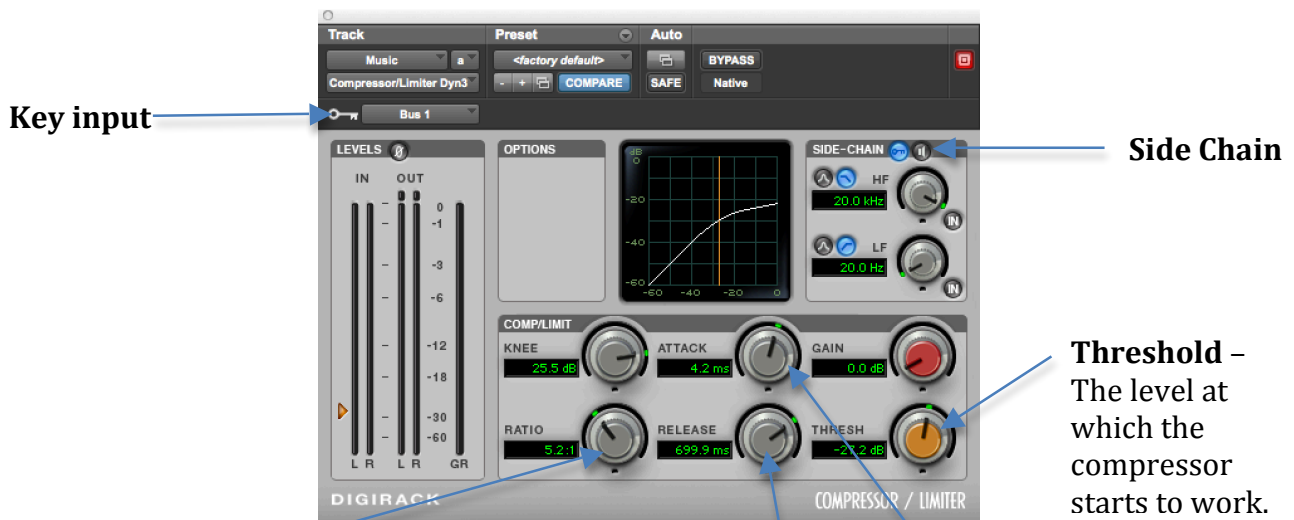


Side Chain Compression

With any compression, a threshold is set and when the amplitude of a track goes above that threshold, the compressor kicks into action.

The idea behind side-chain compression with a voice over is that the amplitude of the voice track (or any source track) drives the compressor on another track (in this case, the music volume). Whenever the V/O passes the threshold, it pushes the music down so you can hear the voice clearer. Today, this can be accomplished with volume automation, but this same routing technique has become a creative one you can use for music production.



Ratio – Adjusts how much the compression is applied. For example, if the compression ratio is set for 6:1, the input signal will have to cross the threshold by 6 dB for the output level to increase by 1dB.

Attack – How quickly the compressor acts when the threshold is crossed.

Release – How long the compressor remains active. How slowly it “lets go” of the signal.



Channel Routing for Side Chain Compression

Music V/O

Setting Up Side Chain Compressor

1. You should have your **Music** and **V/O** tracks visible and edited for time. You can add EQ and compression to the voice track as needed to address any sonic issues.
2. On the V/O track, set up a **send to Bus 1** (since it is a mono track). Bring the fader up to 0.
3. On the Music track, **insert a compressor** (I am showing Comp/Limiter Dyn 3, but most should work).
4. Where you see the image of a key on the left side of the compressor, it should say "No Key Input." **Change that to Bus 1**, so the V/O track is feeding this compressor. With this set up, when the voice engages the compressor, the attenuation will occur on the music track. Activate **Side-Chain by pressing on the key image** on the right of the compressor.
5. You will want to set the **threshold** fairly low, the **attack** fairly fast and the **release** fairly slow. Experiment with these parameters to try and get the voice to push down the music enough to be heard.

Alternative uses of Side Chain Compression

1. Instead of a V/O & music, set up two instrument tracks, one with a synthesizer pad playing long chords, and another with a kick drum playing on every beat (4 beats per measure).
2. Send the kick drum signal over to a bus.
3. Insert a compressor on the synth track and use the same key input/side chain instructions as above. In this set up, the kick drum pattern/rhythm will drive the synth to breathe. In this use, the attack & release times relate to the BPM/rhythmic pattern you are creating.