HB·KICK



User Manual

VERSION 1.0.0

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02 What HB Kick is

HB Kick is a kick drum synthesizer built for electronic music producers. You pick a kick type, set the pitch and the shape, and the plugin takes care of the rest: it tunes the tail to your key, keeps the click and the body in proportion when the tempo changes, and sets the output level so the kick sits at the same level as your bass without you touching a fader.

03 Requirements and installation

HB Kick runs on:

- Windows 10 or 11, 64-bit
- macOS 10.15 or later, Apple Silicon and Intel

It comes in two plugin formats. Install the ones your DAW uses.

VST3	Windows and macOS. For Ableton Live, FL Studio, Cubase, Studio One, Reaper, Bitwig Studio and most other hosts.
AU	macOS only. For Logic Pro and GarageBand.

WINDOWS

Copy the file to its folder, then rescan plugins or restart your DAW.

HB Kick.vst3	C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3

MACOS

Copy each file to its folder, then rescan plugins or restart your DAW.

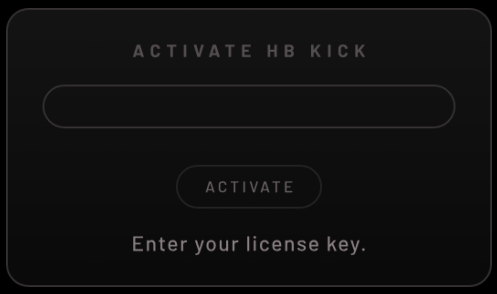
HB Kick.vst3	/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3
HB Kick.component	/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/Components

To install them for your user only, use the same folders inside your home folder (~/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins) instead.

On first launch the plugin creates its preset folder in your Documents folder (see Kick types and presets). On macOS your DAW may ask for permission to access Documents. Allow it, otherwise the factory presets cannot be written.

04 Activation

HB Kick needs to be activated once on each computer. Until then it loads and shows its interface but produces no sound.



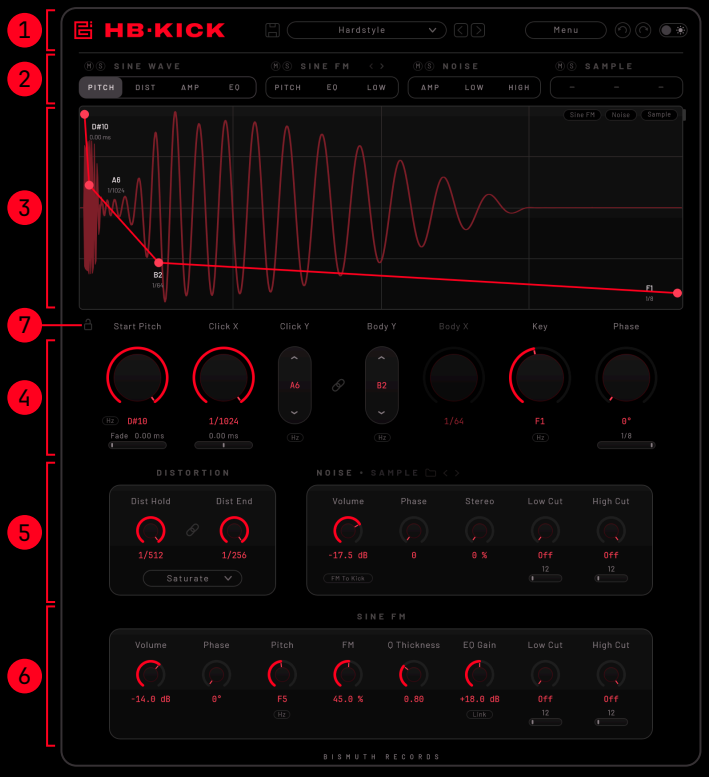
Open the plugin, type your license key into the field and click Activate. This needs an internet connection. Once activated, the plugin stays unlocked on that computer with or without internet.

A license can be active on two computers at the same time. To move it to a third one, open Menu, choose License and click Deactivate on one of the current computers. Deactivation needs an internet connection, because it frees the seat on our server.

MESSAGES

`Wrong license key.`	Check the key for typos.
`This key is already active on 2 computers.`	Deactivate one of them first.
`No internet connection.`	Connect and try again.

