

QUASAR AUDIO · USER MANUAL

QUASAR

Spectral sidechain ducking, with tilt.

QUASAR
SPECTRAL DUCKER

VERSION 0.9 BETA
VST3 — WINDOWS · MACOS COMING SOON

GETTING STARTED

Room for every sound.

QUASAR listens to one sound and makes room for it in another. Send it your vocal, kick or lead as a sidechain, put it on the beat, the bass or the pads, and it turns that track down only in the frequencies where the sidechain is playing, and only while it plays. 32 bands from 20 Hz to 20 kHz react on their own, so the beat keeps its punch while the vocal sits on top. Tilt decides whether the room is carved in the lows or in the highs.

INSTALLATION & ACTIVATION

Windows

WINDOWS 10 OR 11 · 64-BIT · VST3

1. Unzip the download.
2. Copy the folder `QUASAR.vst3` into `C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3`.
3. Rescan plugins in your DAW. QUASAR appears under QUASAR Audio.

macOS

INTEL & APPLE SILICON · AU, VST3

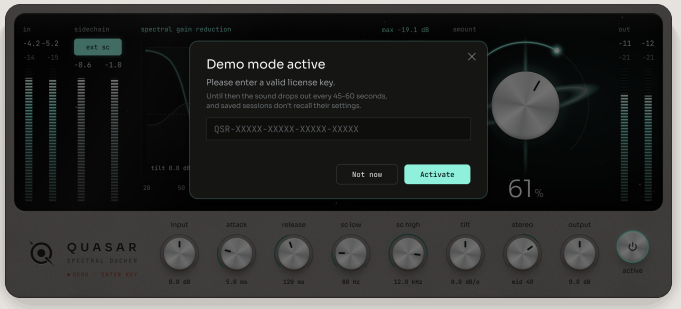
1. A Mac version is on the way. Beta testers on Mac get it first.
2. Until then QUASAR runs on Windows only.

Activate

INTERNET NEEDED ONCE

1. Load QUASAR on any track. The Demo mode active window opens.
2. Paste your key (`QSR-XXXXX-XXXXX-XXXXX-XXXXX`) and click Activate.
3. Done: the key is now tied to this computer.

DEMO MODE



Without a key, QUASAR runs in demo mode. Every control works and it sounds exactly like the full version, with two limits:

- Every 45–60 seconds of playing audio, 1.5 seconds of soft white noise replace the sound. The timer pauses while nothing plays.
- Saved projects don't restore QUASAR's settings. They aren't lost: activate your key and the project's settings come back by themselves.

Closed the window? Click DEMO – ENTER KEY under the logo, or right-click the case and choose Enter license key...

WORKS WITH

Formats	VST3 (Windows). AU and VST3 for macOS are coming.
Hosts	Any DAW that gives plugins a sidechain input. Tested in FL Studio, Studio One and Reaper; setup for each DAW on page 6.
Latency	256 samples (5.8 ms at 44.1 kHz). Your DAW compensates it automatically.

THE INTERFACE

Everything on one panel.



1 In

Level going in, per channel, after the input knob. Top: peak. Below: average (RMS).

2 Sidechain + ext sc

The level QUASAR listens to. If these meters stay still, the sidechain isn't routed (page 6). ext sc switches between the sidechain input (on) and the track itself (off).

3 Spectral gain reduction

The mint curve shows how far each frequency is pulled down right now; the grey curve is the sidechain's spectrum. Click it to freeze (page 5).

4 max

The deepest reduction at this moment, in dB.

5 Amount

The main control: how strongly the sidechain carves room in the track. The ring and the big number show it.

6 Out

Level coming out, per channel, after the output knob.

7 Tilt readout

The current tilt, also drawn as the dashed line across the display.

8 Knobs

input, attack, release, sc low, sc high, tilt, stereo, output. Each one is explained on page 4.

9 Power

active or bypass. It follows your DAW's bypass button, and the other way round.

HANDLING

Turn a knob
Drag up and down (or left and right).

Reset
Double-click any knob to return it to its default.

Resize
Drag the bottom-right corner (60 – 150 %), or right-click the case and pick a size. QUASAR reopens at the size you left it.

Automate
Every control is a parameter in your DAW, so all of them can be automated.

CONTROLS

Every control. One job each.

