



Apogee FX Plugins User's Guide For Symphony Desktop

User's Guide - May, 2021



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Overview

Introduction

Obsessively crafted by the same team that designs all Apogee hardware and software products, Apogee FX plugins offer superior sound quality, and [full bandwidth performance](#) at every sample rate. From visually modern interfaces that allow you to precisely shape and contour your sound to meticulously modeled vintage hardware that is so accurate it has been endorsed by the hardware manufacturer, Apogee plugins will quickly find their way into your daily recording tool kit.

Thanks to Apogee FX plugins' unique ability to run both on hardware DSP and natively on your computer's CPU, Symphony Desktop offers more innovative workflow options than any interface available today.

With Symphony Desktop and Apogee FX, there's no need to adapt your creative workflow to the restrictions of your audio interface and plugins - YOU choose the way you want to work.

Register your product

- Access Apogee's expert Technical Support for free
- Receive important product update information by email
- Take the Customer Satisfaction Survey for a chance to win Apogee gear!

Register Now: www.apogeedigital.com/support/register

Setup

System Requirements

To run Apogee FX as a native plugin on your Mac or Windows computer

- macOS 10.13.6 or later
- Windows 10 Anniversary update or later
- 4 GB RAM minimum, 8GB of RAM recommended
- Pace iLok account, free from www.ilok.com - iLok License Manager software installed - no physical iLok required.

To run Apogee FX on Apogee hardware DSP

- Apogee Symphony Desktop audio interface
- Apogee Symphony Desktop Control software application

Installation

If you've purchased an Apogee hardware-DSP enabled interface like Symphony Desktop, Apogee FX plugins are installed on your computer as part of the Symphony Desktop software installation.

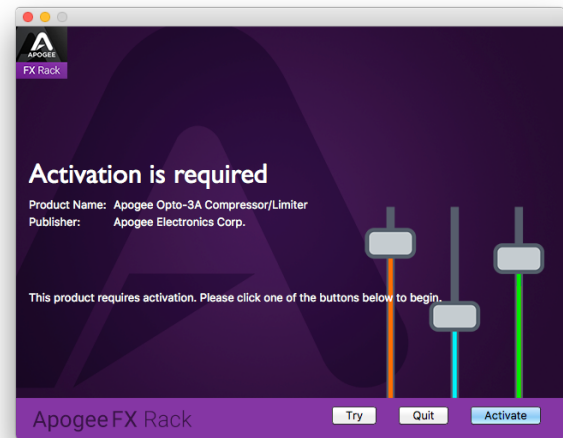
If you've purchased one or more Apogee FX plugins separately, use the Apogee FX Plugin installer appropriate for your operating system.

Plugin Activation

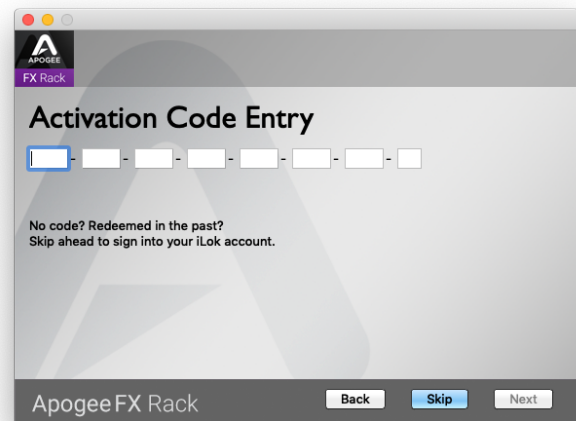
To authorize Apogee FX plugins, you'll need a Pace iLok account and the Pace Activation Code that comes with the purchase of the plugin(s). The Activation Code deposits an iLok license into your account and activates it to a physical iLok 2 (or greater) or your computer's hard drive.

Depending on the DAW, the Pace activation process is launched by simply opening the DAW program or opening an Apogee FX plugin in an open session.

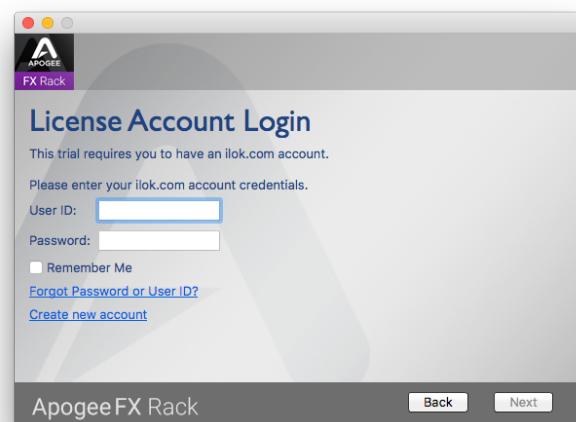
1. At the “Activation is required” page, click Activate if you have an Activation Code. If you don't have a code, click Try to activate with a 15-day Trial license.