05 The interface at a glance



1. Preset bar: the save icon, the preset name (click it for the list of kick types and their presets), the previous/next arrows, Menu, undo/redo and the light/dark switch.
2. Layers: Sine Wave, Sine FM, Noise and Sample, each with M (mute) and S (solo) and its own row of tabs. The tabs decide what the curve window shows.
3. Curve window: the kick's own curves (Pitch, Dist, Amp, EQ) and the layers' curves. Scroll to zoom, drag the background to pan, double-click it to see the whole kick again. The Sine Wave's curves are read-only, except the Dist ramp, which you can drag to bend (double-click it to straighten). The Noise, Sample and Sine FM curves are editable: drag a point, double-click an empty spot to add one, double-click a point to delete it. The pills in the top-right corner overlay the other layers' waveforms; the small button beside them hides or shows those pills.
4. Sine Wave knobs: the kick itself (section 08).
5. Distortion, and the Noise / Sample section. The two share this frame; click SAMPLE in the caption to switch to the sample's knobs, with the folder icon and arrows to load a file.
6. Sine FM: shown only for kick types that use it.
7. Punch Lock (section 12).

Every knob can be typed into: click its value, type a number and press Enter. Double-click a knob to return it to the preset's value.

06 Kick types and presets

HB Kick has twelve kick types, in alphabetical order: 909, Bass House, Dub & Bass, Hard Dance, Hardstyle, House, Industrial, Linndrum, Psy Trance, Techno, Trance and Trap. A type is more than a starting point: it sets which knobs are available, their ranges, the shape of the envelopes and how the plugin levels and tunes the kick. Choosing a type is the first decision; everything else is adjustment.





Click the preset name to open the list. Click a type to load its default settings; a type that has presets shows an arrow, and hovering it opens them beside the list. The arrows next to the name step through every type and preset in order. When you change anything, an asterisk appears before the name to show that the current sound no longer matches the saved preset.

SAVING

Click the save icon, type a name and click Save. The preset is stored under the current type. If a preset with that name already exists, the button reads Replace and overwrites it. The list in the save card also lets you delete presets: hover a name and click the trash icon, then confirm with the check mark.

WHERE PRESETS LIVE

Presets are plain files with the `.hbk` extension in

```
Documents / Bismuth Records / HB Kick / Presets / [type]
```

The factory presets are written there the first time the plugin runs. You can share presets by copying the files, and you can load a preset from anywhere by dropping its .hbk file onto the preset name. Dropped presets are copied into the right type folder.

07 The curve windows

The window above the knobs shows one curve at a time, chosen with the tabs. A kick is always one 1/8 note long at the current tempo, so the time axis runs from 0 to 1/8 and is marked in note values (1/1024, 1/256 and so on) rather than milliseconds; change the tempo and the kick follows.

The Sine Wave's four tabs are in processing order: the pitch is generated first, then distortion is applied, then the amp envelope, then the EQ.



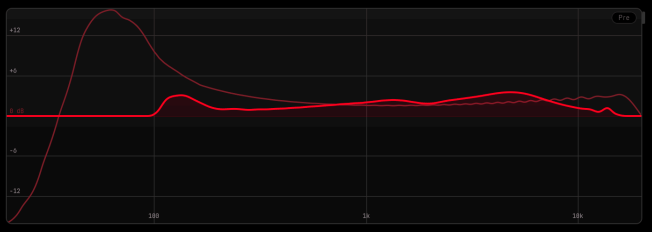
PITCH



DIST



AMP



EQ

Pitch — The pitch over the length of the kick: Start Pitch at 0 ms, the Click point, the Body point and the Key at the end, each labelled with its note and its time. The waveform behind it is the finished kick, post processing.

Dist — Where the distortion applies: full from the start until Dist Hold, then a ramp down to nothing at Dist End.

Amp — The kick's volume envelope. It is tuned per kick type and follows your settings on its own, so it is shown but not edited.

EQ — The kick's spectrum after the plugin's EQ, with the EQ curve drawn over it. The Pre pill shows the spectrum before the EQ instead.

The Noise, Sample and Sine FM tabs show those layers' own curves; they are described with their layers.

