KICKPUMP

SIDECHAIN SHAPER · MAX FOR LIVE

FREE · EXÓTICO RECORDS

User manual

MAX FOR LIVE · VERSION 1.0 · EXÓTICO RECORDS

English

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01

Welcome

KICKPUMP is a sidechain volume shaper for Ableton Live. Instead of setting up a compressor and sending it a kick, you draw the gain curve you want and it repeats, locked to Live's transport.

That makes the pump exact. It never misses a kick, never triggers on a snare, and it sounds the same on every bar — which is the point of the effect in house, techno and lofi. The shape is yours: a soft classic pump, a hard gate, a slow swell, anything you can draw.

Requirements

Ableton Live 12 Suite, or Live 12 Standard with Max for Live. Windows and macOS. No external libraries and no routing: there is no sidechain input to feed.

In one minute

1. Drop KICKPUMP on the track you want to duck — the bass, a pad, a whole bus.
2. Press play. The shape runs once per quarter note and you can see the dot travel along the curve.
3. Drag the points to taste, or click one of the seven shapes in the toolbar below the curve.
4. Set `Depth` for how far down it pulls, and `Rate` for how often.

> WHERE IT GOES
>
> On the track you want to *duck*, not on the kick. The kick stays untouched; KICKPUMP gets out of its way.

02

Download and installation

Download

KICKPUMP is free with an Exótico Records account. Sign in at `exoticorecords.com/tienda/kickpump` with your email — no password — and the download starts. The account is free and only asks for your address.

Installation

1. Extract the whole `KICKPUMP` folder from the ZIP.
2. Copy it into `Documents/Ableton/User Library/Presets/Audio Effects/Max Audio Effect/` .
3. In Live's browser it appears under **User Library › Presets › Audio Effects › Max Audio Effect › KICKPUMP**.
4. Drag `KICKPUMP.amxd` onto an audio track, or after an instrument on a MIDI track.

> **KEEP THE FOLDER TOGETHER**
>
> `KICKPUMP.amxd` needs `kickpump-ui.js` , `kickpump-control.js` and `kickpump-data.js` next to it. Move the device on its own and the interface will not load.

Fonts (optional)

The `Fonts` folder has Archivo and Space Mono, the label's typefaces, under the OFL licence. Install them to see the interface as it was designed; without them, KICKPUMP falls back to the system font and works exactly the same.

03

The interface

Everything fits in Live's device row: the shape on the left, the timing and the knobs on the right, and the gain meter at the top.



1. The shape: one cycle of the pump, with the playhead travelling along it.
2. Seven starting shapes.
3. Grid and snap.
4. Sync or free running.
5. Note value, from 1/1 to 1/32 (in free mode, the rate in Hz).
6. Which band gets ducked: the whole signal, the lows or the highs.
7. Stop bypass: let the signal through when the transport is stopped.
8. Bypass.
9. Depth, attack, offset, crossover, mix and output.
10. The gain meter: what the device is doing to the signal, over the last few seconds.

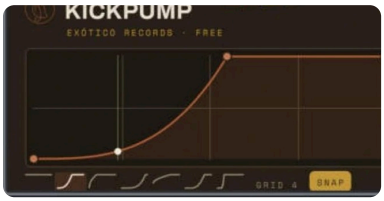
Using the controls

Drag the knobs vertically. Hold Shift for fine control and double-click to go back to the initial value. Every control is a Live parameter, so you can automate it, map it to MIDI and reach it on Push.

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Drawing the shape

The curve is one cycle of the pump. The bottom of the panel is full ducking, the top is the signal untouched. Time runs left to right: the cycle starts at the left edge and ends at the right one.



Add a point

Click anywhere in the panel. The new point lands on the grid unless you hold Shift.

Move a point

Drag it. The first and the last point stay at the edges and only move up and down, so the cycle always joins cleanly with the next one.

Bend a segment

Drag the line between two points. Up gives the fast release of a classic pump, down gives a slow swell. Double-click the line to make it straight again.

Remove a point

Double-click it.

Grid and snap

`Grid` steps through the divisions — 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 12, 16 — and Shift-click steps back. `Snap` turns the grid on and off; with it on, points land on the divisions and rhythms stay tight.

The seven shapes

The icons under the panel are starting points, not presets to keep: click one and then edit it.

1. **Flat** — no ducking. The blank page.
2. **Classic** — the usual pump: straight down, curved back up.
3. **Tight** — back up fast, for faster tempos.
4. **Pump** — a long, obvious swell.
5. **Soft** — a gentle dip that never fully closes.
6. **Hold** — stays down for a moment before coming back.
7. **Gate** — fully closed, then straight open: the stutter.