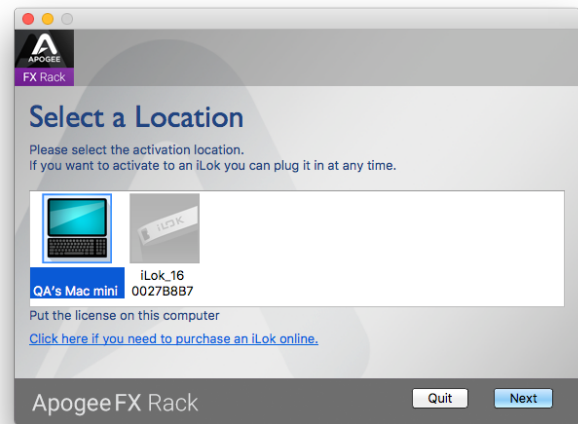
2. If you clicked Activate, enter the Activation Code on this page:



3. Sign into (or create) your iLok account on this page. If you create an account from this page, you will be prompted to download the required iLok License Manager application.



4. Choose a valid license location on this page. If you want to activate to your iLok 2 (or greater), connect it now:
5. It's also possible to activate your license from the iLok License Manager app - open the app and choose Licenses > Redeem Activation Code.



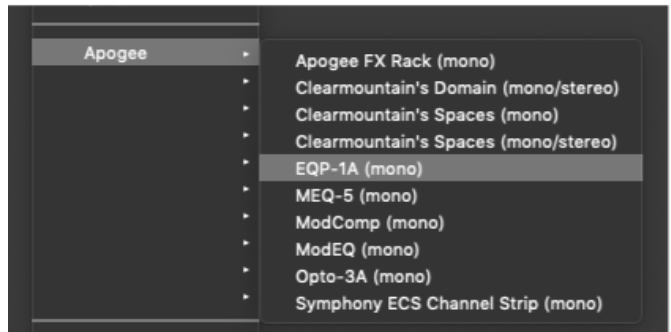
Plugin Interface Tour

Opening Apogee FX Plugins

Apogee FX plugins support a wide range of innovative workflows, thanks to the plugins' ability to run on Apogee hardware DSP and natively in your DAW, using your computer's CPU power.

How and where you open an Apogee FX plugin is determined by your workflow preferences.

Open any individual Apogee FX plugin in your DAW as you would any other plugin - go to your DAW channel's plugin dropdown menu, select the Apogee FX plugin, and start processing. The plugin uses your computer's native CPU power, so no Apogee hardware DSP is required



You can also open the Apogee Channel FX plugin in your DAW. Open the Channel FX plugin, then load up to 4 FX plugins making it convenient to save and recall your own custom processing chains - vocals, drums, guitars and more.



When using Apogee FX and the Channel FX plugin with Apogee DSP-equipped hardware (like Symphony Desktop), you've got access to additional features.

Two additional tabs labelled Preamp and Print FX offer control of mic preamp emulation and hardware DSP-enabled Apogee FX.

When plugins are opened in the Print FX tab, the processing is applied destructively (i.e permanently) at the hardware input *before* routing to your DAW. With Print FX, you commit your processing, which can be an efficient way to work.



If you need the latency advantage of direct monitoring and you want to use plugins while recording, Dualpath monitoring offers all the advantages of this workflow without the need to manage multiple windows and apps.

To learn about DualPath monitoring, Print FX and other Apogee hardware DSP-enabled workflows, consult the [Symphony Desktop User's Guide](#) section entitled Apogee Channel FX Rack.



Symphony ECS Channel Strip

The Symphony ECS Channel Strip offers 3-band EQ and high pass filter, easy-to-use compression plus a Drive control for extra saturation and distortion. The ECS Channel Strip offers a complete range of processing with a minimum of fuss!



