

SideMinder ME2

SideMinder Mastering Edition 2nd Generation Multi-Band Dynamic Stereo Width Maximizer

Audio effect plugin by Raising Jake Studios

Thank you for purchasing SideMinder ME2 audio effect plugin! SideMinder ME2 is a unique plugin for enhancing and controlling stereo width without “over widening” that can result in loss of sounds when mixed to mono. SideMinder ME2 is the 2nd generation “big brother” of the original SideMinder™.

SideMinder ME2 is not a compressor – or even a Mid/Side compressor. It is a “differential compressor” that controls the relationship between the mid (mono) and side (stereo) information in a stereo track. It does not affect the signal’s overall dynamic range – only the stereo width. This affect cannot be achieved with typical “mid/side” compressors – only SideMinder ME2!

SideMinder ME2 is a 64-bit VST2, VST3 and AAX plugin for Windows and “Universal Binary” VST2, VST3, AU and AXX plugin for Mac OS 10.11 or higher on Intel and Apple Silicon.

INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

Installing SideMinder ME2 is simply a matter of copying and pasting the appropriate files from the SideMinder ME2 purchased download to the proper folders on your computer.

FOR PC

To install the VST3 plugin: make sure your DAW is closed then copy the “SideMinderME2.vst3” file from purchased download file and save it to your VST3 plugin folder (typically C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3). Restart your DAW and scan the plugins folder from your DAW’s plugin manager.

To install the VST2 plugin: make sure your DAW is closed then copy the “SideMinderME2.dll” file from purchased download file and save it to your VST2 plugin folder (typically C:\Program Files\Steinberg\VSTPlugins). Restart your DAW and scan the plugins folder from your DAW’s plugin manager.

To install the aaxplugin for Pro Tools: make sure your DAW is closed then copy the “SideMinderME2.aaxplugin” file from purchased download file and save it to your Avid plugin folder (typically C:\Program Files\Common Files\Avid\Audio\Plug-Ins). The plugin will be automatically scanned/added the next time Pro Tools is opened.

FOR MAC

To install the VST2, VST3 and/or AU plugins, make sure your DAW is closed then copy the “SideMinderME2.vst” and/or “SideMinderME2.vst3” and/or “SideMinderME2.component” folders from the purchased download file and save them the VST and/or VST3 and/or “Component” folders on your Mac under /Library/Audio/Plugins.

To install the aaxplugin for Pro Tools: make sure your DAW is closed then copy the "SideMinderME2.aaxplugin" file from purchased download file and save it to your Avid plugin folder (typically /Library/Application Support/Avid/Audio/Plug-Ins). The plugin will be automatically scanned/added the next time Pro Tools is opened.

NOTE: On Mac OS 10.13 and later a reboot may be required before plugins will show up in your DAW(s).

