

# Multiband compressors

Seeking to get that extra bit of control over your frequencies? Look no further than this motley band of multiband heros



## Gramotech Pompeii £30

A satisfyingly small multiband dynamics tool that keeps things simple but manages to remain unique, Pompeii offers four bands of compression and expansion – not quite to the extent of gating, which would be a great addition. There's also a per-band Saturation control, which is great for warming up bands that need extra oomph elsewhere in the frequency spectrum.

Each band is equipped with Bypass, Solo and Mute controls, and while there's no classic metered gain reduction, the spectrogram does show the difference between the input/output signals in a slow fashion.

That's it – Pompeii is very simple but also very solid, satisfying everything you crave in a multiband compressor/expander, and working like a dream, for only £29.99.

[gramotech.co.uk](http://gramotech.co.uk)

**VERDICT 9.2**



## Acon Digital Multiband Dynamics £110

Available as part of Acon's Mastering Suite with four other plugins, this four-band network has all the compression mainstays per band: Threshold, Ratio, Knee, Attack and Release, with Gain In replacing the expected Make-up control (it is a mastering processor, after all). Oscilloscope-style metering is present for each band, as well as an overall spectrogram along the top, and there are global controls over input/output levels, crossover type, and Channel Linking.

You get to audition bands' sounds on their own, although there's no way to bypass a band's processing to compare the whole signal with or without, which is quite crucial when testing whether you're making any real progress to a particular band. There's also some clicking when adjusting controls with a signal running through the plugin. On the whole, though, Multiband Dynamics is a capable, professional multiband compressor at a decent price if you want the rest of the Mastering Suite. [acondigital.com](http://acondigital.com)

**VERDICT 8.8**



## Venomode Complexer 2

\$39

Each of Complexer's bands can be set to up/down compression, up/down expansion, limiting or gating, with Analog or Digital response styles, and a choice of Peak Detection methods. But here's the

unique part: the three processors – Blue, Red and Pink – can be set to operate in Chain (series), Mid/Side (plus overall), Stereo (Left/Right plus overall) or Multiband modes. This makes Complexer a great dynamics tool with tons of creativity and control, but since we're covering Multiband Compressors, we'll dock that mode points for only having access to three rather than the standard four. We'd also appreciate auditioning per band, and more visualisation across the knee graph.

Complexer is a great tool to have in your dynamics arsenal, but it's not a cure-all for every multiband compression task – add a fourth band and you get a capable and truly unique multiband compressor that's capable of so much more besides.

[venomode.com](http://venomode.com)

**VERDICT 8.8**



## WA Production The King \$139

Five bands, each with a gain control and a slider, are the main features you'll spend your time on with The King. Pull a band's slider down to engage more downward compression; push it up to engage more upward compression, with the amount of each type (Up and Down) set globally on the left. Basically, you choose the amount to pull the band towards or away from the slider level you've set. Interestingly, there's a single Time setting for the whole plugin (low to high attack/release), a weird thing to give global control over.

There's Mix control over the entire signal, Input and Output Gain, Limiting, and a 'Magic EQ', whose 0-100 setting, with three types, works in mysterious ways – none of which we've ever found make any signal sound distinctly better. If anything, this plugin's 'easy' approach just leads to more headscratching about how to use it to make things sound better.

[waproduction.com](http://waproduction.com)

**VERDICT 5.5**



## FabFilter Pro-MB \$199

Up to six bands of compression or expansion (in down/up modes), Pro-MB is the one to beat for any multiband dynamics task – both its feature set and its intuitive operation make it more than capable in any situation.

Pro-MB's way of working is still quite unique, engaging Range and Threshold controls, in connection with a Compress or Expand selector, in order to choose between upward/downward compression/expansion. Once you've got your head around it, though, practically any frequency-conscious dynamic feat can be achieved, with Attack, Release, Ratio, Knee, Lookahead and Output controls for each band, as well as individual sidechaining options (although all running from a single source). One overlooked feature is the ability to run each band 'Free', customising exactly where it operates in the frequency spectrum, overlapping with other bands rather than being constrained within a crossover network.

Although it's pricey, Pro-MB will be worth the cash for those prepared to properly learn its functions, turning its hand to practically any audio task.

[fabfilter.com](http://fabfilter.com)

**VERDICT 9.5**