Amount

0 – 100 % · default 100

How strongly the sidechain pushes the track down. It works like a sensitivity: at 50 % the sidechain counts 12 dB less, so only its louder parts make room.

input

–24 to +24 dB · default 0

Level into QUASAR. With ext sc off, it also sets how hard the track drives its own ducking.

attack

0.1 – 200 ms · default 5

How fast the room opens when the sidechain comes in. Short keeps transients clear; long feels smoother.

release

1 – 1000 ms · default 30

How fast the track comes back after the sidechain stops. Longer is smoother and less pumpy.

sc low · sc high

20 Hz – 20 kHz · defaults 20 Hz / 20 kHz

The frequency range QUASAR works in. Outside it the track is left alone, with steep edges. At the end stops they are off. The display shades what's outside.

tilt

–6 to +6 dB/oct · default 0

QUASAR's own control. It tilts the ducking around 1 kHz. Negative carves the lows and low mids harder and spares the highs; positive carves the presence range harder and spares the low end. 0 is neutral.

stereo

side 100 · stereo · mid 100

Which part of the stereo image makes room. stereo ducks everything. Turned towards mid, the centre still ducks while the sides are left more and more alone (mid 100: only the centre). Towards side, the reverse.

output

–24 to +24 dB · default 0

Level after QUASAR.

ext sc

On / Off · default On

On: QUASAR listens to its sidechain input. Off: it listens to the track itself and turns down whatever gets loud, like a spectral compressor.

Power

active / bypass

Switches QUASAR on and off, smoothly and in time. Linked to your DAW's bypass.

TIPS

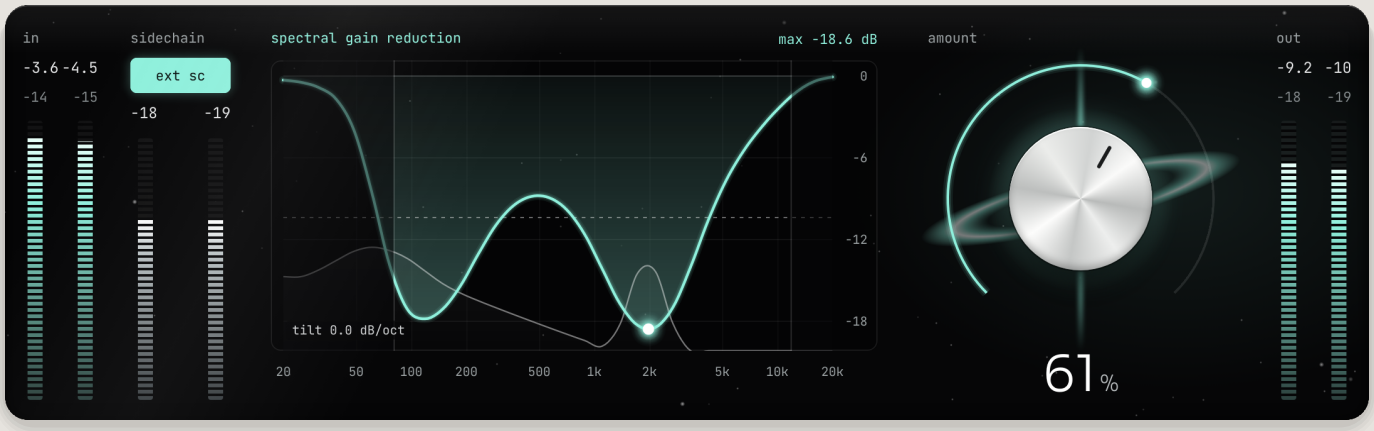
- Start at Amount 100 %, then back off until the track still feels present.
- Watch the mint curve: it should dip where the sidechain lives, not everywhere.
- Use sc low to protect your 808 and kick: set it above the low end.
- Release 60–150 ms often sounds most natural on vocals.

GOOD TO KNOW

- Freeze: click the display to hold the current curve.
- Settings are saved with your project.
- Cuts reach up to about 40 dB in the mids, less at the extremes.

THE DISPLAY

See the room you make.



Mint curve

Gain reduction per frequency, from 0 dB at the top down to –18 dB. The deeper the dip, the more that frequency of your track is turned down at this moment.

Grey curve

The sidechain's spectrum: where the sound you're making room for has its energy. The two curves mirror each other; that's the idea.

Dot and max

The dot marks the deepest point between sc low and sc high, and max shows its value. Both fade out when there's almost no ducking.

Shaded edges

Frequencies below sc low and above sc high are shaded: QUASAR leaves them alone.

Dashed line

The tilt, drawn across the display. Flat at 0 dB/oct; it leans as you turn the tilt knob.

Freeze

Click the display

Holds the current curve, so it keeps ducking the same way. The display and the power label say frozen. Click again to release.

Meters

–60 to 0 dB

In, sidechain and out, per channel. They rise instantly and fall at 20 dB per second. The numbers above show peak (white) and average (grey) in dBFS.

Right-click

Case

Window sizes, license status and the key window.

