CARVE AUDIO

FORGE

Transformer-Inspired Tone Shaper

Meet Forge

Forge is a transformer-style tone shaper built to add subtle weight, polish, and character to your mix bus, groups, and individual tracks. Inspired by the magnetic behavior of classic hardware, Forge gives you three switchable output stages—Nickel, Iron, and Steel—each offering a unique blend of warmth, focus, and harmonic depth.

Use it on your stereo mix to tighten the low end, smooth the top, or add mid-forward clarity.

Use it on drums or guitars to add fullness and weight. Or drop it on vocals for a warmer, more confident tone that sits easily in the mix.

With all tone-shaping controls set to 50%, Forge provides the **truest, most accurate representation of each transformer core**. Small moves from there will add more color, presence, or weight depending on the mode you're using.

Forge makes it easy to deliver a finished, confident sound without adding harshness or mud.

What's Happening Under the Hood

Forge models the nonlinear behavior of classic transformer cores—magnetic saturation, subtle phase shifts, low-frequency tightening, and high-frequency smoothing.

Each core type has unique low-end handling, transient response, and harmonic emphasis, giving you a range of musical options without needing multiple plugins.

Tube Drive adds an additional harmonic layer, inspired by real tube output stages, to give you extra warmth and richness when needed.

Controls

Input

Adjusts the level feeding into the tone-shaping stage.
Increasing Input adds more energy into the transformer algorithms, resulting in a touch more saturation and density.
Lower Input pulls the signal back for cleaner, more open results.

Output

Sets the final level leaving the plugin.
Useful for level-matching before/after comparisons or adding the final gain bump after shaping the tone.

Channel Link (Auto Gain Compensation)

When **enabled**, Input control engages **auto gain compensation**:

- As Input gain increases, output level is automatically reduced
- This helps maintain consistent loudness while you explore tonal changes

When **disabled**, left and right channels can be adjusted independently.

Transformer Select

Choose between three transformer “cores,” each designed to subtly reshape the tone, weight, and harmonic profile of your track.

- **Nickel**

  Cleanest, brightest, and most open.

  Nickel adds a gentle lift to the top end while keeping transients intact.

Perfect for mastering, acoustic instruments, vocals, or any time you want a touch of clarity without coloration.

- **Iron**

  Smooth, warm, and mid-forward.

  Iron subtly thickens the low-mids and adds a gentle musical presence that helps guitars, vocals, and drums sit more confidently in the mix.
  Ideal for adding weight without increasing mud.

- **Steel**

  Denser, fuller, and slightly darker.

  Steel tightens the low end, adds subtle harmonic richness, and creates a sense of controlled thickness.

  Great for the mix bus, rock drums, heavy guitars, and sources that benefit from extra punch.

Transformer Drive

Controls how hard the selected transformer “core” is being hit. This is where much of Forge’s character comes from.

- Lower settings = subtle polish and smoothing
- Higher settings = more harmonic weight, density, and attitude

Transformer Drive preserves clarity while adding body, making it especially useful on the mix bus or instrument groups.

Air

A gentle high-frequency shaping control that adds openness and clarity. Dial it up for extra sheen and presence, or pull it back to smooth harshness and tame overly bright sources.

Note: With the Input, Output, Transformer Drive, and Air controls at **50%**, you get the truest representation of the transformer without added coloration.

Tube Drive

Adds a controllable layer of tube-style saturation on top of the transformer circuit.
Once enabled (by clicking the button), the Tube Drive knob becomes active and lets you blend in as much warmth and harmonic thickness as you want.

- Low settings = subtle glow and smoothness
- High settings = richer, warmer saturation with added sustain and body

Tube Drive pairs beautifully with Nickel for clean warmth, or with Steel for dense, vintage-style weight.

Oversampling

Forge includes global oversampling options to reduce aliasing during saturation.
Choose from:

- **Off** — lowest CPU
- **2x**
- **4x**
- **8x**
- **16x** — cleanest high-frequency processing, higher CPU

Preset Bar

Load factory presets, create your own, or save starting points for different workflows.

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.

Suggested Uses

Mix Bus

- Nickel: clarity and openness
- Iron: warmth and cohesion
- Steel: thickness and full low end
- Tube Drive: adds final polish

Drums

- Iron for punch
- Steel for fullness
- Air to restore brightness
- Tube Drive for glue

Guitars

- Iron for mid presence
- Steel for thickness
- Tube Drive to add sustain and warmth

Vocals

- Nickel for clarity
- Iron for warmth
- Tube Drive for richness and emotion