1. EQ Section In/Out - Toggle the EQ section on or off
2. High Pass to EQ or Side Chain - toggle the high pass filter between two possible signal paths.
 - HP > EQ - The high pass filter is inserted into the EQ signal chain, processing audio throughput.
 - HP > SC - The high pass filter is inserted into the compressor side chain, making the compressor less sensitive to low frequencies.
3. High Pass Frequency - Set the frequency of high pass filter. The slope is fixed at 18 dB per octave.
4. Lo Shelf Gain - Set the gain of the Lo Shelf band in the range of -15 dB to +15 dB.
5. Lo Shelf Frequency - Set the frequency of the Lo Shelf band.
6. Mid Peak Q - Switch the Q (or bandwidth) of the Mid Peak band to Wide (up) or Narrow (down).
7. Mid Peak Gain - Set the gain of the Mid Peak band in the range of -15 dB to +15 dB.
8. Mid Peak Frequency - Set the frequency of the Mid Peak band.
9. High Shelf Gain - Set the gain of the High Shelf band in the range of -15 dB to +15 dB.
10. High Shelf Frequency - Set the frequency of the High Shelf band.
11. Compressor Section In/Out - Toggle the Compressor section On or Off
12. Compressor Threshold - Set the Threshold (the level at which gain reduction commences)

13. Compressor Ratio - Set the ratio of gain reduction once the signal is above the threshold. For example, with a 3:1 ratio, the compressor output increases 1 dB for every 3 dB the compressor input increases.
14. Compressor Dry/Wet Mix - Set the percentage of Wet (compressed) signal at the compressor output. Set to 100% (fully clockwise) to output the compressed signal only. Try a Mix value of 50% for parallel compression on drums and other sources with large transient peaks.
15. Gain Reduction Meter - Displays the amount of gain reduction.
16. Drive - Increase the level of Drive from subtle saturation to distortion. The Drive circuit comes after EQ and Compression and before the Output Level.
17. Output Level - Adjust the output level of the plugin.
18. Preset Save/Recall - Load, save and toggle through Factory or User presets.

To reset controls to their Default setting, Option-click (Mac) the control.

To enter a numerical value, double-click the control. To enter frequencies 1kHz and above, type the frequency in the format "1200" or "1.2k".

Pultec EQP-1A Program Equalizer

Apogee's Pultec EQP-1A Program Equalizer captures the richness, warmth and ease-of-use of the original tube hardware, as manufactured to this day by Pulse Techniques. Reach for the Pultec EQP-1A when you need to add weighty bottom end and silky top end with just a few twists of the dial.



1. Low Boost - Boost at the frequency selected by the Low Frequency selector.
2. Low Atten - Attenuate at the frequency selected by the Low Frequency selector. Try boosting and attenuating simultaneously for an interesting effect!
3. Low Frequency - Select the frequency of the Low Boost and Atten controls.
4. High Boost - Boost at the frequency selected by the High Frequency selector.
5. Bandwidth - Set the bandwidth, from sharp to broad, of the high frequency boost.
6. High Frequency - Select the frequency of the Hi Boost control.
7. High Atten - Attenuate at the frequency selected by the Atten Sel selector.
8. Atten Sel - Select the frequency of the High Atten control
9. IN - Switch In the equalization controls. When EQ is not switched in, gain circuit emulation is still active.
10. Off - On - Toggles the plugin between Engage and Bypass.
11. Preset - Load, save and toggle through Factory or User presets.

Pultec MEQ-5 Midrange Equalizer

The Apogee Pultec MEQ-5 Midrange Equalizer plugin precisely recreates the original hardware to sculpt critical midrange frequencies with precision and warmth.



1. Low Peak Frequency - Select the frequency of the Low Boost control.
2. Low Peak Boost - Boost at the frequency selected by the Low Peak Frequency selector.
3. Dip Frequency - Select the frequency of the Hi Boost control.
4. Dip Atten - Attenuate at the frequency selected by the Low Frequency selector.
5. Low Peak Frequency - Select the frequency of the Low Boost control.
6. Low Peak Boost - Boost at the frequency selected by the Low Peak Frequency selector.
7. IN - Switch In the equalization controls. When EQ is not switched in, gain circuit emulation is still active.
8. Off - On - Toggles the plugin between Engage and Bypass.
9. Preset - Load, save and toggle through Factory or User presets.

Opto-3A Optical Compressor

This Optical Compressor/Limiter reproduces the reactive compression characteristics of a renowned hardware solid state compressor/limiter.