REGISTRATION

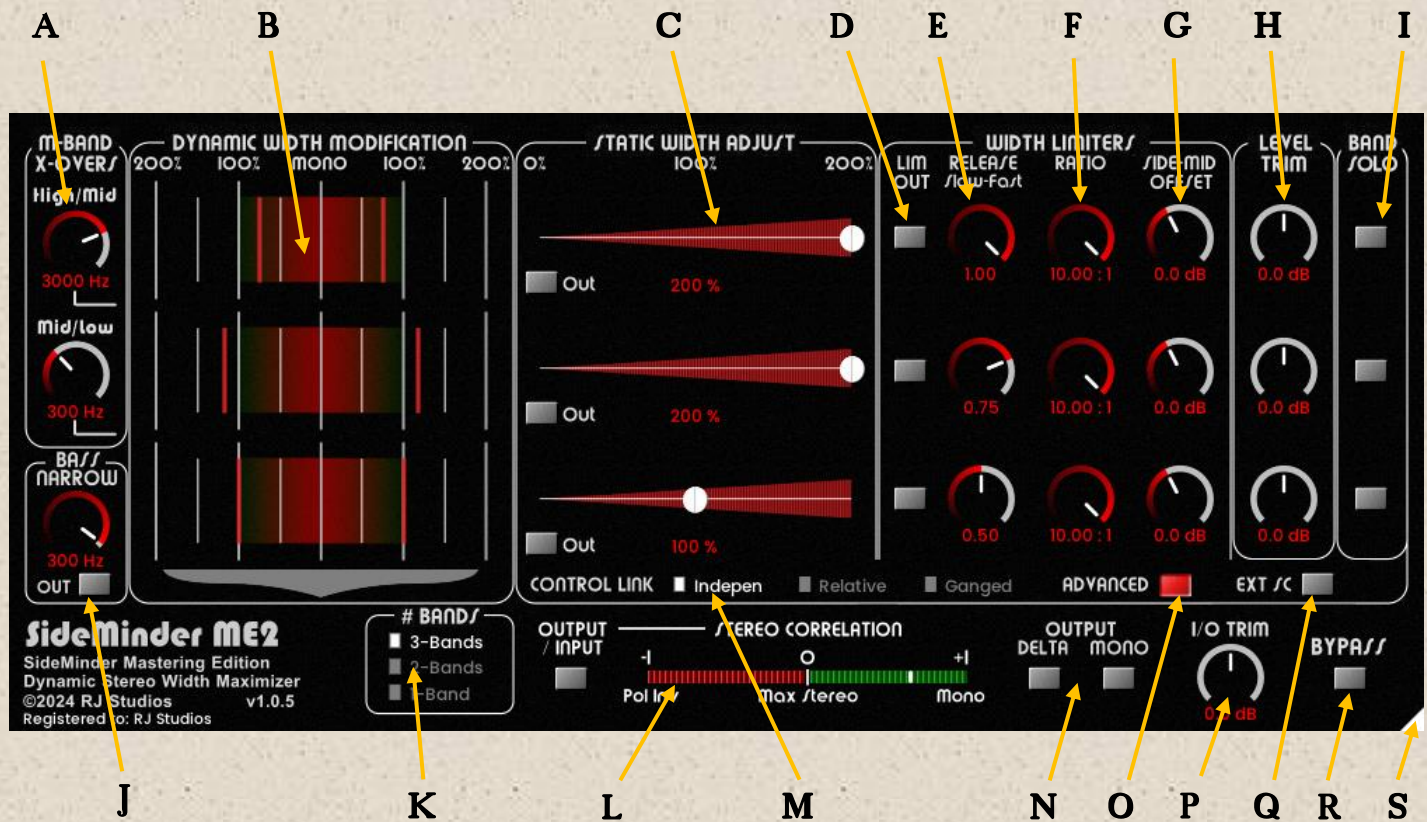
SideMinder ME2 will be operating in demo mode when first installed and will operate unrestricted for 14 days. At the end of 14 days the demo will cease output unless a license is purchased. To install your license, click on the registration at the bottom left corner of the plugin window; copy and right-click paste the registration code from your purchase receipt then press enter on your keyboard.

NOTE: Internet connection is required during registration. If your system is typically isolated from the internet for security or performance reasons you may disconnect after the plugin shows "Registered to: your name".

NOTE: Many DAWs "cache" plugins and may not show the plugin as "Registered to: xxx" until the plugin is removed from a track or bus and re-loaded. Restarting the DAW will also refresh the plugin.

Answers to common registrations issues can be found on our [website FAQ page](#).

Plugin Controls



A – Crossover Controls – (active in 2 and 3-band modes) - selects the crossover frequencies. In 3-band mode the controls will automatically space to force a minimum width of 1 octave for the mid band. Click the Band Solo buttons (**I**) to hear the effect of the crossovers.

B – Activity Display – shows the width enhancement and dynamic action of the width limiters.

C – Width Adjustment Sliders – control the relationship between mid and side components of the stereo signal. When centered (default value) the stereo width is not affected. At 0% setting the stereo mix is narrowed all the way to mono. At maximum setting the audio stereo image is widened by 200% (defined as a 6dB increase in Side/Mid ratio). The effect of the control can be turned on/off without affecting the control position via the **Out** buttons.

D – LIM Out – turns on/off the correlation width limiter for the associated band.

E – Release – The width limiters react quickly and then release through two different slopes to maximize transparency of action. The Release control sets the release time of a second stage release envelope and should be adjusted for most transparent results. Fast release times typically work best on dynamic material while slower release times work best for ballads, etc.

F & G – Advanced Controls – disabled by default but can be enabled with the **Advanced** control (**O**) when more control is desired.

