

SideKick

User manual

(last update 9-aug-2009, version 4.3)

Creating a side-chaining effect in most VST sequencers can be quite a hassle. The purpose of SideKick4 is to make this process a lot easier. You will be able to make a side-chaining setup just by loading two instances of the VST plug-in and linking them together by selecting one of the thirty-two build-in virtual buses.

The plug-in is created in C++ using the VST 2.4 & VSTGUI 3.0 library.

Get started with ducking and keying in minutes by using this manual to install and setup the plug-in in your VST host.



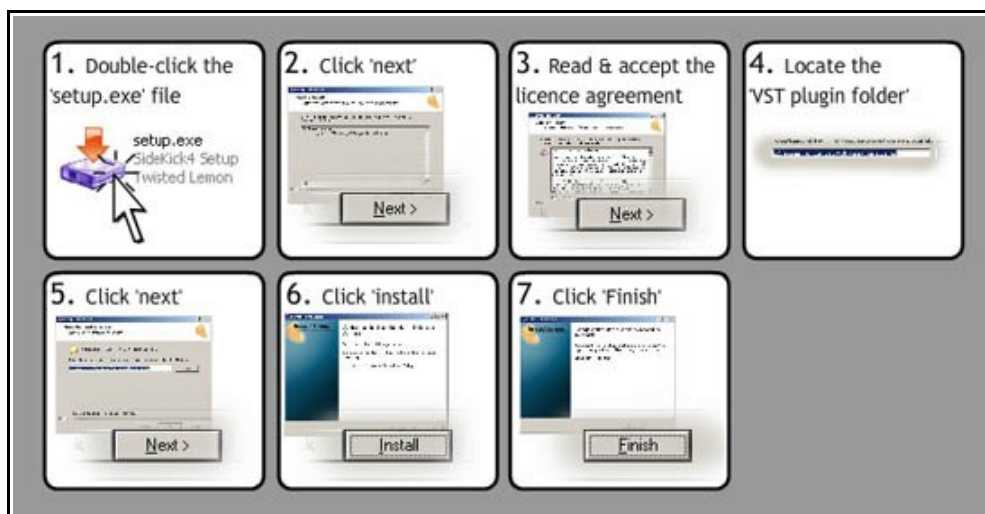
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Installing

Download and the SideKick4 'SideKick43_Setup.exe' file from the download section of the www.twistedlemon.nl website to your computer.

1. Start installing the plug-in by double-clicking the 'SideKick43_Setup.exe' file.
2. Click 'Next' in the welcome screen of the install wizard that has started.
3. Read & accept the license agreement (EULA) and click 'next' to continue.
4. Locate the 'VST plug-in folder' of your VST host/sequencer.
(ie. C:\Program Files\VstPlugins\)
5. Click 'Next' to install the plug-in in the specified folder.
6. Click 'Install' to start the installation.
7. Click 'Finish' to end the installation, the plug-in is now available in your VST host/sequencer.

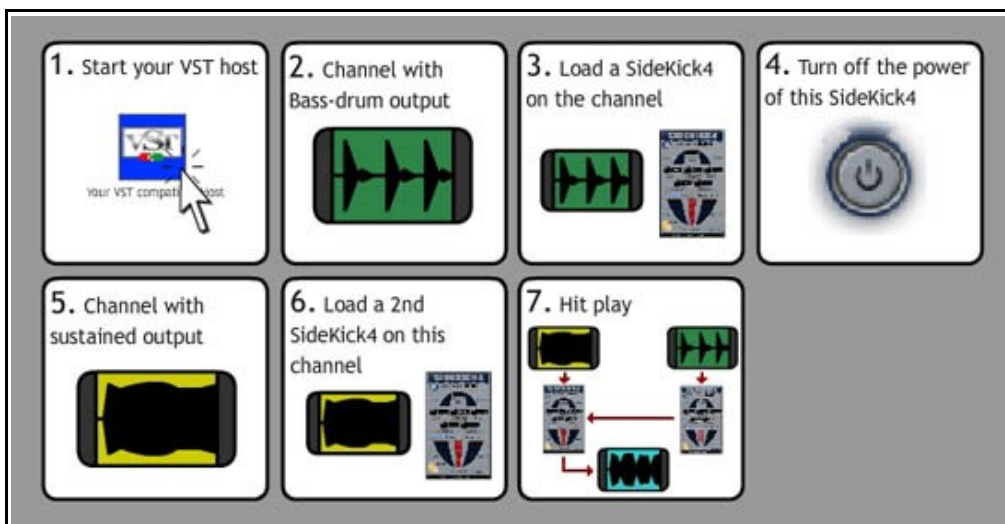


Usage

After installing you may use these following generic steps to create a typical side-chaining setup in your VST host/sequencer.

