Camel Audio

CamelCrusher

Version 1.0

User manual

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Welcome

Welcome to **CamelCrusher**!

CamelCrusher is a versatile 'colouring' multi-effect.

It offers two characteristically different distortion sounds which can be blended together to create a wide variety of tones and textures. Great for guitars, drums and plenty more!

There's also a warm, smooth analogue-style low-pass filter, with buckets of resonance. Assign a MIDI controller and start tweaking!

Finally, let's not forget the easiest-to-use compressor you'll find anywhere. It can 'phatten' up your sound as quickly as you can turn up the 'Amount' knob!

Best of all, CamelCrusher is available **free of charge**!

We hope you will enjoy it.

Highlights

- Two different distortion types.
- Warm, analogue-modelled resonant low-pass filter.
- High quality, easy-to-use compressor, with 'Phat' mode.
- Powerful 'MIDI Learn' function.
- A collection of useful Preset patches to get you started.

System requirements

PC: Pentium III 1GHz, 128 MB RAM, Windows 98/ME/2000/XP, VST host.

Mac: G4 733 MHz, 128 MB RAM, Mac OS X, VST/Audio Units host.

(CamelCrusher is one of many VST plugins adhering to the VST standard developed by Steinberg. The Audio Unit standard was developed by Apple.)

If you like CamelCrusher...

If you like CamelCrusher, you'll love **CamelPhat 3**!

CamelPhat is the ultimate 'phattening' processor. A powerful 'colouring' multi-effect that's been specially engineered to work wonders on guitar, bass and drums, adding warmth, punch and presence wherever they're required.

Four characteristically different distortion effects are included, which can be used separately or blended together to create an endless variety of tones.

The unique 'Magic EQ' enhances the low end like nothing else – it's the perfect kick drum sweetener!

Add to that an easy-to-use analogue-modelled compressor, three resonant filters, two LFOs and an envelope follower, and you've got one seriously phat package!

Find out more at **www.camelaudio.com**

Installation

Installing CamelCrusher is a quick and easy process.

Simply double-click the installer program, and follow the on-screen instructions.

Once installation is complete, CamelCrusher will be available from within your host application the same as any other effect plugin.

Notes: Windows

You will be asked to choose a destination directory. You should choose the VST plugins folder belonging to your preferred host application.

If you want to install the plugin for more than one host, you can run the installer again.

Notes: Mac OS X

The installer will automatically put the plugins and support files in their proper places.

Both the VST and Audio Units versions of the plugin are contained in the installer. You can choose not to install one or the other by clicking the 'Customize' button at the relevant point during installation.

Start here!

Software manuals are boring, and nobody likes reading them. We know this.

We've done our best to make this shorter and less boring than the average software manual... but frankly it's still pretty boring – and it's certainly a lot less fun than using CamelCrusher.

Even so, please keep reading for at least a couple more pages! We have a few tips that'll really help you get the most out of CamelCrusher.

Try the Presets

CamelCrusher comes with a collection of Presets. These are a great way to find out what it's capable of. You can work your way through the Presets using your host's normal selector, or the up/down arrow buttons in the 'Value Readout' display, or by clicking the current Preset name and choosing a new Preset from the pop-up menu that appears.

Think modular

CamelCrusher is a **multi-effect**. That means it's several different effects processors in one. If you look at the front panel you'll see that it's divided into a number of different sections, each with a small blue 'On' button in its upper corner. You can get a wide variety of sounds out of CamelCrusher simply by toggling different modules on and off, and trying out different combinations.

Randomize!

You see that big button at the top? The one marked 'Randomize'? That's the Randomize button, and it's one of CamelCrusher's best features! Clicking Randomize instantly assigns a new value to every parameter in every active module (modules that are switched off aren't affected). In short, it's a great way to make interesting things happen quickly! Randomize is actually not completely random; it's designed to be 'intelligent' so that it won't produce settings that make no sound, or sounds that aren't any use.

Save Presets

After a few clicks of the Randomize button, you'll probably have come up with a sound you want to keep and use again. Your host application will save all your plugin settings each time you save a song, but you can also save CamelCrusher's settings in a separate file (e.g. to use in a different song, or host, or to share with other CamelCrusher users).

