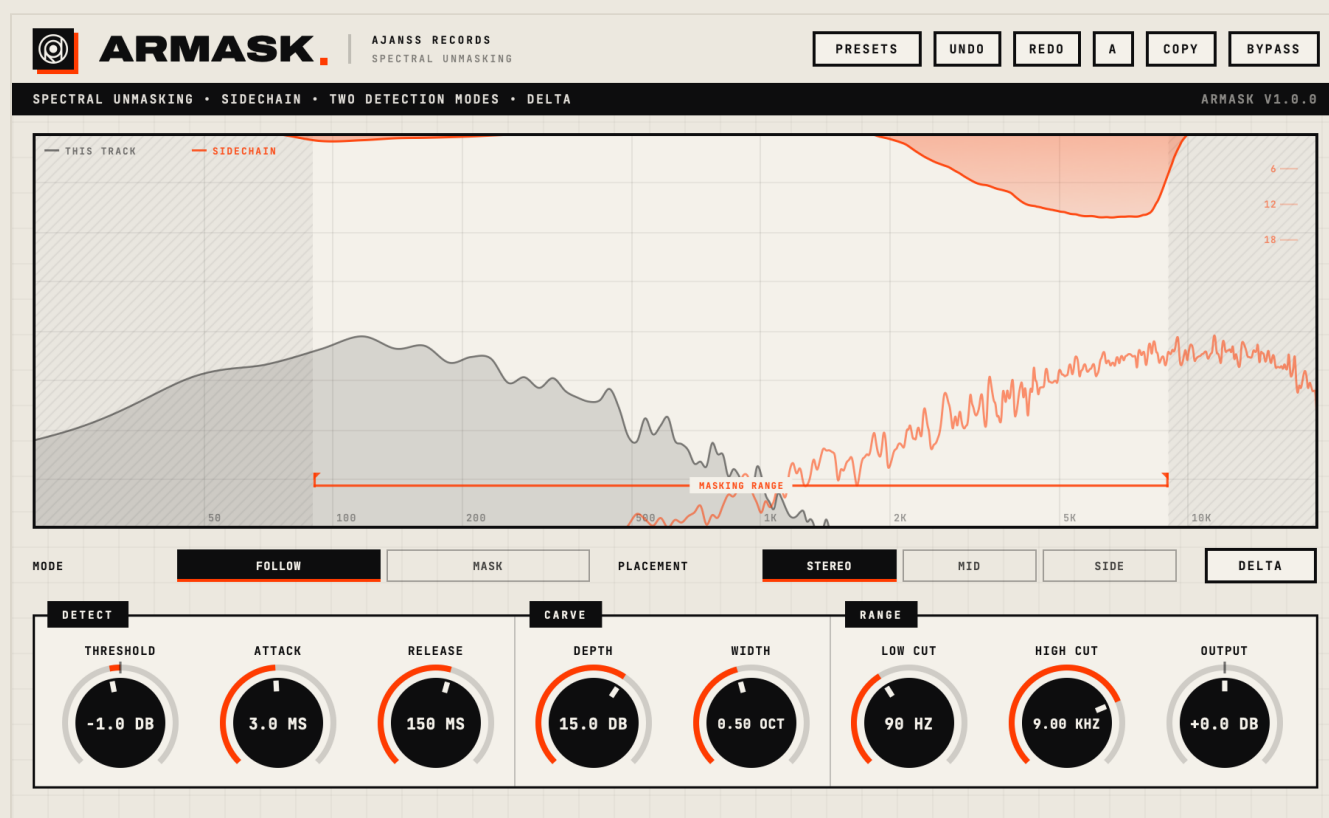


AJANSS RECORDS

ARMASK

SPECTRAL UNMASKING



VERSION
1.0.0

FORMATS
AU • VST3

PLATFORMS
macOS • WINDOWS

DOCUMENT
USER GUIDE

01 WHAT IT DOES

ARMASK carves this track exactly where another one lives. Route the part that has to be heard – the vocal, the lead, the kick – into the sidechain input, and ARMASK opens room for it band by band: the signal is split into more than a thousand bands and only the ones where the two collide are pulled down. Everything else passes untouched, so you are not turning the whole track down to make space for one thing. There are two ways of deciding where the collision is, and they measure genuinely different quantities – FOLLOW works from the shape of the sidechain, MASK from how far it actually covers this track. Every control reads in its own real unit, decibels or octaves or hertz, so there is never a direction to guess at. With DEPTH at zero, or with nothing connected to the sidechain, the output is bit identical to the input; there is no “slightly processed” path through the plugin.