1. Start your VST host/sequencer.
2. Create a channel with a bass-drum audio output.
3. Load an instance of the SideKick4 VST in the channel's inserts.
4. Click on the power button in the Sidekick4 GUI to turn the effect off. The plug-in will now only send the incoming bass-drum audio to the virtual bus and will not affect the bass-drum audio itself.
5. Create a channel with a sustained audio output. For example, a synthesizer with some reverb.
6. Also on this channel, load an instance of the SideKick4 VST in the channel's inserts.
7. Using the default parameter settings of the plug-in you already should be able to hear the bass-drum affecting the volume of the sustained audio output by hitting play in your VST host.

Please note that, you will need at least two loaded instances of the SideKick4 to use the side-chain functionality. And that a single loaded SideKick4 with the same virtual bus selected as send and receive will function as a standard stereo compressor. (which is the same as setting the receive bus to "self").



Tweaking the parameters

To further modify the effect you may read the following parameter details to get a understanding of the functionality.

1. Power	Turns off the effect, the audio will not be changed. But the plug-in will keep sending the input to the selected virtual bus.
2. Send	Each SideKick4 sends the incoming stereo audio to 1 of the 32 available virtual stereo buses. By default SideKick4 will automatically try to select a unique/unused bus. However by clicking the box next to "Send input to Bus" you may manually select a different bus. Thereby it is possible to create mixes by selecting the same virtual buses in multiple SideKick4 instances.
3. Receive	With the box above the text "Receive Bus" you may select any of the 32 virtual buses. Which will then be used as controlling input for the compressor. (Selecting "self" will use the instances own input). The led underneath the input box will turn from red to green if audio is being received from the selected bus.
4. Gain	To adjust the amplitude of the received audio from the virtual bus.
5. Threshold	This parameter defines from which dB level the compressor will start to react on the received audio from the virtual bus.
6. Ratio	Defines the amount of gain reduction. Or in other words the strength of the effect.
7. Attack	How fast the compressor will react to rise of the received audio signal from the virtual bus. (in millisecond)
8. Release	How fast the compressor will react to decay of the received audio signal from the virtual bus. (in millisecond)
9. Drive	A soft saturated drive to "fatten up" the output.
10. Stereo-link	When turned off the compressor will treat the incoming stereo audio signals as 2 separate mono channels. Turned on, the effect will always use the same gain reduction for both the left & right channels.
11. Ducking/Keying	Inverts the gain reduction mod of the effect, making the compressor act as a expander in keying mode.
12. Listen	By turning on the listen mode the sidekick will output the selected receive bus audio instead of its own input. You can use this to check the audio that is being used as controlling input for the compressor.
13. Filter input & output	The filter allows you to select a range of frequencies on which the compressor will act and react. By turning on the 'input' the audio from the selected receive bus will be filtered before being used as control signal in the compressor. Use the listen button to check the setting. By turning on the 'output' the compressor will only apply the compression effect on the selected frequency range. Leaving the audio outside the selected frequency range untouched.
14. Low & high cut	With these two parameters you can select the range (from 0 to 20000 hertz) for the filtering for both the input and output filters. A selected range are the frequencies between the low cut setting and the high cut setting.
15. Bus delay	A display from which you can read out the initial delay of the selected receive bus in milliseconds. This delay is caused by the buffer in the VST host itself and the buffer size of the sound card hardware. You can reduce the delay by selecting a smaller buffer size in your VST host or or sound card settings.

Registering

After purchasing a license on the main sidekick page you may follow these steps to register your copy of the SideKick4 plug-in. Please note, licenses bought before the 10th of august have a slightly different registration process.

Licenses bought after the 10th of August 2009

1. Unzip the 2 registration files: 'skReg' & 'skSer' from the 'registration.zip' file attached to your registration email, into a directory of your choice. Download the small 'SideKick4_RegTool.exe' program, here: <http://tinyurl.com/sidekick-reg> and place it next to the 2 registration files. Start the 'SideKick4_RegTool.exe' program by double clicking on it.
 2. A message box will appear to inform you whether the registration process has succeeded. Start your VST host/sequencer and load a instance of the SideKick4 plug-in. Your email-address will appear in the plug-in interface, and the text 'trial licence' will have changed into 'registered'.
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Licenses bought after the 10th of April 2009

1. Unzip and copy the registration file 'skReg' & 'skSer' (attached to the registration email in the registration.zip file) to the same folder as the 'SideKick4.dll' plug-in file.
(ie. C:\Program Files\Steinberg\VstPlugins\TwistedLemon)
 2. Start your VST host/sequencer and load a instance of the SideKick4 plug-in. You are done, your email-address will appear in the plug-in interface, and the 'trial license' will have changed into 'registered'.
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Licenses bought before the 10th of April 2009

1. Save the registration file 'skReg' (attached to the registration email) to the same folder as the 'SideKick4.dll' plug-in file. (ie. C:\Program Files\Steinberg\VstPlugins\TwistedLemon)
 2. Start your VST host/sequencer and load a instance of the SideKick4 plug-in.
 3. Type (or copy & paste) the serial from the registration email into the box below your email-address in the plug-in user interface.
 4. Press enter and the 'trial license' will change into 'registered'.
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*Having trouble unpacking your registration zip file?
Try www.7-zip.org which has a excellent free zip (de)compression solution.*