08 The Sine Wave knobs

These seven knobs are the kick itself. Each type gives them its own ranges; a knob that a type does not use is greyed out.



Start Pitch — The pitch at the very first instant of the kick. The Fade slider below it adds a short fade-in to the whole sound, layers included.

Click X / Click Y — The click point: when it happens and at what pitch. Click X is a time in note values; Click Y is a note. The small slider under Click X nudges the click by up to 0.2 ms either way.

Body X / Body Y — The body point, the same way: when the sweep reaches the body and at what pitch. On some types Body X is fixed by the type and shown greyed.

Link — The chain icon between Click Y and Body Y ties the two together: move one and the other follows, keeping their distance. While linked, Click X is not available.

Key — The note the kick ends on and holds through its tail. This is the note you tune to your track. The small slider under the Phase knob (marked 1/8) pulls the end of the sweep earlier, up to a 1/32 note.

Phase — Where in its cycle the sine starts, in degrees.

Hz pills — Start Pitch, Click Y, Body Y and Key show note names and snap to notes. Click the Hz pill under a knob to show hertz instead and set any value freely.

09 Distortion

Available on the kick types that use it; on the others the section is greyed out. The distortion is applied to the kick before the amp envelope and the EQ.



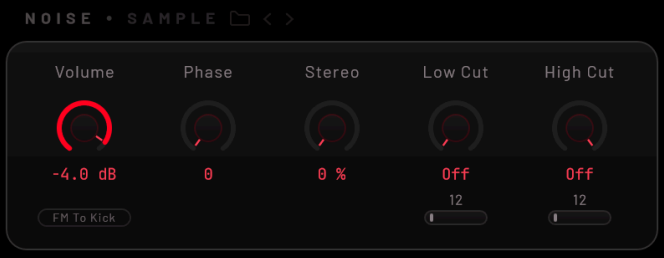


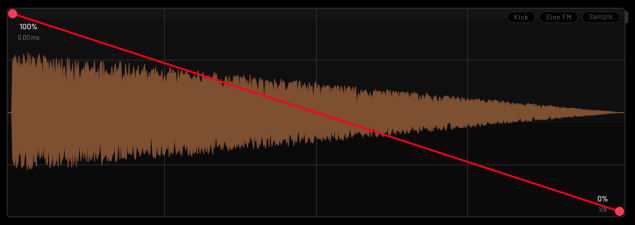
Dist Hold	How long the distortion stays at full strength from the start of the kick, in note values.
Dist End	Where the distortion has faded to nothing. Between Dist Hold and Dist End it ramps down; the ramp can be bent in the Dist window.
Link	The chain icon between the two knobs moves them together, keeping their distance.
Flavor	The menu below the knobs selects the distortion type: Saturate, Drive, Tape, Tube, Clip or Square.

10 Noise and Sample

The Noise and Sample layers are mixed in after the kick, so they are not affected by the kick's distortion and EQ. They share one frame: click NOISE or SAMPLE in the caption to switch between their knobs.

NOISE



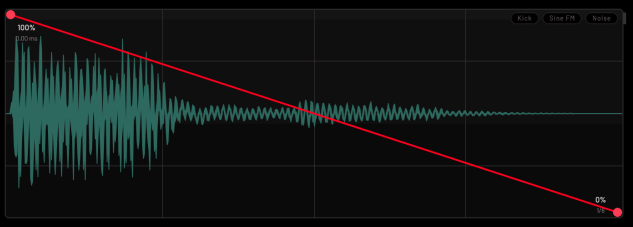


Volume	The noise level. At its minimum it reads Off, and Off means off: the layer is not processed at all, not merely silent, so it costs no CPU. This holds for every control that reads Off (volumes, filters, EQ gain).
Phase	A start offset into the noise sequence, 0 to 1000 samples. The noise is the same on every hit; this chooses where in it the hit starts.
Stereo	Blends the noise between mono and a second, independent noise on the sides: 0 % is mono, 100 % is an equal mix, 200 % is the sides only.
Low Cut / High Cut	Filters on the noise, from 20 Hz to 20 kHz. At the end of its range a filter reads Off and is bypassed. The small capsule under each knob sets the slope: 12, 18 or 24 dB/oct.
FM To Kick	With this pill on, the noise is not heard; instead it modulates the pitch of the kick. The Volume, Phase and filter settings shape the modulation. On Industrial it is always on.
Amp / Low / High	The noise tabs. Amp is the noise level over time (the 1/8). Low and High are how far each filter's cutoff travels over time, starting from the knob's value. All three are editable curves.