SIDECHAIN SETUP

Send it something to listen to.

QUASAR has a sidechain input. Route the sound you want to make room for (vocal, kick, lead) into it, then put QUASAR on the track that should make room. When it's routed, the sidechain meters move as the source plays and ext sc is lit. Menu names can differ slightly between DAW versions.

FL Studio

TESTED

1. Load QUASAR on the mixer track that should make room.
2. Select the source's mixer track, right-click the routing arrow under QUASAR's track and choose Sidechain to this track.
3. In QUASAR's plugin window, open the wrapper settings (gear) Processing and set the sidechain input to the source's track number.

Studio One

TESTED

1. Load QUASAR on the track that should make room.
2. Click the Sidechain button in QUASAR's window header.
3. On the source track, add a send to QUASAR (Sidechain).

Reaper

TESTED

1. Load QUASAR on the track that should make room.
2. On the source track, add a send to that track and set its audio to channels 3/4.
3. Reaper feeds channels 3/4 to QUASAR's sidechain. If not, set them in the plugin's pin connector.

Ableton Live

LIVE 11 OR NEWER

1. Load QUASAR on the track that should make room.
2. Open the sidechain section in QUASAR's device title bar and switch it on.
3. Under Audio From, choose the source track.

Cubase

1. Load QUASAR as an insert on the track that should make room.
2. Activate Side-Chain in QUASAR's window header.
3. On the source track, add a send (or side-chain routing) to QUASAR – Side-Chain.

Logic Pro

WITH THE MAC VERSION

1. Load QUASAR (AU) on the track that should make room.
2. Pick the source in the Side Chain menu at the top of the plugin window.

RECIPES

Four places to start.

Starting points, not rules. Set them up, then adjust Amount and release by ear.

Vocal over the beat

QUASAR on the beat or instrumental bus · vocal into the sidechain

Amount	50 – 70 %
sc low	~150 Hz
sc high	12 kHz
attack	5 ms
release	60 – 120 ms
tilt	+1 to +2
stereo	mid 40

The beat moves out of the vocal's way in the presence range. sc low keeps the kick and 808 untouched, a positive tilt focuses on clarity, and mid carves the centre while the stereo width stays.

Kick and bass

QUASAR on the bass or 808 · kick into the sidechain

Amount	70 – 100 %
sc high	250 – 400 Hz
attack	1 – 3 ms
release	40 – 80 ms
tilt	-2
stereo	stereo

The bass ducks only in the low end and only for the length of the kick, so both stay loud without fighting. Negative tilt puts the focus on the lows.

Lead over pads

QUASAR on pads, chords or a reverb return · lead into the sidechain

Amount	40 – 60 %
attack	10 ms
release	150 – 300 ms
tilt	0
stereo	stereo

A slow release makes the room open and close gently, so the pads breathe with the lead instead of pumping.

Self-ducking

ext sc off · on a harsh loop, a dense bus or a full mix

ext sc	off
Amount	20 – 40 %
sc low	200 Hz
sc high	8 kHz
release	100 ms

Without a sidechain, QUASAR turns down only the frequencies of the track that get loud, like a spectral compressor. Keep Amount low.

LICENSE & HELP

If something's off.

LICENSE

One key, one computer

Activating ties your key to this computer. Another computer is refused. New PC? Write to support with your key and we'll free it.

Internet

Needed to activate. After that QUASAR checks in now and then in the background and keeps working for up to 14 days without a connection.

Where it's stored

`%APPDATA%\QUASAR\license.json`. Deleting it puts QUASAR back into demo mode; activating again with the same key on the same computer works.

Messages

Already activated on another computer: contact support. Couldn't reach the license server: check the connection, or allow your DAW through the firewall. This key isn't valid: check it. Upper and lower case, spaces and dashes don't matter, and O/0 and I/1 are read the same.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Nothing happens

Do the sidechain meters move? If not, the sidechain isn't routed (page 6). Also check that ext sc is on, Amount is above 0, power says active, and sc low / sc high aren't squeezed together.

Not enough ducking

Raise Amount, or send the sidechain louder: QUASAR reacts to how loud the sidechain is.

Too much pumping

Longer attack and release, or less Amount.

Noise bursts every minute

That's demo mode. Enter your key.

Settings reset when I reopen a project

Also demo mode. Activate, and the settings come back.



QUASAR AUDIO

Make room. Keep the punch.

Thank you for testing QUASAR. Your feedback shapes the release: tell us what works, what breaks and what you'd like to see.

WEBSITE

quasaraudio.com

support@quasaraudio.com

© 2026 QUASAR Audio. Beta version 0.9 BETA.
Please don't share your key or the plugin files.

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