



MANUAL



WELCOME TO CENTERONE

Thank you for choosing Leapwing. We are a small team of highly passionate people devoted to developing easy-to-use digital audio tools that deliver rapid results at the highest possible quality. We appreciate the feedback and support of our users, and we encourage you to contact us whenever you need assistance or want to share your experience. To get the most out of CenterOne 3, we recommend reading this manual before you begin working with the plugin.

Product Overview

CenterOne 3 is a stereo image and center-control processor for mixing, mastering and post-production. It gives you direct control over the Left, phantom Center and Right components of a stereo signal, allowing you to rebalance, isolate and shape spatial information with precision. Version 3 expands the CenterOne workflow with three-band L/C/R control, two dedicated EQ bands that can be assigned to either the Center or the L/R components, and an integrated sidechain dynamics section for frequency- and channel-selective control.

Features:

- Proprietary Left-Center-Right extraction for direct access to phantom-center and side content.
- Three-band processing with adjustable crossover frequencies and slopes.
- Independent L, C and R gain and mute control within each frequency band.
- Two parametric EQ bands, each assignable to LR or C processing zones.
- Integrated sidechain compressor with internal and external key sources.
- Band/channel target matrix for selective dynamic control.
- Center extraction-width control for defining how tightly the phantom center is isolated.
- A/B comparison, undo/redo, preset management and full parameter automation.
- Stereo main output with extracted L/C/R auxiliary outputs in compatible hosts.

Authentication

When opening the plugin for the first time, you will be asked to enter the email address associated with your Leapwing account and your serial number. The serial number is provided after purchase and can also be found on your Leapwing account page. Your license is associated with a Hardware ID, which can be managed from your account when moving the license to another computer. Online authentication is required periodically; for offline-system assistance, contact Leapwing support.

Applications

CenterOne 3 can be used when the relationship between the center of a stereo signal and its left/right information needs to be changed without rebuilding the mix from stems. Common uses include mastering, mix-bus processing, stem balancing, post-production, restoration and creative stereo manipulation.

- Bring a centered vocal, snare, kick or bass element forward or backward relative to the stereo information.
- Reduce center buildup in a specific frequency range while leaving wide material intact.
- Add presence or remove harshness from the phantom center without applying the same EQ to the L/R components.
- Brighten or soften the sides while keeping the center tonal balance unchanged.
- Use different L/C/R balances in the low, mid and high bands to reshape the stereo image by frequency.
- Use internal or external sidechain control to make selected L/C/R frequency regions respond dynamically to another signal. For example, having a reverb return of the vocal duck whenever the vocal is singing.

Understanding L/C/R

CenterOne works with a stereo signal as spatial information rather than treating the input simply as two independent channels. Its extraction process identifies the phantom-center component and separates it from the remaining Left and Right information, giving you three components that can be controlled independently.

The extracted L and R components are not the same thing as the original left and right input channels. They are the spatial components that remain around the extracted center; together, L, C and R form CenterOne's working representation of the original stereo signal.

What's New in CenterOne 3

- Multiband control: Low, Mid and High regions can use different L/C/R balances.
- LR/C EQ: two parametric EQ bands can be assigned to either the Center or the combined L/R zone.
- Sidechain dynamics: internal or external detector signals can drive selective frequency/spatial compression.

