MAINTAINER

User Manual · Darkglass Anagram

THE ART OF INVISIBLE COMPRESSION.

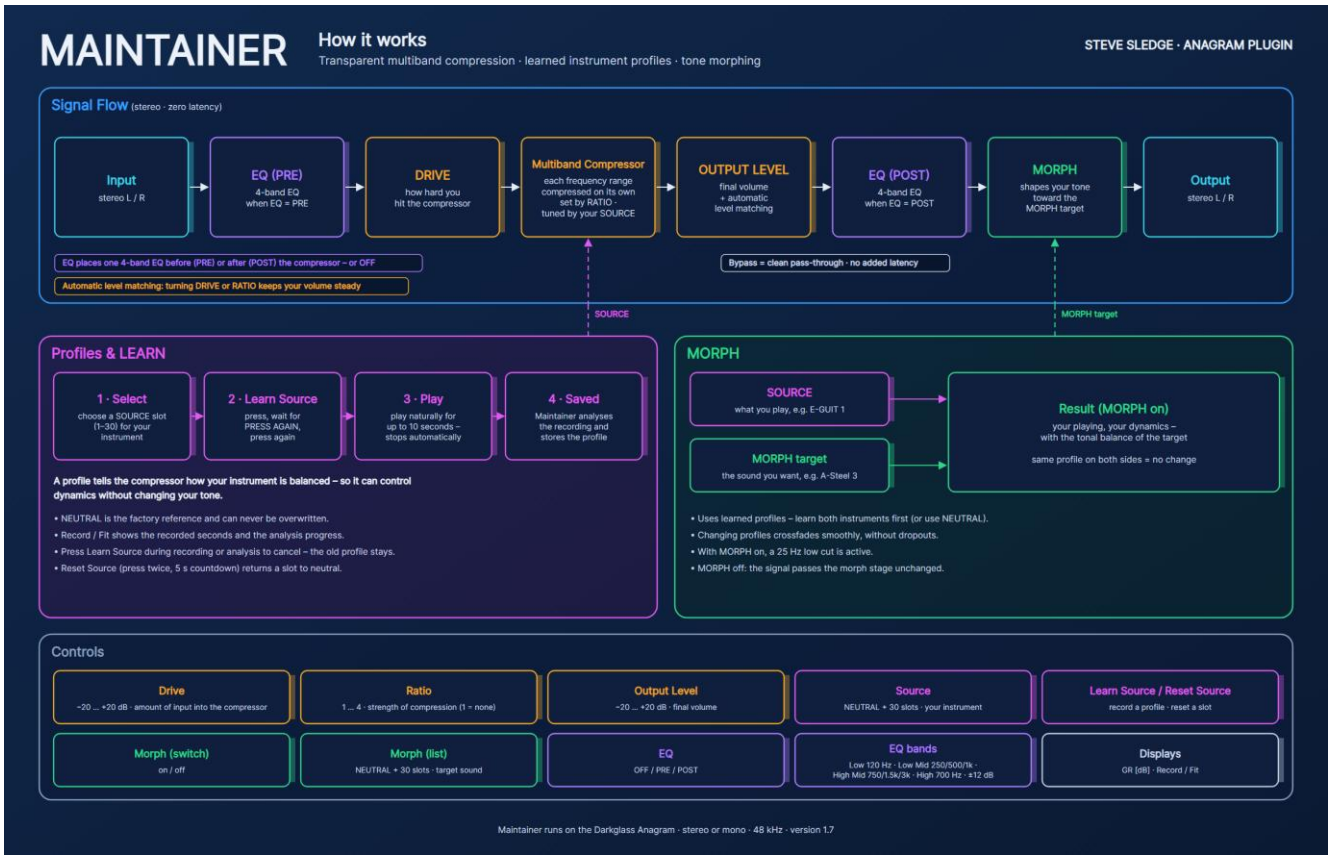
25 November 2026

Stereo dynamics processing, instrument profiles and spectral morphing in one plugin. The main interface is deliberately focused on DRIVE, RATIO and OUTPUT LEVEL. LEARN SOURCE, a 2048-tap morphing FIR and a movable four-band EQ are available when needed.

