CARVE AUDIO

SMASHBURGER COMPRESSOR

Meet The Smashburger Compressor

Smashburger isn't just another compressor — it's a modern twist on a classic FET-style design, served up with extra features to fit today's productions. Inspired by the legendary 1176 but cooked with more flexibility, Smashburger gives you lightning-fast attack times, extended ranges for precise transient control, and built-in extras like Tube warmth, Tape saturation, and a Shaper to sculpt your sound before it even hits the compressor.

Whether you're looking for subtle leveling, punchy grooves, or completely smashed parallel tracks, Smashburger delivers that larger-than-life energy while keeping the workflow simple and fun.

Why it's different:

- **Extended control** – Go beyond the classic FET limits with wider attack/release ranges.
- **Built-in character** – Tube warmth and Tape saturation add polish without extra plugins.
- **Modern workflow** – Wet/Dry blend, Sidechain, and Oversampling keep things smooth and flexible.
- **Simple and inspiring** – Powerful sound, easy controls, and presets that get you there fast.

Smashburger Controls

Ratio

Choose your squeeze: 2:1, 3:1, 4:1, 8:1, 12:1, or 20:1. Lower ratios give you gentle leveling, while higher ones bring the hammer down for serious dynamic control.

Attack

Fast or slow? You decide. Smashburger's attack goes all the way from lightning-quick 20 microseconds up to a laid-back 30 ms. Double-click the knob and it'll jump to 80 µs — the classic slowest setting on a vintage 1176 — but here you've got way more room to shape transients however you like.

Release

How fast the compressor lets go. Dial it from a snappy 0.05 seconds for aggressive pumping, all the way to a smooth 1.1 seconds for natural sustain.

Shaper

Want extra snap or smoother hits before compression even kicks in? The Shaper is like a built-in transient designer. Turn it up to emphasize attack, turn it down to mellow things out. Perfect for taming pokey snares or giving kicks extra punch.

Input

Think of this as your “flavor dial.” Turning it up pushes more signal into the compressor’s fixed threshold, giving you that unmistakable FET-style grab. The more you add, the tighter and punchier your tracks will feel.

Output

After you smash your sound, this control helps you balance the level back up so it sits just right in your mix.

Link/Auto-Gain

Links the Input and Output controls so that as you push into compression, your volume feels controlled; allowing you to hear the effect of compression without being influenced by volume. When the icon is yellow, it is on. Grey means it is off. This is enabled by default.

Tube

Flip this on to add a touch of warm, vintage glow. It’s subtle, not a distortion effect — perfect for giving your low end that extra “hug.”

Tape

This engages the tape saturation circuit. It adds thickness, weight, and a bit of harmonic magic that makes tracks feel more alive.

Drive

Once Tape is engaged, Drive controls how hard you hit it. Go gentle for some sweet warmth, or crank it for a juicy, overcooked vibe.

Wet/Dry

Blend your compressed signal with the original untouched track. This makes parallel compression super easy — smash it hard, then mix in just enough to keep things big and lively.

Sidechain

Want your compressor to groove with another track? Flip on sidechain mode and feed it an external source — like a kick drum — to make bass lines, pads, or even vocals dance in time.

Oversampling

Engage oversampling when you want extra polish. Choose from 2x, 4x, 8x, or 16x to reduce digital harshness and keep high-end detail smooth. Higher settings give you cleaner results at the cost of more CPU — like upgrading from a diner burger to a gourmet smash: same vibe, just extra refined.

Presets

Need a quick starting point? The Presets menu lets you load hand-crafted settings designed for drums, vocals, guitars, and mix bus magic. You can cycle through factory presets, save your own go-to recipes, and build a library of flavors that match your workflow.

Other Interface Shortcuts

- **Menu Icon** → Click it any time to pull up the plugin manual.
- **Carve Audio Logo** → Click here to view your licensing info.
- **Resize Handle (bottom right corner)** → Click and drag to resize the plugin window to whatever size feels comfortable in your DAW.

Quick Start: Tasty Recipes

Not sure where to begin? Here are a few classic Smashburger moves to get you cooking fast:

🥁 Kick Drum

- Dial in a 4:1 **Ratio**
- Set **Attack** around 5–10 ms to let the transient pop through.
- Keep **Release** fairly quick (0.1–0.2 s) so it breathes with the groove.
- Add a touch of **Tube** for low-end weight.

Result: A tight, punchy kick that holds its spot in the mix.

🥁 Snare Drum

- Use a 4:1 **Ratio**
- Go faster on the **Attack** (around 0.8 ms) to slightly clamp down on the initial hit.
- Medium **Release** (0.2 s) to let the body ring out.
- Try some **Tape Drive** for extra bite and thickness.
- Use the **Shaper** to introduce some extra transient bite. It'll make it sound like your drummer hit harder

Result: Snares that snap with authority and cut through the mix.

🥁 Parallel Drums (Smash Mode)

- 12:1 or 20:1 **Ratio** (go extreme — this is about vibe, not subtlety)
- Crank the **Compression** hard.
- Fast **Attack**, fast **Release** — let it pump and breathe.
- Push the **Drive** for extra grit.
- Use **Wet/Dry** to blend back in with the clean kit.

Result: Explosive, room-filling drums with extra sustain and energy.

🎸 Bass Guitar

- 4:1 or 8:1 **Ratio** (4:1 for leveling, 8:1 for more aggressive control)
- Start with a medium **Attack** (5–10 ms) so the pluck comes through.

- **Release** around 0.3–0.5 s for steady leveling.
- Engage **Tape + Drive** for thickness and harmonic edge.

Result: A bass that stays glued and powerful without losing growl.

🎤 Vocals

- Gentle **Compression** with Ratio around 3:1 or 4:1.
- Slower **Attack** (~10 ms) to keep natural articulation.
- Medium **Release** (0.3–0.6 s) for smooth control.
- A hint of **Tube** can warm the lows, while **Tape** adds vibe if needed.

Result: Controlled, upfront vocals that sit confidently in the mix.