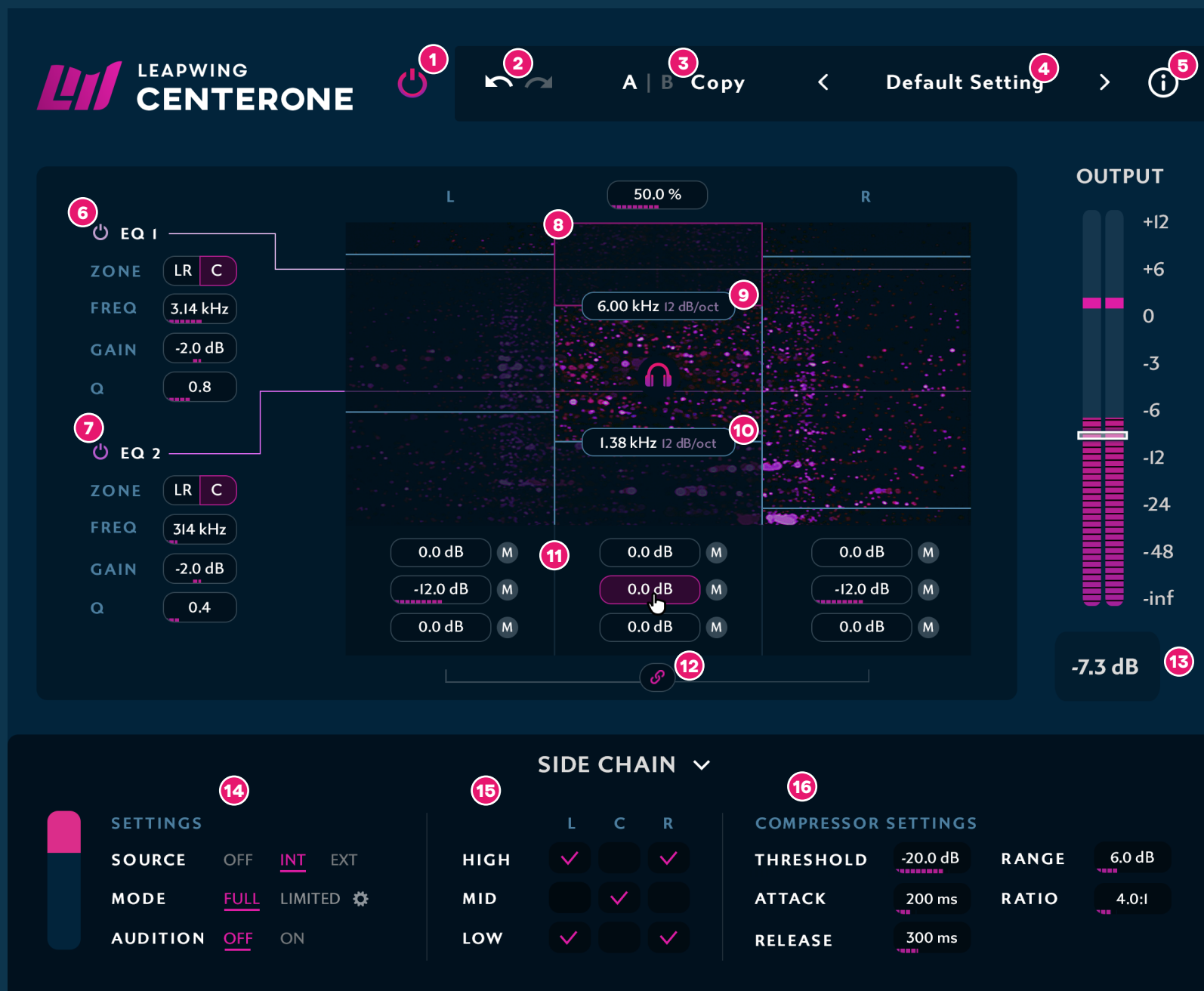


Figure 1 — CenterOne 3 main interface. Numbered callouts correspond to the control descriptions on the following pages.

Main Interface and Controls

1 — Bypass

Full plugin bypass. Bypass maintains the plugin's latency so that comparisons remain time-aligned.

2 — Undo / Redo

Undo and redo changes made to plugin parameters. Changing presets clears the current undo/redo history.

3 — A/B Comparison and Copy

Store two complete parameter states and switch between them for detailed comparison. Copy duplicates the currently active state to the other A/B slot.

4 — Presets

Click the preset name to open the preset browser, or use the left/right arrows to move through presets. User presets can be saved from the preset menu.

5 — Info

Opens plugin information including version and license details, update access, website and manual links.

8 — Center Extraction Width

Controls how narrowly or broadly CenterOne defines the extracted phantom-center region. Lower settings focus more tightly on content located exactly in the center; higher settings include content positioned progressively farther away from the exact center. Auditioning the C channel on its own is the easiest way to hear the effect.