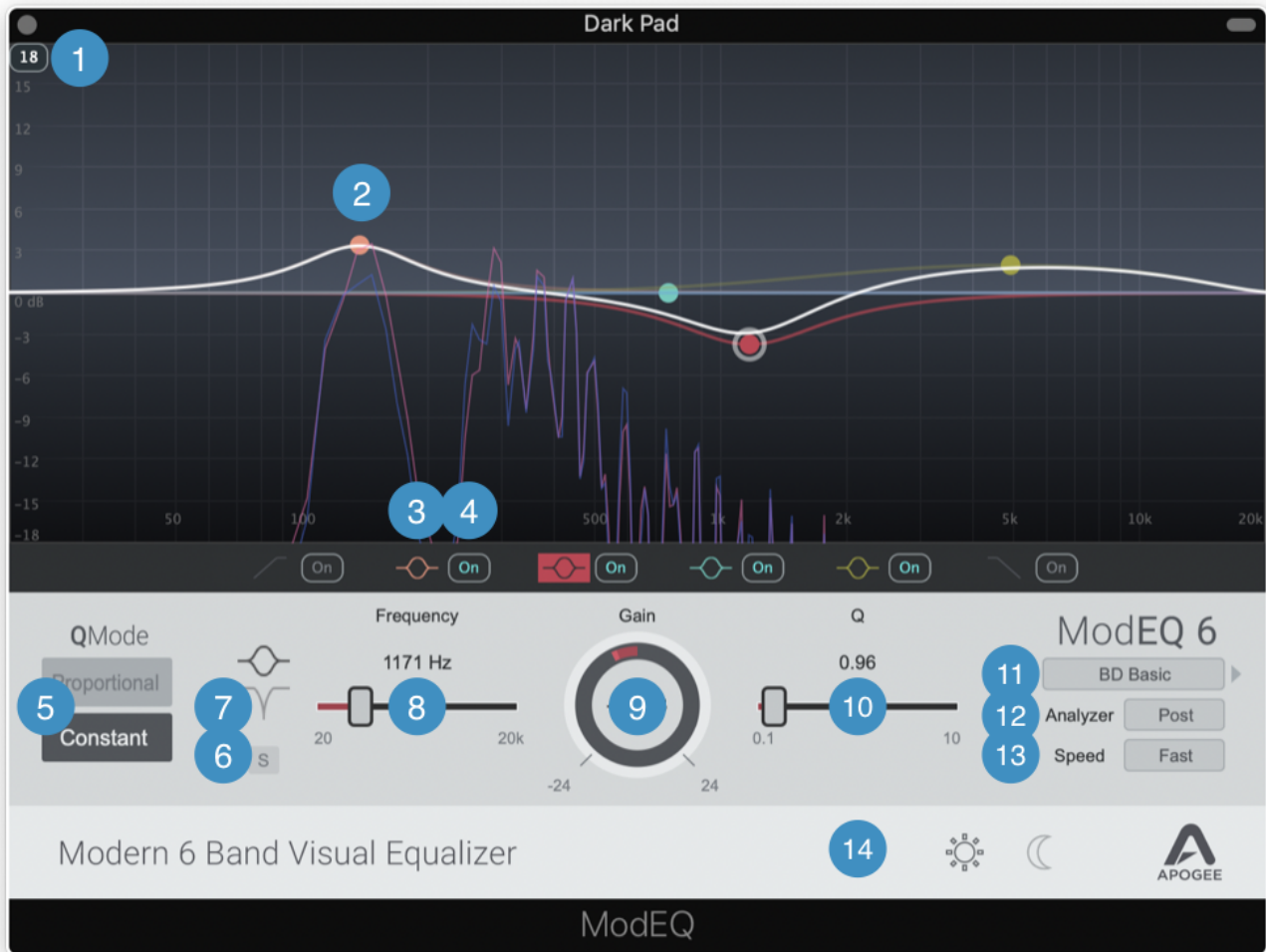


1. Gain - Set the Output gain, i.e. after compression. The grease pencil mark indicates unity gain when no gain reduction is engaged.
2. GR/Output Meter - Select the signal displayed on the front panel meter - gain reduction level or output level.
3. Peak Reduction - Set the amount of Peak Reduction - as the control is turned clockwise, the threshold lowers and the ratio subtly increases.
4. Comp/Limit - Switch the gain reduction ratio between compression and limiting.
5. HF Contour - Modify the high frequency response of the compressor side chain. When the side chain's high frequencies are boosted, the compressor's threshold becomes more sensitive to high frequency audio and thus compresses this part of the spectrum more than low frequencies. Setting

HF Contour to Cut has the opposite effect - high frequencies are compressed less than low frequencies.