SAMPLE

The sample layer plays one audio file from the start of every hit. Click the folder icon to choose a file (WAV, AIFF, FLAC or MP3, up to 5 seconds), or drop a file onto the folder, the arrows or the name. The arrows load the previous or next file in the same folder. The X after the name removes the sample.

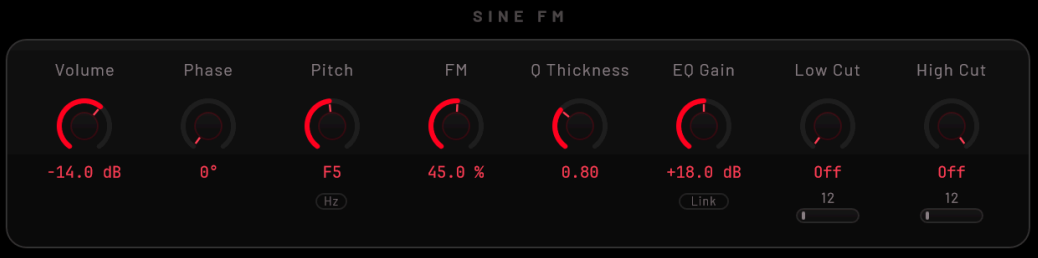




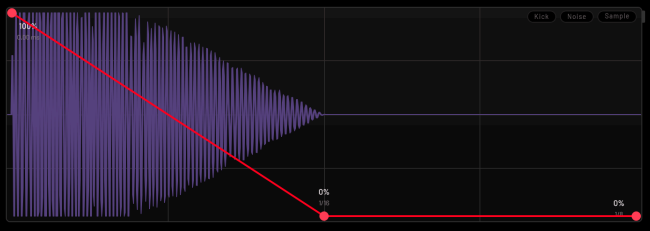
Volume, Low Cut, High Cut	As for the noise, slopes included.
Phase	A start offset into the file, shown in samples.
L / R	The two pills under the Stereo knob play only the left or only the right channel of a stereo file, centred. With neither on, the file plays as it is.
Stereo	Blends a stereo file between mono and its sides: 0 % is mono, 100 % is the file as it is, 200 % is the sides only. Not available while L or R is selected.
Amp / Low / High	The sample tabs: the same three curves as the noise, over time (the 1/8). The sample's Amp curve always ends at 0 % at the 1/8 mark.

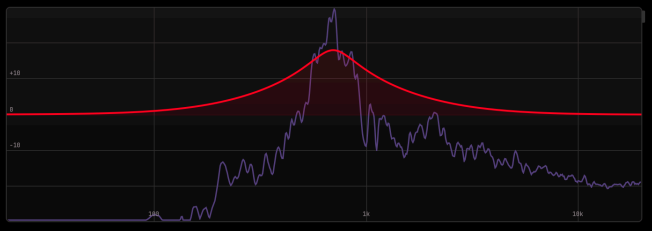
11 Sine FM

A second sine oscillator, available on Hardstyle and Industrial. When the kick type has it, its section appears below Noise and Sample and the window gains the Sine FM tabs. Like the noise and the sample, it is mixed in after the kick's distortion and EQ.



Volume	Its level; at the minimum the layer is off.
Phase	Where its cycle starts, in degrees.
Pitch	Its note (or Hz, with the Hz pill).
FM	How strongly the oscillator's frequency is modulated, in percent. The modulator is a separate noise source built into the layer; it is not heard and has no controls of its own.
Q Thickness	The width of a resonant peak that follows the oscillator's pitch.
EQ Gain	The height of that peak in dB. The Link pill ties EQ Gain to Volume: raising the gain lowers the volume by the same amount, and moving the volume moves both.
Low Cut / High Cut	Filters on the layer, with 12/18/24 dB/oct slope capsules, as for the noise.