02 INSTALLING

macOS

Run **ARMASK Installer.pkg** and follow the steps. You can choose which formats to install, and whether to install for every user or only for yourself. The package is not notarised by Apple yet, so the first time you open it macOS may refuse: right-click the installer, choose **Open**, then confirm. This is only needed once.

Windows

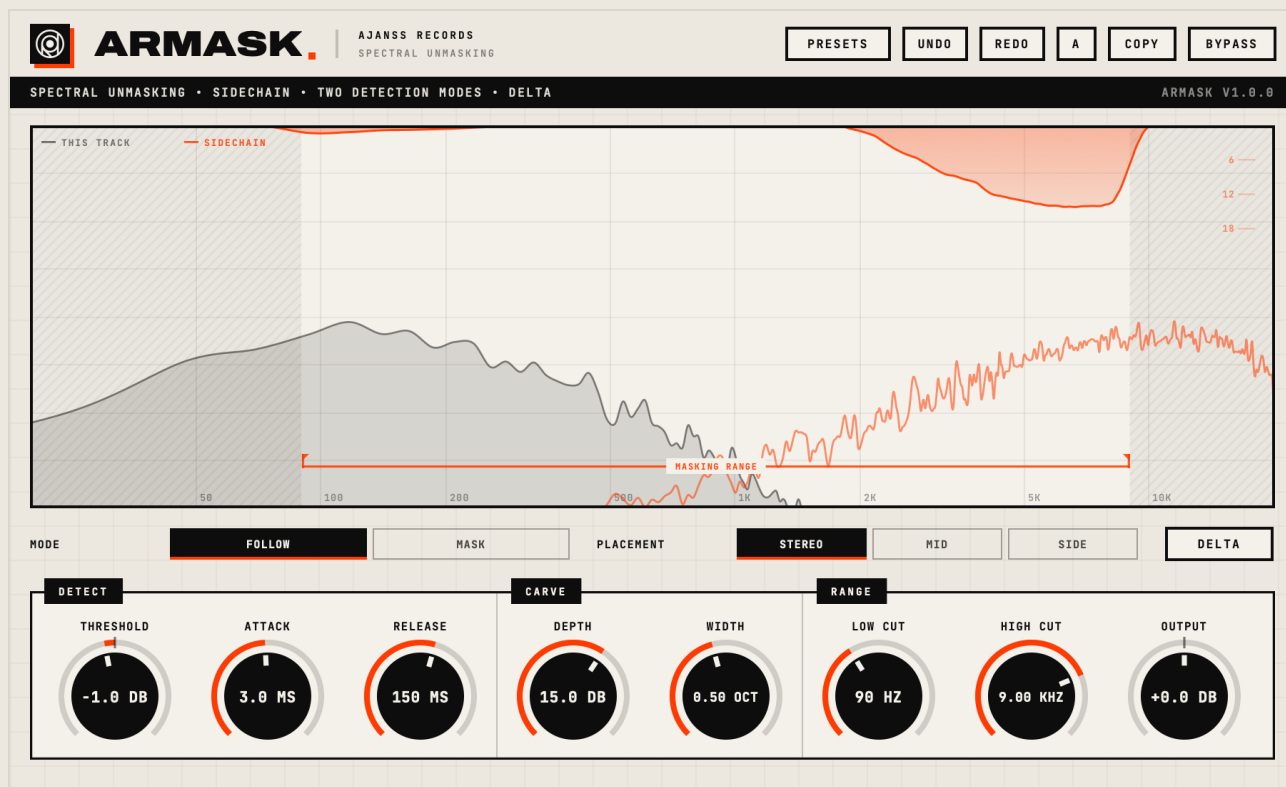
Run **ARMASK Installer.exe** and follow the steps. The plugin is placed in the shared VST3 folder. The installer is not code-signed yet, so SmartScreen may warn you: click **More info**, then **Run anyway**. This is only needed once.

After installing

Rescan the plugin list in your DAW. ARMASK appears under **Ajanss Records > ARMASK**.

Requirements – macOS 10.13 or newer, Intel or Apple Silicon (universal binary). Windows 10 or newer, 64-bit. Formats: Audio Unit and VST3 on macOS, VST3 on Windows.

03 THE INTERFACE



SPECTRUM

Three layers on one axis. The grey fill is this track, the orange line is what is in the sidechain, and the orange curtain hanging from the top is what is being taken. Where the curtain hangs deepest, the two were fighting hardest.

MASKING RANGE

The bracket along the bottom marks where masking is allowed to work at all. Everything outside it is hatched and is never touched. Drag either handle, or use the LOW CUT and HIGH CUT knobs.

STATUS STRIP

Under the header: what the control under the cursor does. If nothing is routed to the sidechain the display says so outright rather than sitting there doing nothing.

