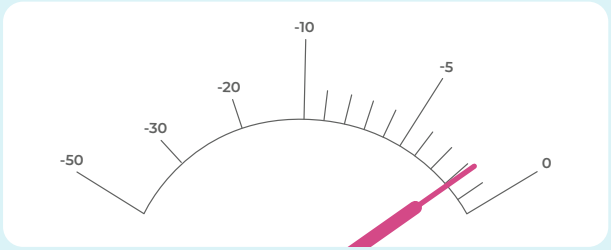
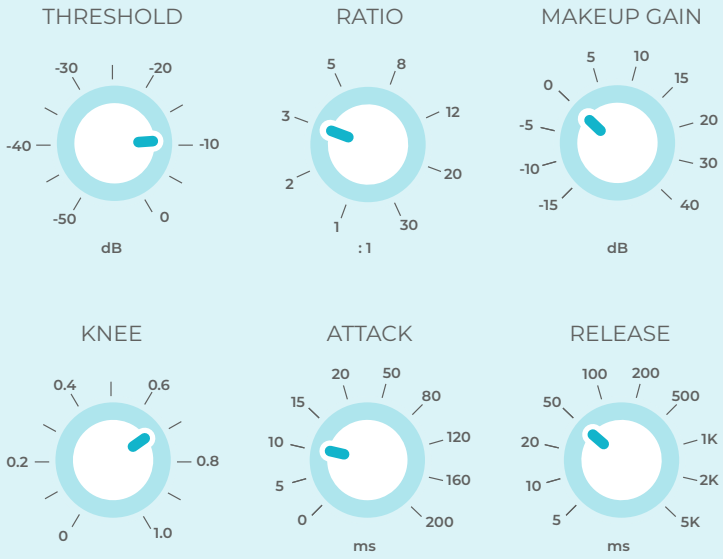
Musician - ON A MISSION -

ANATOMY OF A COMPRESSOR

GAIN REDUCTION METER

- How much gain is being reduced by the compressor.
- The more gain is reduced, the harder the compressor is working.





THRESHOLD

- Determines the level that the compressor kicks in.
- When the audio is louder than the threshold level, the compressor turns on.
- The lower the threshold, the more the audio is compressed.

RATIO

- Determines by how much the volume is reduced.
- The higher the ratio, the more aggressive the compression.
- To read a ratio, flip the numbers around. For example, a ratio of 4:1 means that for every 1dB that goes above the threshold, 1/4th of a dB comes out.

ATTACK TIME

- Determines how quickly the compressor completely engages and reduces the volume of the audio.
- Faster attack times make an instrument thick and controlled.
- Slower attack times make an instrument punchy and exciting. Unless you have a reason, this is usually preferred.

RELEASE TIME

- Determines how long it takes the compressor to completely disengage and return the audio to its normal level.

KNEE

- Determines how aggressive the compression sounds.
- A “soft knee” (1.0) makes the compression more subtle.
- A “hard knee” (0.0) makes the compression more obvious.

MAKEUP GAIN

- Increases the output level to compensate for the loss in volume due to compression.
- Use makeup gain to keep your instrument from getting quieter in the mix.