SideMinder ME2 is designed to prevent negative correlation of stereo signals HOWEVER if it is desired to make the signal slightly wider (or narrower) than 0 correlation the compression **Ratio (F)** and **Side-Mid Offset (G)** of the limiters can be adjusted here. The Ratio control affects how much width reduction is applied to the signal. At its maximum setting (10:1) the limiting is slightly softer than when the Advanced controls are not engaged. This will produce a softer width limiting but may not always keep the signal in positive correlation. The Side-Mid Offset control can be adjusted to keep the signal in the positive correlation range or can be left at its default “0” position if small amounts of negative correlation are acceptable.

When the Side-Mid Offset control is in the negative range the limiter(s) will limit to a value in the negative correlation range (wider stereo but less mono compatible). If set to greater than 0 the limiters will limit to a more positive correlation (more mono).

NOTE: Ratio settings below 10:1 and Offset settings below “0” can result in output signals that are no longer mono compatible – especially if width boost has been applied. Monitor the Correlation Meter to ensure your mixes stay in the positive correlation range.

H – Band Level Trim – SideMinder ME2 modifies the phase relationships in the stereo signal which can produce small changes to the overall levels and spectral balance (in 2/3-band modes). The Level Trim controls can be used to correct the levels (in all band modes) or as trim EQ (in 2 and 3-band modes).

I – Band Solo Control – allows “soloing” each band (in 2 and 3-band modes). Especially useful when adjusting the crossover frequencies in 2-band and 3-band modes.

J – Bass Narrow Control – sets the cutoff frequency of a gentle (6dB/octave) filter below which the signals are mixed to mono. This filter is applied BEFORE the stereo width limiters and helps to solidify the bass frequencies (especially helpful when mastering for vinyl records).

K – # Bands Control – selects the number of bands used in processing. The crossover points for 2-band and 3-band modes are set by the crossover controls (**A**) and can be auditioned using the Band Solo controls (**I**).

L – Stereo Correlation Meter – shows the phase relationship between the left and right channels at the input or output of the plugin. If the signal is to the left of 0 it means that there are elements in the signal that are becoming out of phase between the left and right channels and will begin to cancel if mixed to mono. When the correlation is -1 the left and right channels are completely inverted and will cancel entirely if summed to mono. At the center of its range “maximum stereo” separation is occurring while a reading of +1 indicates complete correlation between left and right channels (i.e., a mono signal - the same on both left and right channels). Musical material should usually appear only in the POSITIVE range.

The input to the meter can be selected as Input to the plugin or as Output from the plugin for easy comparison of SideMinder ME2’s action.

M – Control Link – selects how controls in the Static Width Adjust and Width Limiter sections operate and interact.

- **Independent** mode – all controls operate independently
- **Relative** mode – all controls in a group will move together while keeping their relative settings. To change the value of any individual control switch to independent mode, make the adjustment, then switch back to relative mode to move all the controls in that group as a group. If any control in the group reaches its limit of travel all other controls in the group will “snap back” to their relative positions (this behavior may vary in some DAWs).
- **Ganged** mode – all controls in a group move together with the same value.

NOTE: Due to the interlinking of controls in Relative and Ganged modes, conflicts can occur when responding to manually edited automation data. If that occurs please switch to Independent mode or write automation *from* the plugin (by moving its controls during write) and not via manual DAW edits.

N – Output Controls – Stereo/Mono and Normal/Delta buttons – select the output modes for quickly monitoring SideMinder ME2’s action. The Stereo/Mono button selects normal or mono-mixed output while the Normal/Delta button selects the processed signal or the difference between the processed signal and the input signal.

O – Advanced Controls – disabled by default but can be enabled to access the Advanced controls of Ratio (**F**) and Side-Mid Offset (**G**) when more control is desired.

P – I/O Trim – provides overall level adjustment to match pre/post processed signal levels.

Q – Ext SC – switches from internal to external sidechain control. The sidechain input is a wideband signal applied to all bands (is not split by the crossovers). When Ext SC is engaged plugin processing changes to a linear mode that modulates the width of the main signal but does NOT limit the signal to 0 (positive) correlation. The amount of modulation is set by the Ratio controls while the Side-Mid Offset controls act as a threshold. One sidechain signal applies to all bands however the amount of effect can be adjusted for each band independently via each band’s Speed, Ratio and Offset controls. Adjust the Static Width Adjust controls, Ratio and Side-Mid Offset controls as desired/necessary to make sure the signal stays in the positive range on the correlation meter.