04 PARAMETERS

CONTROL	RANGE	DEFAULT	WHAT IT DOES
DEPTH	OFF ... 24.0 dB	12.0 DB	The deepest cut allowed where the two collide most. At zero nothing happens at all – the output is the input, sample for sample.
MODE	FOLLOW / MASK	FOLLOW	How the collision is measured. FOLLOW carves the shape of the sidechain: each band is compared with the sidechain's own broadband average, so the vocal's formants open the deepest cuts and moving the vocal fader does not change the depth. MASK compares the two signals directly: a cut only opens where the sidechain actually rises above this track, so bands this track owns on its own are left alone. FOLLOW for a general pocket, MASK when you only want movement where there is a real conflict.
THRESHOLD	-12.0 ... +12.0 dB	0.0 DB	How far the measurement has to clear before a cut opens – in decibels, so the direction is never in doubt: higher asks for more, lower opens more easily. In MASK, zero is the point of equality: the sidechain has to rise above this track. In FOLLOW it is how far a band must sit above the sidechain's own average.
WIDTH	0.10 ... 1.00 oct	0.50 OCT	How wide each cut is, in octaves. Unmasking generally wants broader shapes than surgical work – a voice occupies a region, not a single frequency.
ATTACK	0.5 ... 20.0 ms	3.0 MS	How fast a cut opens when the sidechain arrives.

04 PARAMETERS CONTINUED

CONTROL	RANGE	DEFAULT	WHAT IT DOES
RELEASE	30 ... 500 ms	150 MS	How fast it closes once the sidechain leaves that band. Long enough and the movement stops being audible as pumping.
PLACEMENT	STEREO / MID / SIDE	STEREO	Which component the cuts are applied to. SIDE keeps the centre of this track intact and only opens room out at the edges; MID does the opposite.
LOW CUT	OFF ... 2.00 kHz	OFF	Masking never works below this. Wide open by default, low end included: a kick and a bass fighting under a hundred hertz is the most common job this plugin has, so nothing down there is protected unless you say so.
HIGH CUT	500 Hz ... OFF	OFF	Masking never works above this. Between the two you have the range the plugin is allowed to touch – outside it the signal passes through with nothing done to it, however loud the sidechain gets.
DELTA	on / off	off	Play only what is being removed. If you cannot hear anything you care about in it, the cut is harmless.
OUTPUT	-12.0 ... +12.0 dB	0.0 dB	Final level trim.
BYPASS	on / off	off	Passes the input through untouched, keeping the reported latency so the comparison is honest.

05 PRESETS

Open the browser with **PRESETS**. It has two categories: **FACTORY**, which ships with the plugin, and **USER**, which is yours. Click a preset to load it, or browse with the keyboard.

↑ ↓	Move through the list. The highlighted preset loads as you go, so you can audition the whole bank without clicking.
← →	Switch between FACTORY and USER.
ESC	Close the browser.
SAVE	Type a name in the field and press SAVE to store the current settings as a user preset.
RENAME • DELETE	Act on the selected user preset. Factory presets cannot be changed or removed.

Factory bank — 15 presets

VOCAL OVER MUSIC	WIDE CARVE
VOCAL OVER GUITARS	SURGICAL
DIALOGUE OVER BED	AIR ONLY
LEAD OVER PAD	LOW END ONLY
KICK OVER BASS	SIDES ONLY
BASS UNDER KICK	CENTRE ONLY
SNARE SPACE	HARD DUCK
GENTLE ROOM	

06 STARTING POINTS

Rough settings to work from, not destinations. Every one of them assumes you will move it once you hear the source.

Start here

Put ARMASK on the part that should give way, send the part that should win into its sidechain, and turn DEPTH up until the display shows the curtain moving with the phrase.

Check with DELTA

Listen to what is being removed. If you hear the instrument itself rather than the region it shares with the sidechain, raise THRESHOLD or narrow WIDTH.

Kick and bass

MASK mode, HIGH CUT around 250 Hz, WIDTH near half an octave, RELEASE short. The bass moves only where and when the kick is actually there.

Vocal over a bed

FOLLOW mode with a wide WIDTH makes a soft pocket rather than a set of notches – the movement stays under the music.

Protect the ends

LOW CUT around a hundred hertz and HIGH CUT around eight kilohertz keeps the weight and the air out of it entirely while the midrange opens.

Do not solo it

The point is what happens when both parts play together. Judge it in the mix, never on its own.

07 SUPPORT

For questions, bug reports and feature requests, please reach us on Instagram at [@ajanssrecords](#). Please include your operating system, your DAW and its version, the plugin format you are using, and the plugin version shown in the top right of the window.

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