LYDTROLD AUDIO / MADE IN DENMARK

The 3A

Optical levelling compressor



User Manual

English | Manual edition 1.0 | October 2026

Product version: 0.1.3

Native: VST3 and AAX Native; AU on Mac

AAX DSP + Native edition available for compatible HDX systems

lydtrold.com

01 / START HERE

Meet The 3A

Optical compression with peak reduction, gain, compression and limiting.



Your first session

1. Insert on a track or bus and start with modest compression.

2. Play the loudest section. Increase compression until peaks are controlled, then set timing so the musical attack and recovery remain natural.

3. Match output loudness to bypass. Check quieter passages before saving a preset.

02 / REFERENCE

Controls and behaviour

Names follow the front panel; alternate host parameter names are included where useful. Ranges describe control values, not recommended settings.

CONTROL	RANGE / OPTIONS	HOW TO USE IT
Peak Reduction	0-100	Increases optical compression. Set it while watching gain reduction and listening to phrase endings.
Gain	-12 to +36 dB	Restores the output level after compression.
Compress / Limit	Two modes	Compress gives gentler levelling; Limit gives firmer control. Recheck Peak Reduction after switching.
Meter	GR / OUTPUT	Switches between gain reduction and output indication. It does not change the audio path.
Mix	0-100%	Blends the original with compressed audio; 100% is fully processed.
Bypass	On / Off	Compares the optical process with the source.

03 / IN PRACTICE

Workflows and troubleshooting

Vocal levelling

Increase Peak Reduction until loud phrases sit more evenly. Restore level with Gain and check that breath and phrase endings remain natural.

Parallel bass or room

Use stronger reduction, then lower Mix until the uncompressed attack returns. Check the output level again.

If the result is unexpected

Little gain reduction. Check the enable switch, input level and compression amount. A routed external key must also carry audio.

Pumping or lost punch. Reduce the amount, slow the attack, or adjust release to the phrase.

04 / INSTALLATION AND SESSIONS

Install, recall and get help

Download and install

Visit https://lydtrold.com/installer and download the public Lydtrold Installer for your platform. Close your DAW before installing or updating. For AAX, Pro Tools must be fully closed. Enter the licence key associated with your purchase or Free Collection, select the product and required formats, then install.

Choose the format

Use AU in compatible Mac hosts, VST3 in compatible Mac or Windows hosts, or AAX Native in Pro Tools. The AAX DSP edition runs on compatible Pro Tools HDX systems and includes the Native formats. Select the edition covered by your licence.

System compatibility

The public Mac plug-ins support Intel from macOS 10.15 and Apple silicon from macOS 11. The current public Mac installer requires macOS 12 or later. Use a compatible 64-bit DAW and check the product page for current platform and format availability.

Recall and automation

Save the DAW session and use supported host presets to retain parameter settings. Automate sound controls exposed by the installed edition in the host. Display-only meters and analysis results are not sound parameters. Save a preset before resetting or making major changes.

Support

Visit https://lydtrold.com/contact. Include the product name and installed version, operating system, DAW version, plug-in format and relevant routing. Describe the steps that reproduce the problem and the expected result.

Manual edition 1.0, 26 October 2026. Covers the public product version shown on the cover. Manual editions and plug-in versions are separate. Illustrations show the published product interface.