IMPORTANT POINTS when using the External Sidechain input

- The external sidechain signal must be a stereo signal with typical stereo content. The plugin will not work properly, and may provide erratic results, if fed a mono signal to only one sidechain input pin.
- A stereo sidechain signal that has the same signal on both L/R channels (100% mid/mono signal) or identical, but polarity inverted signals (100% side signal) will produce no dynamic width modulation effect.
- If **Ext SC** is engaged but no external sidechain is connected the plugin will use the input to the plugin, pre-crossovers and pre-width adjust, as the sidechain signal. In this mode the plugin will produce width compression but will not necessarily limit the output signal to “0” (positive) correlation. This mode can be used as an effect or as a different sounding means of dynamic width control.

R – Process/Bypass button – turns all plugin processing on/off and bypasses the input signal.

S – GUI resize control – click and drag to resize the GUI. Double click to reset to default size.

ROTARY & SLIDER CONTROL MODIFIERS

- 1) Hold down the Ctrl key while dragging or scrolling control for fine resolution
- 2) Holding down the Alt (Win)/Option(Mac) key and then clicking on control will reset that control to its default value
- 3) Double-click on control to open a window for text entry of control value.

PLUGIN PRESETS

SideMinder ME2 comes with a basic assortment of built-in presets to get you started. These presets will appear in all versions of the plugin on both Mac and PC however not all DAWs support hard-coded presets for VST3 plugins. If you are using the VST3 version in your DAW and do not see the preset list it means your DAW does not support hard-coded VST3 presets. In that case, please use the VST2 version.

HOW TO USE SIDEMINDER ME2

SideMinder ME2 can be used to widen – or narrow – the stereo image by moving the Width Controls left or right. Moving the controls to the right makes the image wider (more stereo) while moving the controls to the left makes the image narrower (more mono). SideMinder ME2 can be used on individual stereo tracks, sub-mix buses and/or the stereo master bus.

If the Width Limiters are off the plugin works like a typical mid/side stereo width enhancer with bass control. The width effect is minimized for low frequencies by the Bass Mono control which can be used to “solidify” the bass to help control groove overshoot when mastering for vinyl or for an overall “tighter”/more solid bass sound.

When the Width Limiters are engaged (default) the Width Meters will show any dynamic action that is occurring to keep the signal “mono compatible”. Like many other width enhancement effects SideMinder ME2’s width enhancement is best used in moderation. **If the Width Meters are moving often or in big leaps you should consider reducing the stereo width and/or checking your mix for phase problems.**

The Output Correlation Meter can be viewed to observe the overall stereo mix correlation.

Fit it in the Mix – *WIDTHWISE*

SideMinder ME2’s sidechain input can be used in a similar way that sidechain compression is used to help “fit a signal in the mix” – only in this case we are fitting the signal in *widthwise* instead of by amplitude. When the external sidechain signal gets wider the source signal will get narrower. The amount of the effect is controlled by the Ratio and Side-Mid Offset controls as explained in the **Ext SC (Q)** section above. This rather unique effect can be used to help fit a track or bus signal into the final stereo mix or for special effects when driven from stereo LFOs or other source.

General Notes About SideMinder ME2

SideMinder ME2 is a stereo image enhancer/controller that works with **stereo** source tracks - it will

not generate a stereo image from mono tracks nor will it respond properly to mono sidechain inputs.

SideMinder ME2 manipulates the mid/side relationship of the stereo signal and can, therefore, increase or decrease the overall audio levels. Use the I/O Trim control to adjust overall input vs. output levels and the individual band Trim controls as needed to equalize tonal balance (in 2 and 3-band modes).

SideMinder ME2 should be placed LAST in the signal processing chain following any other effects but before any compressors and/or final peak limiters.

LICENSE INFO

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Updates: You are entitled to free updates until the next major version number. **Please retain your purchase download link and registration key.** The developer makes no guarantee that this product will be maintained indefinitely.

Moving to another computer:

To move your plugin to another computer you can "De-Register" the plugin using our De-Register app that can be download anytime from our [FAQ webpage](#).

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