nypa

OPERATION MANUAL



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Why Nypa?

Did we really need another compressor? Seriously? Well, yeah, I did. Nypa is the compressor I personally wanted and the first one I reach for whenever I want to tighten up a sound. It has become a reliable workhorse in my own sessions. Now, it's available to everyone.

I know we're being flooded with new plugins, and the pace of development right now is completely bananas. But I'm confident you'll like this one. I wanted a compressor I could dial in quickly without sorting through a long list of controls or giving up the decisions that matter.

Floor, Up, Down. You might look at those labels and wonder, "What does this thing do? Where's my ratio?" Or perhaps, "That's a lot of knobs for a one-knob compressor." Fair enough. Nypa revolves around three jobs, each with its own threshold. The remaining controls let you shape the response.

Nypa brings downward compression and upward compression together. Down holds louder peaks in place, Up brings quieter details forward. Floor makes sure the noise floor isn't pushed by either process. You can tighten a source quickly with a few decisions, while the detector, curve, and timing do much of their work under the hood.

Why RE?

I chose the Rack Extension format because the rack in Reason is where I've been hanging out since Reason's first release in 2000. The rack is a comfortable place to build your own signal chains, and I can quickly have devices affect each other rather than just stringing insert plugins in series.

For a long time after the introduction of Rack Extensions, the format was exclusive to Reason users. Today, Reason Free lets you put the Rack in your favorite DAWs for free. Reason Rack Plugin runs as **VST3**, **AU**, or **AAX** in a DAW and Nypa loads inside it alongside other Rack devices.

You need a Reason Studios account to purchase, install and use Nypa. Install the software Reason Companion, and it will take care of installation and authorization.

Add a pinch of compression

Nypa means *to pinch* in Swedish, and Pinch is where the name becomes a sound. This is where a *punchy, finite-ratio VCA compressor meets an ultrafast elastic soft-knee limiter*, if I may draw a comparison though it makes me sound like some cheesy marketing guy. The pinch can be a quick nip, a gentle hold, or a firm squeeze — and it springs back as soon as the sound gives it room.

At its lowest setting, Pinch carries on the legacy of studio classics: RMS-based level detection and Nypa's **SoEasy** curve give the compressor its finite-ratio grip. At its highest setting, peak-based detection and an ultrafast response bite instantly without pumping. Bear in mind that Pinch is not a conventional RMS/peak switch. You simply decide how hard you want to squeeze that snowball. Pinch morphs through different approaches to attack while detection, curve shape, and release change with it. There is more going on than a single attack or release adjustment.

The best way to learn the different characters is to stop reading and try it out. Start at the center, play a drum loop, keep Down at a fixed value and sweep through the Pinch range. Listen for differences in how transients are treated, how sustained sounds are glued together, and how the compressor lets go.

Downward compression

The Down section represents the familiar side of Nypa: a compressor that attenuates loud signals and then compensates by adding make-up gain. The threshold operates within a soft-knee compression curve, meaning it is not a rigid dividing line; the signal is affected to varying degrees around this threshold point. There is no dedicated control for the compression ratio; instead, the *Pinch* knob adjusts the character of the curve and the compressor's overall response.

Lowering the threshold brings a larger portion of the dynamic range into the active region of the curve. The *Down* threshold extends down to -48 dBFS which is sufficient to crush almost anything. The *Makeup* control allows for threshold-dependent gain, pushing the signal right to the forefront. Makeup does not measure and match loudness for you. Your ears make that decision.

Bias decides how much the bass register influences the downward detector. Positive settings give the low end more relative weight by reducing the detector's sensitivity to higher frequencies, a nice thing for compressing your bass. Negative settings shift that balance toward the highs, well suited for vocals where the midrange is the deciding factor in how the vocals sit in the mix.

If you connect an external sidechain, whether it is a feed from another track or the group bus that you're outputting to, Down's detector follows that signal while still processing the main input. Up and Floor continue to follow the main input.

Upward compression

Up works from the other direction. You set a threshold **below** which quieter material is lifted. The dynamics above that threshold remain largely intact. Increasing the value extends that lift and the available boost range between the Up and the Floor thresholds.

This can bring out the release of a vocal phrase, the sustain after a plucked note, or details that were getting buried in a mix. Upward compression can also bring up the background noise. That is why Up has a partner in Floor Preservation.

Floor preservation

Floor marks the level below which Nypa gradually steps back. As the dry input falls, Down's compression and makeup gain, along with Up's lift, ease toward unity. The sound is left at its original level rather than gated or expanded.

Mix & Output

Mix, often called Dry/Wet, blends the processed path with the dry input. It provides the opportunity to rebalance the signals within a dynamically cohesive track, and to partially reintroduce a touch of transients or peaks. Output sets the final level – useful if your workflow involves driving the curves with a hot signal and subsequently attenuating it.

Display and signal path

The display shows an input-to-output transfer curve and a live input-level indicator. The diagonal is the unprocessed reference. A curve below the diagonal indicates gain reduction, and a curve above it indicates an increase. The letters F, U, and D (Floor, Up, and Down) are preceded by an indicator that shows which range the signal falls within. Turning a knob temporarily shows its value in the display for ease of use.

Analog signal path

On the back of Nypa, Signal Path lets you choose Digital or Analog. Digital is the neutral clean default, with a **limiter** that caps peaks at 0 dBFS. The analog mode simulates how Nypa would behave as a hardware unit in an analog signal chain, with the signal fed back to your DAW through an AD converter. Through modeling, it recreates the **soft clipping** that occurs in a reference ADC unit as the signal approaches 0 dBFS.

The Analog noise floor is neither a sample added beneath the audio nor a generic noise generator (which, frankly, far too many plugins seem to resort to for analog feel). The hum frequencies and levels, along with the broader noise spectrum, were measured, modeled and shaped with the same care as Nypa's dynamics. At its lowest setting, Noise Trim keeps the character understated. This is a quality unit, after all, with a high signal-to-noise ratio. If you want more noise, raise Noise Trim to bring the noise and hum forward for a deliberate lo-fi feel.

Presets

I originally considered shipping Nypa without presets. The goal was a compressor that sounds good and is easy and quick to set by hand. That is why the selection is deliberately small. The included presets are signposts, pointing to where you're likely headed, not a finished setting. Choose one that fits the task, then make it fit your source.

Credits

Thanks to the beta testers and everyone who listened, shared feedback, and helped shape Nypa. And most of all: **Thank you** for purchasing Nypa. I hope it becomes a reliable part of your productions.

// Linus Wileryd, CutUp Studios