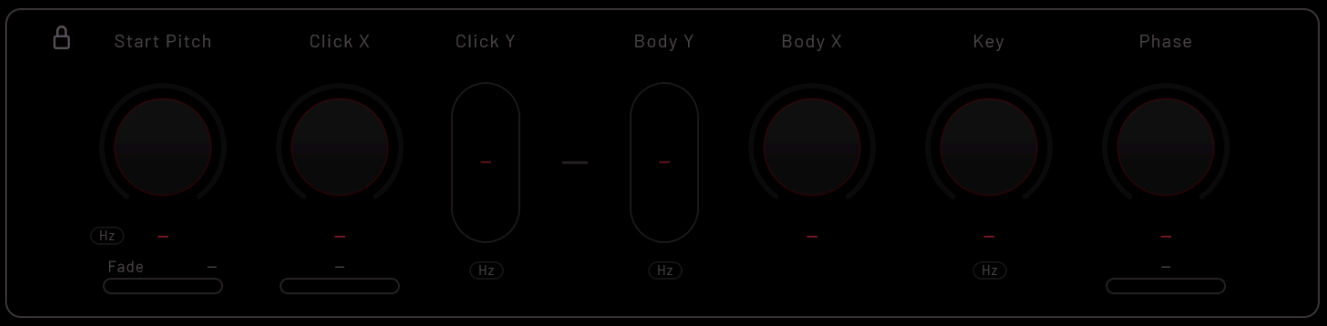




The tabs	The Sine FM has five tabs; the tab bar holds three at a time, so scroll it or use its arrows to reach the others. Pitch is the layer's pitch over time (the 1/8), within ±12 semitones of the Pitch knob. Amp is its level over time. EQ shows the layer's spectrum. Low and High are the filters' travel over time. Pitch, Amp, Low and High are editable curves.

12 Punch Lock

The padlock on the left of the knob row. Its purpose is to keep the character of a kick when the tempo changes: normally every point is placed in note values, so a faster or slower tempo shifts them, which changes the kick's character. With Punch Lock on, the points before the Key (the click, the body, the distortion points, the layer curves) keep the milliseconds they had at the tempo the lock was engaged at; only the Key point and the overall 1/8 length still follow the tempo, so the punch stays as you designed it.



While the lock is on, the kick's knobs and the curve points are not editable; the curve windows can still be zoomed and panned. Unlock to edit again. The locked tempo is saved with the preset and the project.

13 Auto level and Maximize

AUTO LEVEL

HB Kick sets its own output level, so there is no output knob. Whatever you change, the kick is brought to one fixed level, measured on its low end (0 to 150 Hz) at a point in the kick that depends on the type. You cannot read that point on a meter yourself, and you do not need to: with the kick's channel fader at −10 dB, the kick sits at the same level as a bass that reads −4 dB on the HB Meter's first band.

MAXIMIZE

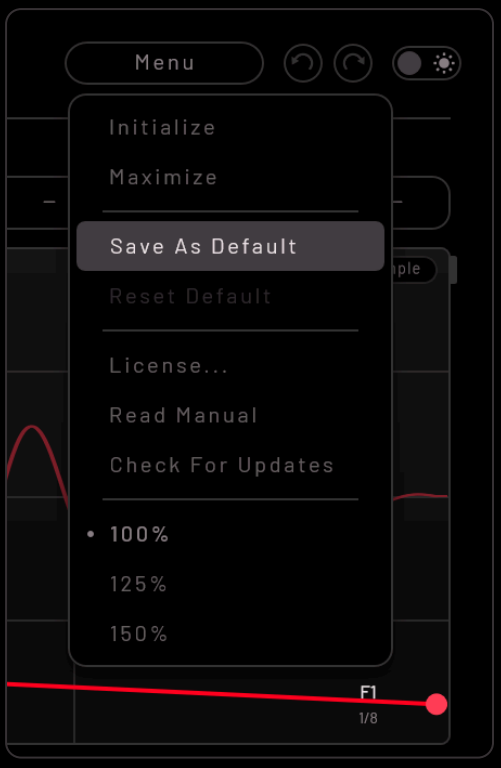
A switch in the Menu. It applies one fixed EQ curve to the plugin's final output, after the layers, above 150 Hz only, so it never touches the low end that the auto level sets. Off is a clean bypass.