CamelCrusher allows you to save Presets (.FXP files) and Banks (.FXB files). A Preset is a record of all the settings required to make up a single sound. A Bank is a record of all the settings that make up a set of 64 different sounds. To save a Preset (or Bank), click on the Preset name in the Value Readout display, choose 'Save Preset' (or 'Save Bank') from the pop-up menu, then choose a name and location for the Preset file in the dialog box that appears.

Hint: Presets and Banks saved from within CamelCrusher are always saved in standard .FXP and .FXB formats. These are the same regardless of platform and host application, and files saved in this way can easily be shared with other CamelCrusher users. If your host application uses a different format for saving effects settings the files will be a bit less 'portable'. Saving .FXB and .FXP files from within CamelCrusher is therefore the preferred option.

Try MIDI Learn

Most of CamelCrusher's parameters can be controlled via MIDI. To do this, you'll first need to set up your host application to send MIDI data to the plugin (this varies from host to host). Then simply right-click (Ctrl-click if you're a Mac user) on any of CamelCrusher's knobs, select 'MIDI Learn' from the menu that appears, then send a controller message from your preferred MIDI controller (e.g. move your keyboard's Mod Wheel). CamelCrusher will recognise the controller and automatically assign it to your chosen parameter!

Come back soon

That's enough to get you started. Once you've played around for a while, please come back and read the rest of this manual. It won't take long!

User interface features

CamelCrusher's user interface is quite straightforward, and what you see is what you get.

Even so, there are one or two details that perhaps aren't apparent at first glance, and are worth knowing about.

CamelCrusher logo

In the top left corner of the CamelCrusher window is CamelCrusher's logo, along with the current version number (e.g. 'v1.00').

Main display

CamelCrusher's main display is divided into several sections:

- **Value Readout** is where the name of the currently-active Preset is displayed. Whenever you adjust a knob, its value (e.g. '75 %' or '1.3 Hz') will appear, replacing the Preset name. After about three seconds the Preset name reappears. Clicking in the Value Readout display opens a pop-up menu, from which you can choose to load or save Banks and Presets. 'Load Bank A' and 'Load Bank B' allow you to load the two default Banks included with CamelCrusher. 'Clear Preset' sets all parameters to their default values.

Knobs

Right-clicking (Ctrl-clicking on a Mac) any of CamelCrusher's knobs opens a pop-up menu containing four options:

- **Display Value** causes the knob's current value (e.g. '71.7 Hz' or '-40 dB') to appear in the 'Value Readout' section of CamelCrusher's main display. After about three seconds, the current Preset name will reappear in its place.
- **MIDI Learn** allows a MIDI continuous controller to be assigned to the knob. (Note: your host application must first be set up to send MIDI data to the plugin. Different hosts do this in different ways. Please see your host's manual for more details!) Simply right-click (Ctrl-click on a Mac) a knob, choose 'MIDI Learn' from the menu, then send a message from your hardware controller (e.g. by moving your keyboard's Mod wheel, or some other assignable control). CamelCrusher will 'learn' the controller, and automatically assign it to the relevant parameter.
- **Linear** and **Circular** tell CamelCrusher's knobs how to respond to mouse movements. Linear mode is the default. In Linear mode, you can adjust a knob's value by clicking it and dragging vertically upwards (to increase the value) or downwards (to decrease it). In Circular mode, you instead use the mouse pointer as if you were turning a real knob on a hardware device. A clockwise turn increases the parameter value, while an anti-clockwise turn decreases it. Changing from Linear to Circular mode affects **all** of CamelCrusher's knobs.

Hint: Holding down the Shift key while dragging will result in a slower, more precise knob movement.

Effect modules

CamelCrusher features 3 different effect modules: Distortion, Filter and Compressor.

On/off switches

One feature that all three effect modules have in common is a small, blue 'On' switch, which can be used to toggle the module on or off. When the 'On' button is illuminated, the module is active. When the 'On' button is dimmed, the module is switched off, and has no effect on the sound.

Distortion

There are two different distortion types, and each has its own 'amount' knob. The different types are not exclusive, so you can use varying amounts of all four at once.

Tube provides a warm and musical, analogue-style overdrive, while **Mech** is a bit nastier (hint: it's great for booming kick drums).

Hint: using a lot of distortion tends to amplify the signal, so you might need to use the Master Volume knob (see below) to keep your levels under control.

