

1 Introduction

Roundtone is a VST virtual effect for Windows (Mac version available soon). It requires a VST compatible host to run.

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This manual is referred to current 1.0.3 version.

2 General description

Roundtone is an effect for tape recording emulation.

Several side-effects from recording on magnetic tape, from "old days" school, are considered as interesting and useful to compensate for sometimes excessive transparency and dynamics from digital recording.

Sound from recordings on tape is often heard as more "round", "punchy", "coloured" and "controlled".

Using and managing a real tape recording machine isn't so simple and, while the interesting effects above are guaranteed (in good maintenance conditions and with good technical skills), more effects like noise cannot be avoided.

Main advantages from an emulation are:

- it is very cheap
- doesn't require maintenance
- infinite instances ("tracks") are available
- results beyond real world tape can be obtained
- great versatility (emulating several machines, tapes, conditions)

Several algorithms are included in Roundtone.

Each algorithm gives different dynamic control and coloration to sound.

Main parameters included in each algorithm are:

- tape speed. Affects the "color" and saturation (acting on different frequency ranges, due to the interaction between head and tape at different tape speeds)
- saturation (i.e. soft, medium, hard). Affects the dynamic response and the saturation of the incoming audio
- number of saturating stages (i.e. "30ips Hard Comp" algorithm includes a tape head saturation stage with an overall dynamic effect)



The interface is very simple, including:

- input - Input gain from -∞ to +6dB
- speed - Controls the overall time constants for the tape machine
- action - Controls the amount of coloration and effect on the sound
- emphasis - Controls the amount of dynamic coloration and high values preserve high frequencies, too
- volume - Output gain, from -∞ to +6dB
- algorithm menu (top) - Select the overall "machine"

Roundtone is a stereo effect. You can put it on mono or stereo tracks or on groups for submixes/mixes.

It is rather light on CPU and operates "latency-free" as it doesn't add additional latency to the system.

Given the extremely simple interface, no presets are given. A preset system is implemented, anyway. Settings can be saved and recalled as usual.

3 Tips and tricks

- 30ips Hard modes for Bassdrum.
- soft modes for vocals, guitar, panoramics on drums
- 15ips modes on snaredrum
- look for some "snap" at about 1/3 with "Speed" knob
- experiment with equalization pre-plugin
- add lots of "action" for coloration and punch. Look for the right position between color and openness (high frequencies)
- add lots of "emphasis" for nice high frequencies
- set "30ips Hard Comp" for a less "saturated" compression (submixes)
- set low "Action" and high "Input" for transparent dynamic control (i.e. level the drum hits)

More algorithms are being developed for future versions.

Connect to www.sknote.it or the sknote forum for tips, feature requests, reporting.

Have fun!