14 The top bar: undo, theme and the Menu

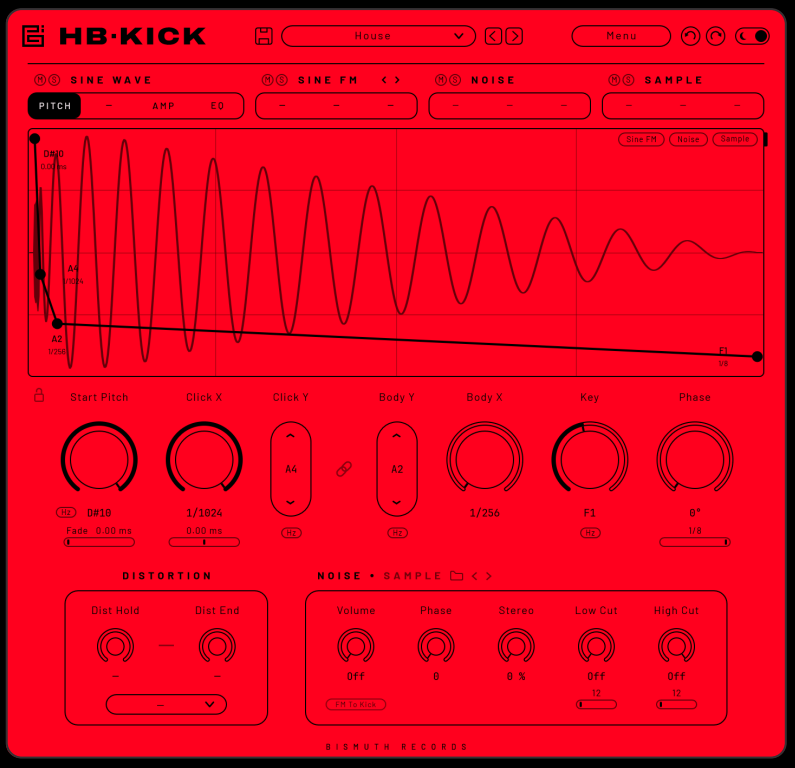


Undo / Redo The two arrows. Every change is a step: knobs, curve points, preset loads, layer settings.

Theme The switch at the far right toggles between the dark and the light interface.



THE MENU



THE LIGHT THEME

Initialize Returns the plugin to its launch state.

Maximize Switches the output EQ on or off (section 13).

Save As Default Makes the current state the new launch state for every new instance.

Reset Default Restores the factory launch state.

License… Shows the last characters of the active key and lets you deactivate this computer.

100 / 125 / 150 % The window size. It is saved with the project.

15 Tips

Level the bass to read –4 dB on the HB Meter's first band and set the kick's channel fader to –10 dB; the two then sit at the same level. Keep the ratio by moving both faders together.

Presets are files. To move your presets to another computer, copy the Documents / Bismuth Records / HB Kick / Presets folder; the plugin picks them up on the next launch.

Save As Default is per computer, not per project: it sets what a new instance opens with.

16 Troubleshooting

`Sample missing: …`	The project or preset points to a sample file that is no longer at its path. The plugin looks for a file of the same name in the folder you last loaded a sample from; if it is not there either, the kick plays without the sample. Load the file again from the folder icon.
`The preset folder could not be written: …`	The plugin could not create or write to its Presets folder in Documents, usually because the DAW was denied access to Documents (macOS) or Documents is read-only or managed by a cloud service. Allow access or free the folder, then reopen the plugin; it tries again on every launch.
`The preset could not be saved.`	Same cause as above, for a single save.
`This key is already active on 2 computers.`	Deactivate one of them from Menu › License, then activate here.
`Deactivation needs an internet connection.`	Connect and try again; deactivation frees the seat on the server, so it cannot be done offline.
`The kick sounds different after a tempo change.`	That is by design: the kick follows the tempo in note values. If you want the punch kept as it was, use Punch Lock before changing the tempo.

17 Support and credits

Support	info@bismuth-records.com
Web	bismuth-records.com

HB Kick is designed and developed by Hanan Bismuth (HB), Bismuth Records.