softer, more dynamic processing to pure clipping. The center position uses the original Master Plan algorithm.
SILK	Set the strength of high-end Silk processing: Off, 1x, 2x, or 3x.
SMOOTH	Enable gentle compression that smooths the overall sound.
TAPE	Adjust the amount of Tape EQ. Blend warm, rounded tape character with a tighter sound.
THICK	Adjust the saturation drive.
THICK TONE	Focus the Thick character on the lows, highs, or the whole mix.
TP	Keep true peaks at or below the output level.
UNITY	Continuously adjust the output level to match input loudness. Disable to restore the manual output gain.
WIDE	Open up the stereo image.

METERS

The following table describes Master Plan 2's meter options, selectable through the dropdown in the top right corner:

FULL METERING	View loudness, levels, stereo imaging, frequency balance, and gain history together.
SPECTRUM	Compare the input and output frequency spectra to see how processing changes your tonal balance.
GAIN	View the waveform and gain reduction over time to see how processing shapes your dynamics.
EQ	View the tonal changes applied to your signal, with an optional phase-response display.
REFERENCE	Load and loop a reference track to compare its sound and frequency balance with your master.
EARS ONLY	Hide the main visualizations so you can focus on listening, while retaining input and output integrated loudness readings.

Master Plan 2 has additional options for the meters:

SPECTRUM RESOLUTION	Choose Full resolution, one-third-octave bands, or Bark bands based on human hearing.
NORMALIZE	Keep the spectrum level normalized for comparing tonal balance.
BIPOLAR / UNIPOLAR	Show both positive and negative waveform peaks, or show waveform magnitude on one side of the baseline.
SCAN / SCROLL	Sweep the cursor across a stationary gain history, or combine scrolling history with a moving cursor.
SHOW PHASE	Show or hide the phase response alongside the EQ curve.
TIME WINDOW	Adjust how many seconds of gain history are displayed; drag or scroll to zoom in or out, and Option-click to reset.

SETTINGS

The following table describes Master Plan 2's settings:

VERSION	Choose the original Master Plan sound or Master Plan 2.
OVERSAMPLING	Balance processing quality with CPU use.
FACEPLATE	Choose a white or black faceplate (bottom half of the plugin UI).
DARK MODE	Choose a light or dark view of the HUD/meters.
HELP	Show or hide tips as you explore the controls.
EFFECTS	Switch visual effects on or off (off may translate to less CPU usage).
ADAPTIVE METERS	Let the meters adjust their scale to your sound.
HIDE GRIDS	Hide the meter grids for a cleaner view.
HUE	Adjust the interface accent color. Option-click or Home resets it.