This manual describes MAINTAINER version 1.11 for the Anagram.

Video, signal flow and downloads: stevesledge.com/products/maintainer

How it works



Overview: signal flow, profiles & LEARN, MORPH and all controls (version 1.7).

Quick start

1. Open MAINTAINER in your Anagram preset and enable the plugin.
2. On page 1 set DRIVE. More DRIVE increases the amount of compression.
3. Use RATIO from 1:1 to 4:1 to set the desired dynamics control.
4. Set your output level using OUTPUT LEVEL.
5. Watch the GR meter: the yellow bar height shows the compressor's gain reduction.

Page 1 · Compression and output level



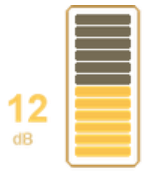
Genuine Anagram capture, 20 November 2026.

DRIVE	Sets the compressor drive. Higher values increase dynamics processing.
RATIO	Compression ratio from 1:1 to 4:1.
OUTPUT LEVEL	Final level control, with internal loudness compensation.
GR [dB]	Meter height displays compressor gain reduction, 0–24 dB.
EQ	Choose OFF, PRE or POST for the four-band EQ. PRE is before compression; POST is after compression but ahead of the morph FIR.

GR meter and output level

MAINTAINER adds no latency. The Anagram signal chain runs in floating point; the signal can only clip at the device output after the master level. If you need a fixed ceiling, place a limiter block at the end of the chain.

The GR meter is yellow. Its bar height shows the compressor's gain reduction, 0–24 dB.



GR · COMPRESSION

Page 2 · SOURCE, RESET SOURCE, LEARN SOURCE and MORPH



Genuine Anagram capture, 20 November 2026.

SOURCE	Source profile for the compressor and, when enabled, spectral morphing. On delivery all slots are empty (= NEUTRAL) until you learn them.
RESET SOURCE	Deletes the learned profile of the selected slot after intentional confirmation; the slot is empty (NEUTRAL) again.
LEARN SOURCE	Initiates instrument capture after protected double confirmation.
RECORD / FIT	Displays recorded time, fitting progress and status.
MORPH (target selector)	Target profile – a slot you have learned beforehand with the target instrument (or a recording of it).
MORPH (switch)	Enables/disables spectral transfer. The compressor remains tied to SOURCE.

Important: all profile slots start empty

MAINTAINER does not contain factory profiles. The 30 slots E-GUIT 1 … UKULELE are empty memory places; their names are only labels that help you keep your profiles organised. Until a slot is learned it behaves exactly like NEUTRAL. The compressor works with an empty slot as well, but the morph only changes your sound once both the SOURCE slot and the MORPH target slot have been learned.

You learn a target the same way as your own instrument: play the target instrument (for example an acoustic guitar with pickup, an upright bass or a keyboard), or a recording of it from your phone or computer, into the Anagram input. LEARN SOURCE always learns into the slot currently selected at SOURCE – to learn a target, select its slot at SOURCE first and switch back afterwards.

In short: for MORPH to do anything you have to learn at least twice – once your own instrument (SOURCE) and once the target sound (MORPH target).

Learning your instrument

1. Select a profile slot from 1 to 30 on page 2. The NEUTRAL slot cannot be overwritten.
2. Press LEARN SOURCE once. The display asks you to wait; PRESS AGAIN appears after approximately two seconds.
3. Press LEARN SOURCE a second time. Recording begins only now. Play for the full ten seconds without long pauses and cover as much of the instrument's range as possible: on bass, single notes from the lowest notes on the open strings up to the highest positions; on guitar, barre chords from the lowest to the highest positions on the neck; on other instruments, notes from the lowest to the highest register. The more of the range the recording contains, the better the profile.
4. Recording stops automatically after no more than ten seconds, followed by RECORD / FIT on the worker thread.
5. On success, SAVED appears briefly, then the display returns to READY or 0.0 seconds. The slot now contains fitted compressor parameters and the measured spectral fingerprint.

Pressing LEARN SOURCE while recording or fitting is used for cancellation. A properly cancelled new capture preserves the previously stored profile. Provide enough varied playing material for useful analysis.