IT IS SAVED WITH YOUR SET

The shape, the grid and the snap travel with the device, like any knob. Save a Live preset to keep a shape you like for other projects.

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The controls

Sync / Free

Sync locks one cycle of the shape to Live's grid, so it stays in time however long the song runs. Free runs it at a fixed speed in Hz, between 0.1 and 20, which is the one to use for tremolo and for effects that should not follow the tempo.

Rate 1/1 – 1/32

How long one cycle lasts, with dotted (D) and triplet (T) values. 1/4 is the house four-on-the-floor pump; 1/8 doubles it; 1/1 gives one long swell per bar of 4/4.

Depth 0–100 %

How far down the shape pulls the gain. At 100 % the bottom of the curve is silence; around 40–60 % you get movement without losing the track.

Attack 0–30 ms

How fast the gain is allowed to fall. At 0 the duck is instant, which can click on bass; one or two milliseconds is enough to keep it clean. Going up is the shape's own job, so Attack does not touch it.

Offset 0–100 %

Slides the whole shape inside the cycle. Use it when the pump feels slightly early or late against the kick, or to put the dip on the off-beat.

Full / Low / High and X-Over 20 Hz – 2 kHz

Full ducks everything. Low ducks only below the crossover, which clears the kick's room without flattening the hats. High ducks only above it, keeping the weight of a bass while the top end breathes. `X-Over` sets where the split happens; 100–200 Hz is the usual place.

Mix 0–100 %

Blends the ducked signal with the dry one. Below 100 % you get parallel pumping: the movement is there but the body of the track stays.

Output −24 to +12 dB

Gain after the mix. Ducking lowers the average level, so a couple of dB here brings the track back to where it was.

Stop byp

On by default: with Live's transport stopped, the signal passes through untouched, so you can audition a sound without the pump. Turn it off to keep ducking while stopped. In free mode the shape never stops, so this does nothing.

Bypass

Takes the device out of the path, smoothly, with no click.

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In the session

Automation and Push

The twelve controls are Live parameters with English names, in two banks: **Main** (depth, attack, offset, mix, output, bypass) and **Shape** (mode, rate, free rate, band, crossover, stop bypass). Automating **Depth** is the easiest way to bring a drop in: take it from 0 to 100 % over a bar.

The drawn shape is saved with the Set but is not automatable: for a change of shape mid-song, use a second KICKPUMP and automate the bypass of each one.

Latency

None. KICKPUMP reports no latency to Live because it does not look ahead: the shape comes from the transport, not from the audio.

Tips

- **Bass and kick.** KICKPUMP on the bass, `Low` band, crossover around 150 Hz, Depth 60–80 %. The kick gets its space and the bass keeps its top end.
- **Glue a whole mix.** On the master or a bus, Depth around 20 % and Mix at 100 %. Small numbers go a long way here.
- **Parallel.** Depth 100 %, Mix 50 %. Hard movement that still keeps the track's body.
- **Stutter.** The *gate* shape at 1/16 with Depth 100 % turns a pad into a rhythm.
- **Tremolo.** Free mode, 5–8 Hz, Depth 30 %, a soft shape.

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FAQ

› Do I have to route my kick anywhere?

No. There is no sidechain input. The shape comes from Live's transport, so there is nothing to send and nothing to set up.

› The pump is not in time with my kick.

Check that the kick is on the grid, then use `Offset` for the fine alignment. If your kick is deliberately off the grid, move the first point of the shape instead.

› Nothing happens when the transport is stopped.

That is `Stop byp` doing its job. Turn it off if you want to hear the pump while the transport is stopped, or switch to free mode.

› Can I automate the shape?

Not the drawing itself. Automate **Depth**, **Mix** or **Rate**, or put two instances with different shapes and automate their bypass.

› Why is my bass clicking?

A zero-millisecond attack on a low sine clicks. Raise `Attack` to 2–5 ms, or soften the start of the shape.

› Can I use it on the master?

Yes, with small amounts: Depth around 20 %. Remember that the pump is applied to everything, including the kick.

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Specifications and support

Format	Max for Live audio effect (.amxd)
Host	Ableton Live 12 Suite, or Live 12 Standard with Max for Live
Systems	Windows and macOS
Processing	Stereo, original Gen engine
Latency	None
Parameters	12 automatable, in 2 banks
Shapes	7 starting points, freely editable
Interface language	English
Version	1.0

Licence

Free for personal and commercial use in your music. Do not sell or redistribute KICKPUMP or its files: share the exoticorecords.com link so each person downloads it with their own account.

Support

Write to **exoticorecords@gmail.com** with your Live version and your system, and we will answer. KICKPUMP is made by Exótico Records, an independent lofi hip hop label.