Filter

The **Filter** module provides a powerful resonant filter.

This is what's known as a 'low-pass filter'. It allows frequencies below the 'Cutoff' point to pass, while rejecting other frequencies.

- **Cutoff** sets the filter Cutoff point, in Hz.
- **Res**onance is an effect where the frequencies immediately surrounding the filter Cutoff point (see above) are emphasised or boosted. This is particularly effective when the Cutoff point is modulated or 'swept' (e.g. by a MIDI controller), as it emphasises the 'movement' in the sound.

Compressor

Compression works by decreasing a signal's dynamic range (the difference between the highest-volume and lowest-volume parts of the sound), thereby delivering more perceived 'loudness' at the same relative volume.

CamelCrusher's compressor is deceptively simple; behind the scenes lies a sophisticated and responsive 'soft-limiting' compressor algorithm, modelled after the classic analogue compressor designs renowned in studio folklore.

There are two parameters:

- **Amount** controls the amount of compression applied to the sound, and thus the apparent 'loudness'.

- Turn the **P** (for 'Phat') button off for 'smoother' results when working with 'clean' signals (e.g. clean guitar sounds) to avoid occasional 'crackles' at high levels.

Other Modules

In addition to the effect modules described above, CamelCrusher features one other module.

Master

The **Master** module has three parameters:

- **On** is a toggle switch much like the on/off switches in the effects modules. However, switching the Master module off has the effect of completely bypassing CamelCrusher, so that only the 'dry', unprocessed signal is heard.
- **Volume** allows you to adjust the overall level of CamelCrusher's output. If the Output Level meter in the main display shows the signal 'clipping', you can reduce the Volume slightly until it stops.
- **Mix** allows you to adjust the wet/dry balance of CamelCrusher's output. You'll probably most often want to hear just the 'wet', processed output, and so should set the Mix knob all the way to the right. Sometimes, however, it can useful to mix in a little of the dry, untreated signal. Turn the Mix knob to the left to adjust the balance in favour of the dry signal.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why aren't Preset names showing up correctly when I load a Bank?

If you load a Bank using CamelCrusher's internal Preset system the host won't know about the change, and it won't display the right Preset names. Use your host's own Bank loading feature (see the host's manual for details) and the names will be right.

Why doesn't MIDI learn work?

MIDI learn relies on you setting up your host to transmit MIDI to the plugin. How exactly this is achieved varies from host to host – please read your host's manual for details. (Some hosts do not support this feature. We recommend you email the developers and ask them to include it in a future update.)

Displaying the interface really slows down my computer. How can I fix it?

Please ensure your graphics card drivers and operating system are up to date (i.e. the most recent updates have been installed). If this does not solve the problem, see if there is an option to turn on 'bus mastering' for your graphics card, and if so, enable it. In nearly all cases this solves the problem.

Windows 98 users: we are not officially supporting Windows 98, due to some problems it has with 'alpha-blending' – a process used by our graphics library. If you have tried updating your system and the plugin still performs unsatisfactorily, then we regret that we can't help you any further. If you have a more recent operating system, and updating your graphics drivers and OS hasn't solved the problem, please submit a technical support enquiry giving full details of your setup and the problems you are experiencing.

How can I get rid of this unpleasant distortion?

CamelCrusher allows you plenty of options, and it's sometimes possible to arrive at a combination of settings that will produce some unwanted distortion. To get rid of this, there are a number of things you can do.

- CamelCrusher applies a hard-limiting action on the output, which can result in unwanted distortion. Simply turn down the master volume to make this go away.
- If that doesn't solve the problem, try turning off the 'Phat' mode for the Compressor module.

There's a problem I have which isn't covered here – what should I do?

Please visit the support page on our website at **www.camelaudio.com**. Refer to the relevant FAQs for the latest information.

Credits

Concept, design and programming

Ben Gillett

Additional programming

Rob Martino

Graphic design

Bitplant

Additional design input

Cris Hawkins

Jim Hunter

Sound Design

Manuel Schleis (Vengeance Sound)

Tim Conrardy

Rory Dow

Biomechanoid

Stephan Muesch

Jim Hunter

David DeBaecke

David Goodwin

Glen Berry

Meffy Ellis

Christian-W. Budde

User manual

Paul Sellars