9 / 10 — Band Crossovers

The main processing area is divided into Low, Mid and High bands. The two crossover controls set the boundaries between these bands. The displayed slope value defines how rapidly adjacent bands transition around each crossover frequency.

11 — Per-Band L/C/R Controls

Each frequency band provides separate level controls for the extracted Left, Center and Right components. The adjacent M buttons mute the corresponding component within that band. This allows frequency-dependent stereo rebalancing—for example, reducing only the center of the low band

while leaving the center of the mid band untouched.

Clicking on the main area will solo the corresponding region for auditioning purposes.

12 — L/R Link

Links corresponding Left and Right controls so that symmetrical changes can be made quickly. This is useful when you want to alter side level while preserving left/right balance.

13 — Output Meter and Gain

The output section provides final level control and stereo metering. Use the output gain to compensate for level changes introduced by L/C/R balancing, EQ or sidechain compression and to make level-matched comparisons.

Modifier and arrow keys

- **Shift + click** a gain slider or mute button to enable vertical linking.
- **Alt + click** a slider to reset it to its default value.
- **Ctrl + drag** a slider to scale down mouse sensitivity for micro-adjustments.
- **Arrow up/down** keys make micro-adjustments when a slider value is selected.

Important: Changing individual L, C or R levels intentionally changes the stereo balance. When the extracted components are left unprocessed and recombined at unity, CenterOne's L/C/R workflow is designed for transparent reconstruction of the source; once gain, EQ or dynamics are applied, the resulting panorama and spectrum will change by design.

LR/C Equalization

CenterOne 3 includes two independent parametric EQ bands. Each EQ can be switched on or off and assigned to either the L/R zone or the C zone, giving you tonal control that follows the spatial extraction rather than conventional left/right channel processing.

6 — EQ 1

The first parametric EQ band.

7 — EQ 2

The second parametric EQ band.

Zone: LR / C

Select LR to process the extracted Left and Right components together, or C to process the extracted phantom-center component only.

Frequency

Sets the center frequency of the EQ band.

Gain

Boosts or cuts the selected frequency region.

Q

Controls the bandwidth of the EQ. Lower Q values affect a broader range; higher Q values focus the adjustment more narrowly.

Three-Band L/C/R Processing

The multiband section divides the extracted L/C/R signal into Low, Mid and High regions. Within each band, the Left, Center and Right components can be level-adjusted or muted independently. This makes the spatial balance frequency-dependent: the low end can remain narrow and centered while the upper mids and highs are opened up, or the opposite can be created for a deliberate effect.

Typical EQ Uses

- Reduce vocal harshness in the center without dulling cymbals or stereo ambience.
- Add center presence around the vocal or snare region while leaving the sides untouched.
- Remove low-mid buildup from the L/R components without thinning centered kick and bass information.
- Add high-frequency openness to the sides while retaining a stable, focused center.

Interaction with Multiband Control

The EQ section and three-band L/C/R level section solve different problems. Use the EQs for spectral shaping within the selected spatial zone; use the multiband controls when you want to rebalance Left, Center and Right independently in broad frequency regions. Combining both allows very precise spatial tone shaping without requiring separate stems.

Sidechain Dynamics

The Side Chain panel adds dynamic control to the CenterOne 3 spatial workflow. It can use either the plugin's own signal or a DAW-provided external sidechain input as the detector source, and it allows selected Low/Mid/High and L/C/R regions to be targeted independently.

14 — Source

OFF disables the sidechain dynamics section. INT uses CenterOne's internal input as the key signal. EXT uses the host's external sidechain input, where supported by the DAW.

Mode: FULL / LIMITED

Selects the detector/control mode. FULL uses the complete selected sidechain path; LIMITED provides a more frequency-restricted detector configuration. The settings icon beside LIMITED opens the bandpass filter parameters associated with that mode.

Audition

Lets you monitor the sidechain/key signal so you can verify what is driving the compressor before making dynamics decisions.