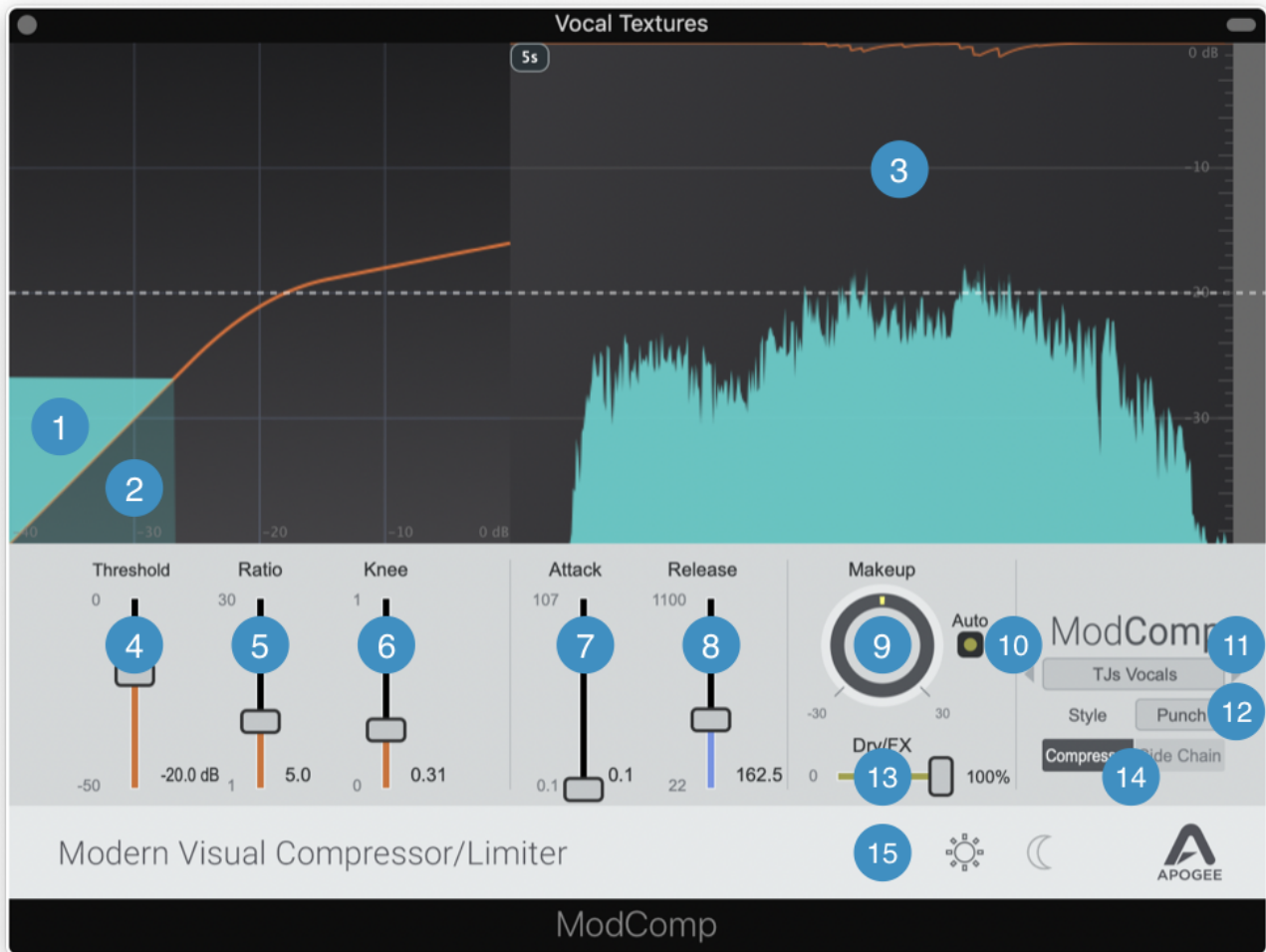
6. Hi Pass - Set the frequency of the compressor side chain hi pass filter.
7. Dry/FX - Set the mix between the Dry (input) signal and the FX (compressed) signal. Set at 50/50 for parallel compression, then adjust to taste.
8. Side Chain Listen - Listen to the side chain signal path, useful when adjusting HF Contour or Hi Pass. Turn off during normal compressor operation.
9. Preset - Load, save and toggle through Factory or User presets.

