



Magma StressBox

Shape musical tension & feel – with one knob

User Guide



Introduction

Thank you for choosing Waves! To get the most out of your new Waves plugin, please take a moment to read this user guide. To install software and manage your licenses, you'll need a free Waves account—sign up at www.waves.com.

We suggest that you become familiar with the Waves Support pages at www.waves.com/support. There, you'll find technical articles about installation, troubleshooting, specifications, and more. Plus, you'll find company contact information and Waves Support news.

Stressbox

Unlike traditional compressors which rely on multiple parameters (threshold, ratio, attack, release, makeup gain), **Magma StressBox** condenses the entire range of dynamic control into a single, continuous knob.

Behind the scenes, it intelligently moves through behaviors that would normally require different compressor types or settings—from tight transient enhancement to aggressive flattening that brings up ambience.

This means you can use the same control to:

- Tighten percussive elements like drums or acoustic guitars
- Bring vocals forward, or let them sit deeper in the mix
- Extract room tone, or completely dry it out
- Find the exact punch/weight balance of any dynamic source

Because the processing keeps output level relatively consistent across most of the range, you can turn the knob in real time while listening and clearly hear how the element shifts inside the mix until it just *locks* into place.

It's not about tweaking settings. It's about hearing where the sound belongs, and landing there in seconds.

StressBox gives you dynamic control that feels like playing an instrument—not operating a machine. Whether you're slamming drums or lifting vocals, it's all about **feel**.

Quick Start

1. Insert **StressBox** on your track or master bus.
2. Turn the **Main Knob** *clockwise* to set the amount of **Compression**, or *counter-clockwise* to set the amount of **Expansion** applied to the incoming signal.
3. Use the **Input Gain** knob to push into compression more aggressively, especially with low-level sources.
4. Use **Output Gain** to adjust the overall volume of the end result.
5. Turn **Mix** to the left to blend in some of the original signal for subtle parallel dynamics. At around 30–50%, you can achieve thickening without killing transients.
6. Use the **On/Off** button to compare the original signal with the output result. Combine this with Mix to find the sweet spot.

Interface – Main View

Controls:



1	Main Knob	The knob has a smooth, continuous behavior without stepping or switching, designed for musical control instead of clinical precision. Center position: No processing. The plugin is fully transparent. Turn right: Applies compression gradually. Turn left: Applies expansion. Note: Makeup gain is internally compensated as much as possible, but extreme settings may require manual adjustment.
2	Input Gain	Adjusts signal level <i>before</i> processing. It can be used to drive the dynamics engine harder or reduce incoming signal. Range: ± 18 dB
3	Output Gain	Adjusts signal level <i>after</i> processing. It can be used to match level post-processing or compensate for dynamic shifts. Range: ± 18 dB
4	Mix (Dry/Wet)	Blends between unprocessed (dry) and fully processed (wet) signal: Designed as a true parallel blend placed after all internal processing, including Input and Output gain. Crossfade is phase-accurate and transparent. 0% = completely dry, plugin has no audible effect, regardless of other control settings. 100% = fully wet, full processing is applied.



5	On/Off	Toggles the entire processing engine on or off. When off, StressBox is in full bypass mode. When toggled Off, Mix knob is ignored.
6	Visual Feedback Meter	Needle-style meter shows how the plugin is reacting: Right = compression Left = expansion Center = no processing The meter is not calibrated in dB but rather conveys the Compression/Expansion energy. Purpose: Give you instant visual feedback about what you're hearing.