15 — Band / Channel Matrix

The High, Mid and Low rows and L, C and R columns determine which frequency/spatial regions participate in the sidechain processing. Enable only the areas you want the compressor to control.

16 — Compressor Settings

Threshold

Sets the level above which the sidechain compressor begins to react.

Ratio

Sets the strength of compression once the detector crosses threshold.

Attack

Controls how quickly gain reduction begins after the detector exceeds threshold.

Release

Controls how quickly gain reduction returns toward zero after the detector falls below threshold.

Range

Limits the maximum amount of gain reduction. Use this to keep the dynamic effect subtle even with more assertive threshold and ratio settings.

External sidechain example: Route a lead vocal to CenterOne 3's external sidechain and target the Mid/C region to create space dynamically in a stereo music stem only while the vocal is present. The exact result depends on the selected band/channel targets and compressor settings.

Presets, Routing and Automation

Preset Management

Factory presets are available from the preset dropdown and can be stepped through using the left and right arrows. To store your own setup, use the Save As option in the preset menu. User presets are added to the menu automatically, and subfolders can be used to organize presets into categories.

Inputs and Outputs

CenterOne 3 requires a stereo input because the extraction algorithm relies on the relationship between left and right channel information. The main output is stereo when inserted on a stereo track, or LCR on a multichannel track. In DAWs that support plugin auxiliary outputs, the extracted Left, Center and Right components can also be made available as separate outputs for independent routing and processing.

When external sidechain mode is used, the host must also provide a sidechain input to the plugin. Sidechain routing and the availability of auxiliary outputs vary between DAWs; consult your host documentation for the exact setup procedure.

Automation

CenterOne 3 exposes its user controls to host automation. In most DAWs, the fastest way to create an automation lane is to enable the host's automation-parameter selection mode and move the desired CenterOne 3 control. Disable the selection mode afterward if you want to continue adjusting the plugin

without creating additional automation lanes.

A/B Workflow

- Set up a first processing approach in state A.
- Copy A to B so both states start from the same point.
- Change one or more parameters in B.
- Level-match the output if necessary, then switch between A and B for a meaningful comparison.

Practical Workflows

1. Bring a lead vocal forward in a stereo mix

Start with the center extraction at a moderate setting. In the Mid band, raise C slightly while leaving L and R at unity. If the vocal becomes too aggressive, use a C-zone EQ to reduce the harsh frequency area rather than lowering the entire center band.

2. Tighten low frequencies without narrowing the whole mix

In the Low band, reduce L and R equally while leaving C unchanged. Keep the Mid and High bands at unity. This can create a more focused low end while preserving upper-frequency width.

3. Add air to the sides only

Assign one EQ band to LR, set a high-frequency boost with a broad Q, and keep the center untouched. This can add openness without making a centered vocal overly bright.

4. Make room dynamically for dialogue or vocals

Use EXT sidechain as the source. Select the frequency/spatial area that conflicts with the dialogue or vocal, then adjust threshold, ratio, attack, release and range until the music moves out of the way only when needed.

5. Audition the extracted center

Mute L and R in all three bands and listen to C only. Adjust the center extraction-width control to learn how it changes what CenterOne considers center information. Restore L and R before continuing normal stereo processing.

6. Isolate L/C/R for external processing

In a compatible DAW, route the auxiliary L, C and R outputs to separate tracks or buses. Process them independently, then manage the final balance in the host. Remember that independent processing means the recombined result is no longer identical to the original signal.

Installation Locations

After running the CenterOne 3 installer with the default paths, the plugin formats are normally installed in the standard system locations below. If you select alternate locations during installation, make sure your DAW scans those folders.

macOS

AAX — /Library/Application Support/Avid/Audio/Plug-Ins

VST3 — /Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3

AU — /Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/Components

Windows

AAX — C:\Program Files\Common Files\Avid\Audio\Plug-Ins

VST3 — C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3

Contact Us

If you have questions, need assistance or want to share your thoughts about CenterOne 3, please contact Leapwing at support@leapwingaudio.com or visit leapwingaudio.com.