ModEQ6 Parametric Equalizer



1. Scale Display -Toggle the EQ display between +-18 and 24 dB
2. Band Adjuster - Click and drag the band adjuster to the desired gain and frequency.
3. Band Focus - Click to focus the band and display controls in the plugin lower half.
4. Band On - Toggle the band On/Off
5. Q Mode - Set the Q behavior Proportional or Constant.
6. Band Solo - Solo the band so that its effect on the total EQ may be heard. On Peak/Notch bands, a variable Q band pass filter is engaged
7. Band Type - Depending on the band, toggles the band type between Peak and Notch or Peak and Shelf
8. Band Frequency - Set the frequency of the focused band.
9. Band Gain - Set the gain of the focused band.
10. Band Q - Set the Q, or slope, of the focused band.
11. Preset - Load, save and toggle through Factory or User presets.
12. Analyzer - Set the frequency Analyzer display before (Pre) or after the equalization (Post), or turn off the analyzer display
13. Speed - Set the display speed of the frequency analyzer
14. Light/Dark - Click the Apogee logo to toggle the plugin graphics between Light and Dark Mode.

ModComp Visual Compressor



1. Ratio Display Output Level - Displays output level after compression, before Makeup gain.
2. Ratio Display Input Level - Displays input level before compression.
3. Gain Reduction Meter and Trace - Displays gain reduction amount. Input/Output Trace and Display Speed - Input is displayed as dark blue, output is displayed as light blue. Adjust display scrolling speed in the upper corner of the display.
4. Threshold - Set the threshold level above which audio is compressed.
5. Ratio - Set the ratio of compression once the audio input level exceeds the threshold.
6. Knee - Set the compression knee, or sharpness of the transition from uncompressed to compressed audio.
7. Attack - Set the compression attack, or speed at which gain reduction commences once the audio input level exceeds the threshold.
8. Release - Set the compression release, or speed at which gain reduction stops once the audio input level goes below the threshold.

ModComp Visual Compressor (*continued*)

9. Makeup - Set the amount of gain added after compression to make up for lost level from the compression process.
10. Auto - Engage Auto Makeup gain to automatically add post-compression gain to maintain unity gain through the compressor. Dry/FX - Set the mix between the Dry (input) signal and the FX (compressed) signal. Set at 50/50 for parallel compression, then adjust to taste.
11. Preset - Load, save and toggle through Factory or User presets.
12. Style - the Style
 - Punch - best for general compression and limiting.
 - Easy - Auto attack/release with a linear release envelope similar to the renown 160 compressor. Great for easily configured compression with a vibe
 - Leveller - Ultra-clean and transparent gain reduction, great for providing a transparent leveling of the audio signal. Even though the release setting is longer even at its minimum, the gain reduction action remains smooth and present.
13. Dry/FX Mix
14. Compressor - Side Chain view - Toggle the plugin window view between Compressor and Side Chain.
15. Light/Dark - Click the Apogee logo to toggle the plugin graphics between Light and Dark Mode.

Channel FX (no Apogee hardware DSP)

Though the Apogee Channel FX plugin is conceived to work with Apogee hardware DSP-enabled interfaces like Symphony Desktop, it may also be opened in your DAW as a native plugin regardless of your interface. The information given below describes Channel FX functionality with no Apogee DSP-enabled interface. To learn about Channel FX functionality with Symphony Desktop, consult the [Symphony Desktop User's Guide](#).

1. Open Monitor FX plugins - Click “+” to open up to 4 Apogee FX plugins. When multiple FX are opened, drag the FX icons to re-order them. Use the On/Off button to turn on/off individual plugin instances. Use the Trashcan icon to delete individual plugin instances.
2. Monitor FX Presets - Open, save and toggle through Factory and User presets. Save and recall your favorite plugin processing chains.
3. Monitor FX A > B - Click A or B to toggle the Monitor FX tab between two snapshots of all plugins and settings. To load the A or B snapshot, click the letter. To copy a snapshot from A to B, click A, then click the arrow. To copy a snapshot from B to A, click B, then click the arrow. Use these functions to refine settings, copy them to the other snapshot for further refinement, then compare the options until you've arrived at your perfect setting.
4. Rack IN & Rack OUT Trims & Meters - Trim the input and output levels of the Monitor FX rack as displayed by the In and Out meters.



Additional Support

For more information

- Apogee KnowledgeBase and FAQs
- Informational Videos
- Apogee Product Registration
- How to contact Apogee Technical Support

Please visit:

www.apogeedigital.com/support

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