

# KickShaper Quick Manual



KickShaper is specifically tailored for computer-based music production, but it also excels in enhancing clean acoustic kicks with sub-frequency information. It harnesses the power of cutting-edge algorithms, rigorously tested across thousands of kicks in various genres. With its streamlined and intuitive workflow, you are just a few seconds away from crafting exceptional kicks. Although primarily designed for kick shaping, this versatile tool can also be applied to basslines and clicky 808s.

The issue with modern kicks, particularly when utilizing pre-existing kick samples, is that they often suffer from excessive compression and clipping, or they may lack the necessary strength to meet the demands of different genres. In mixing scenarios, this can result in kicks losing their punch and power. Similarly, when listening to your tracks on smaller speakers, you may encounter either bloated or weak kicks. Moreover, during the mastering stage, achieving the desired LUFS levels becomes challenging due to the potential distortion in your songs. Applying a highpass filter to reduce low-end muddiness may compromise the punch and kick tones. Fortunately, KickShaper comes to the rescue in such situations.

KickShaper offers a fresh perspective on kick shaping, providing natural-sounding tails, distinct transients, and depth, and utilizing the full dynamic range that the digital realm has to offer. This remarkable tool is the brainchild of award-winning audio engineer Emrah Celik, developed in collaboration with WA Production. After a year of rigorous testing and analysis involving thousands of kicks, KickShaper has proven its effectiveness and has already been incorporated into hundreds of mixes. Its tried-and-true concept will empower you to achieve your desired kick tones, ensuring that they translate seamlessly across all listening environments, from modest speakers to colossal festival arrays.

## Let's dive in and find out what makes KickShaper so special?

### Bottom Menu Controls:

**A - Copy - B:** A and B will toggle between two settings, and Copy is used to copy between these two settings.

**INV:** This button flips the polarity by 180 degrees. Checking the polarity ensures that your kick is in phase with your speakers or bassline, serving as a rule of thumb.

**X4:** This button enables 4-times oversampling. While not essential for a kick plugin that primarily focuses on low frequencies, oversampling enhances processing precision in the clipper, heat, and depth modules. Feel free to activate this button if it enhances the overall sound to your liking. X4 oversampling suffices for kick processing.

**Hand Icon:** The limiter before the output serves as a precautionary measure. Since KickShaper is used on channels, clipping on the channel itself is not a significant concern. However, the limiter is available for those who wish to push KickShaper further for genre-specific kicks.

**Power Button:** This button serves as a bypass switch.

## TAIL Section:

KickShaper utilizes a unique method to create and generate kick tails. Unlike sub-generators, the tail module resonates with the filters, naturally producing frequency resonance without any boomy artifacts. Sub-generators tend to introduce timing issues, causing the subs to be slightly delayed compared to the original kick, resulting in an unnatural sound. Kick Shaper, on the other hand, avoids such timing complications. It simply takes the sub frequencies from the original kick and resonates them naturally, without skipping a beat.

**Tail Knob:** This knob offers two settings, allowing you to adjust the length of the kick tails. The clockwise rotation creates longer, more sustained tails, while counterclockwise rotation shortens them. Use your creative imagination, as the added tail will harmoniously complement your kick and bassline and impart a delightful warmth to your beats. This will replace unhealthy boomy subs with natural-sounding subs.

**Find Button:** Pressing this button once allows KickShaper to identify the dominant frequency of your kicks and determine the appropriate frequency to add a tail, based on the tail knob setting. It consistently selects the dominant frequency, ensuring it remains in musical key. If you are dissatisfied with the chosen frequency, you can click the find button multiple times until the desired frequency is attained. Furthermore, if you wish to adjust the frequency manually, simply hover the mouse over the frequency display and modify it accordingly. Alternatively, double-click the display and input the desired value.

**Here's a tip:** Click on the find button, wait for analysis, then turn the tail knob all the way up. Let KickShaper work its magic.

## Dynamic Controls:

**Deboom Knob:** This feature is the essence of KickShaper. If your kicks possess power and punch but tend to distort or lack impact when played on smaller speakers or struggle pushed to desired LUFS levels, Deboom comes to the rescue. It is not a mere low-cut or compressor. Deboom intelligently shortens the wavelength of the low frequencies, resulting in shorter kicks that perfectly complement your earth-shaking basslines and 808s. You will notice that your kicks no longer dominate the entire low-frequency spectrum but seamlessly blend into the mix. This enables you to push your mastering limiter even further, achieving greater volume during the mix.

**Thump Knob:** The Thump knob also analyzes the wavelength of the low frequencies and adjusts the sustain of your kicks accordingly. It exclusively affects the low frequencies, ensuring that the kick's body remains intact.

**Click Knob:** This module introduces a new transient shaping algorithm. Unlike most transient shapers on the market that struggle to keep up with varying tempos, KickShaper's Click excels in handling random kick shots, kick fills, or kicks that occur between selected quantize points. Even with rapid-fire kicks, it never misses a beat. By analyzing the high-frequency wavelength, Click triggers itself flawlessly, regardless of tempo or kick arrangement. This unique algorithm sets KickShaper apart as one of the finest transient catchers available.

**MIDI Button:** KickShaper features an advanced detection system for triggering the dynamic processors. It can detect kicks at different levels and even multiple kicks in quick succession with amazing accuracy. However, even the most accurate detector can occasionally miss. The MIDI feature overrides the detector and triggers the processing manually. To do this, simply activate the MIDI button, set up a separate MIDI track in the DAW, and route its MIDI output directly to the plugin. MIDI routing is handled differently in each DAW, so be sure to check the DAW manual if you are unsure how to do this.

## **TONE Section:**

The Tone section is specifically designed for kick processing. The **Cut knob** applies a gentle low-cut filter to shape excessive low frequencies. The **Low knob** adds punch either way, the Mid knob enhances or reduces muddiness, and the **High knob** allows precise control over excessive clicks or shapes the clicks in a harmonically pleasing manner.

## **ENHANCE Section:**

The ENHANCE section holds a significant influence in shaping the tone of your sound. Let's explore the different knobs and their capabilities:

### **Depth Knob:**

The Depth knob applies convolution from analog hardware to add depth to your kicks. It makes the kick bigger, adds depth to the front and back, and reduces excessive highs. This feature is perfect for various genres like techno, lo-fi, hip-hop, trap, and tech house, providing a prominent kick sound.

### **Heat Knob:**

For warmer kicks, the Heat knob is your ally. It applies gentle saturation that never compromises the sound quality, no matter how much you push it. We encourage you to experiment with it and witness its effects.

### **Punch Knob:**

The Punch knob emulates a widely used console compression, finely tuned to match our vision. It compresses the kick to enhance its attack and click, resulting in a lovely sound. Make sure to utilize this feature to your advantage.

### **Clip Knob:**

The Clip knob acts as a clipper, effectively squashing the kick and removing excessive peaks. This allows your kicks to utilize the full dynamic range of the digital world. Even on smaller speakers, your kicks will maintain their punchiness and impact. Rest assured, the knob has been meticulously calibrated using thousands of kicks, saving you the trouble.

### **Input and Output Knobs:**

Adjust the Input knob to optimize the volume fed into Kickshaper. If your signal is weak, increase the input; if you desire a more intense effect, push it further. The Output knob, situated after the limiter, helps with gain matching. Since Kickshaper utilizes the entire dynamic range of your kicks, lowering the output can provide additional headroom. Feel free to experiment with increasing the volume after the limiter for more extreme results.

Embrace the power of the ENHANCE section and unlock the true potential of your kicks with Kickshaper.