

Monarch FAQ

What is Monarch?

A stereo compressor inspired by variable-mu behavior, with a soft knee, level-dependent ratio, six rectifier timing families, Tube Bias and broad tonal voicings. It is intended for mix buses, mastering adjustments and individual sources.

Is it a circuit-perfect hardware emulation?

No. Monarch is an independent algorithmic design. The component-style rectifier labels identify its timing families; they do not claim component-by-component equivalence.

How many presets are included?

135: the original 100 plus five fictional engineer-style collections with seven recipes each. These are Shark-created presets, not endorsements or contributions from real engineers.

Why does a preset change the input gain?

Gain staging is part of each recipe. Mastering presets load +5 dB Input on both channels and Mix Bus presets +2 dB, including the engineer collections. Adjust the drive to suit your source.

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What does LINK link?

It shares detection and left-side compression settings, and synchronizes both inputs. Either Input knob controls both while linked. Output trims and channel-enable buttons remain independent.

Why do right-channel settings change when I unlink?

The right compression settings stored before linking become active again. Linked mode displayed and used the left settings. Inputs retain their matched values until adjusted independently.

Why do the switches reverse direction?

They intentionally move through the center: Low, Mid, High, Mid, Low. Tone follows Air, Off, Tape, Off, Air. An endpoint never jumps directly to the opposite endpoint.

Are the curved meters output VU meters?

No. They display gain reduction from 0 to 20 dB. Use a meter after Monarch to check output level, LUFS or true peak.

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Is Gain Match loudness normalization?

No. It compares running signal energy and applies up to +/-12 dB compensation. Allow it to settle and verify by ear; it is not LUFS normalization or peak protection.

Does Monarch prevent output clipping?

No. It has no output ceiling or true-peak limiter. Leave headroom and use a dedicated downstream limiter when a final peak limit is required.

What does Delta let me hear?

The dry signal minus the compensated, mixed result. This includes changes in dynamics, tone and stereo image. Turn Delta off for normal playback.

Does Sidechain EQ change the audio EQ?

It shapes the detector rather than directly equalizing the audio path. The audible result changes because compression reacts differently. SC Filter remains active even when Sidechain EQ is Off.

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How do I use an external sidechain?

Route a DAW send to Monarch's sidechain bus and choose External in Sidechain EQ. Under LINK, set the left selector. With no routed trigger, there is no useful external detection signal.

What happens in M/S mode?

The left strip processes Mid and the right strip processes Side before decoding back to stereo. Use LINK off for independent treatment. The faceplate still reads LEFT and RIGHT.

Does Mono Bass make everything below its frequency completely mono?

Its transition is gradual, not a brickwall. It reduces low-frequency Side information in the processed path. Adding dry Mix can restore some original stereo content.

Is oversampling included?

Not in the current edition. The engine has no oversampling or lookahead and reports zero latency. Strong drive can alias; use conservative levels if bright material develops unwanted edge.

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How do I find, save or import presets?

Open the preset field, use categories or Search, and scroll the sidebar for engineer collections. Save new stores a named user preset. Load imports a valid Monarch XML. A double-click or Enter loads and closes the browser.

Can I favorite or hide factory presets?

Yes. Use the star for favorites and the hamburger to hide the current factory preset or restore hidden presets. Hidden entries are skipped by the browser and arrows; the factory recipes are not deleted.

How do themes and zoom work?

Click either logo for Amber, Red, Blue or Purple. The hamburger offers 80%, 100%, 120% and 140%; 100% is 1026 x 557. Theme and zoom are saved with the host session.

Where is the installer and compatibility information?

The signed Monarch customer installer is the next release step. Download availability and verified operating-system/format support will be published on the product page when ready. Do not assume compatibility from a source-project target alone.

What should I send with a support request?

Include the Monarch version, DAW and version, operating system, sample rate, buffer size, preset and a short description of the steps. Mention LINK, M/S or External sidechain if relevant. Use the Support section of sharkplugs.com.