Restoring a profile

1. Choose the affected slot 1–30. Make sure no recording or fitting operation is active.
2. Press RESET SOURCE, wait about two seconds, then press again when PRESS AGAIN appears.
3. The display counts RESET IN 5 … 0. During the countdown, another LEARN SOURCE or RESET SOURCE press cancels the operation.
4. The confirmed reset deletes the learned profile; the slot is empty (NEUTRAL) again. NEUTRAL itself is permanently protected.

Spectral MORPH – source and target

SOURCE chooses the source profile and remains the compressor's dynamics reference. The MORPH selector chooses the spectral target. With the MORPH switch ON, a 2048-tap minimum-phase FIR derives the measured spectral difference and applies it to live audio after compression.

Example: learn your electric guitar into the slot E-GUIT 1. Then connect an acoustic guitar (or play a recording of one into the Anagram input), set SOURCE to A-Steel 3 and learn it as well. Play your electric guitar again, set SOURCE = E-GUIT 1, MORPH selector = A-Steel 3 and the MORPH switch to ON. MAINTAINER moves the tone toward the measured target response without replacing your attack or source dynamics with a recorded sample.

MORPH OFF bypasses spectral transfer. Selecting the same source and target, or a slot that has not been learned yet, adds no transfer. A spectral FIR cannot invent absent instrument resonances or create completely new harmonic content. With MORPH ON, a 25 Hz low cut follows the morph stage.

Level follows the selected source reference and the internal gain matching. Different source profiles may sound different in loudness even when their resulting spectral curves resemble the same target. Level-match comparisons by ear.

Page 3 · Four-band EQ



Genuine Anagram capture, 20 November 2026.

EQ LOW 120 Hz	120 Hz low shelf, ±12 dB.
LOW MID FREQ	Select 250 / 500 / 1000 Hz.
EQ LOW MID	Low-mid bell EQ, ±12 dB.
HIGH MID FREQ	Select 750 / 1500 / 3000 Hz.
EQ HIGH MID	High-mid bell EQ, ±12 dB.
EQ HIGH 700 Hz	High shelf from 700 Hz, ±12 dB: lifts or cuts everything above 700 Hz. The HIGH MID bell (750 / 1500 / 3000 Hz) shapes a narrower band inside this range, e.g. extra presence at 1.5 kHz.

Available profile names

31 fixed names: one immutable NEUTRAL slot plus 30 learnable slots. On delivery all 30 slots are empty (= NEUTRAL). Instrument labels identify slots, not factory recordings of specific instruments.

NEUTRAL, E-GUIT 1–3, A-Steel 1–3, A-NYLON 1–3, 12-STRING, E-BASS 1–3, A-BASS 1–3, F-VOICE 1–3, M-VOICE 1–3, MANDOLIN, BOUZOUKI, LAP STEEL, STEEL GTR, PIANO, E-PIANO, SYNTH, UKULELE

Operating notes and troubleshooting

MORPH makes no audible change	SOURCE or MORPH slot not learned yet (empty = NEUTRAL), MORPH switch off, or source and target are the same slot.
MORPH sounds different in level from the target profile	Source and target have different loudness references. Level-match listening comparisons manually.

LEARN SOURCE does not save a new profile	Allow RECORD / FIT to complete, play enough source material and check status. NEUTRAL cannot be edited.
RESET SOURCE does not react immediately	It requires two distinct presses about two seconds apart, then a five-second countdown.
High-frequency boosts sound noisy with MORPH	FIR compensation can boost weak source regions, including noise. Check output level and source material.

Technical reference

Platform	Darkglass Anagram LV2, ARM64; verified technical build with 48 kHz test path.
Dynamics	Stereo-linked frequency-aware detection, RATIO 1–4, compressor GR meter.
Profile slots	One immutable NEUTRAL slot and 30 learnable slots, all empty on delivery.
Morphing	2048-tap minimum-phase FIR; post-compressor source/target spectral transfer.
GR display	25 yellow original sprite states for 0–24 dB compressor gain reduction.
EQ	Four bands, OFF/PRE/POST, ±12 dB.
Plugin identity	MAINTAINER, URI: https://stevesledge.de/plugins/maintainer **Website** stevesledge.com/products/maintainer