



WildCompare

Demystify sonic differences between your sound and the reference.

USER GUIDE

Wildflower Sound · VST3 & AAX, plus AU on macOS

What WildCompare does

WildCompare holds your sound up to a **reference** and tells you, in plain words, how the two differ. Give it a reference (an audio file, or a capture of the plugin's own input) and play your track through it. Every difference it measures comes back **green** when it matches, **amber** when it is close and **red** when it differs, with the measured number and a tip on how to get closer. Together they add up to one overall grade, from **A+** to **F**.

Where WildCompare can correct a difference, press **Fix** and it adds that correction to your track, where you hear it and can edit it. With no fixes, your audio passes through untouched, with no added latency.

Good for: recreating a sound effect from a reference (the punch, tone and tail of an impact or a whoosh), checking a mix or master against one you trust, and catching hum, DC offset, clipping or mono problems before you deliver.

Quick start

1. **Insert WildCompare** on the track or bus you want to check.
2. **Pick a Mode:** SFX for one sound you are recreating, Music for a mix or master.
3. **Give it a reference:** drop an audio file anywhere on the plugin, press **Load...**, or press **Capture** to record its input.
4. **Play your track.** The DIFFERENCES list fills in and the grade appears.
5. **Hover a difference** to see how to get closer, or press **Fix** where one is offered.
6. **Switch Monitor to Reference** to hear the reference in place of your track, then back to Comparison.

The reference

The REFERENCE card, marked **A**, holds the sound you are comparing against. Its title glows lavender with the reference's level: faint with no reference, a steady low glow once one is loaded. Once a reference is in, the card draws its waveform; hover it for the file's name, length and full path.

Load... and drop a file

WAV, AIFF, FLAC, OGG or MP3 · up to 10 minutes

Press **Load...** to choose a file, or **drop an audio file anywhere on the plugin**, the Comparison card and the DIFFERENCES list included. Drop several at once and the first audio file wins. Drop another later to replace it.

Capture and Stop

records this track's input and makes it the reference

Press **Capture**, play the sound you want as the reference, then press **Stop**. A red bloom breathes and the input level moves while it records, and nothing is compared until you stop. The capture records the input before any fixes. It is saved in your Documents folder under *Wildflower / WildCompare / References*, named *Capture* with the date and time.

WildCompare keeps your **newest 20 captures**: when a new one is saved, older ones go. Only files named the way Capture names them are ever deleted. A file you put there yourself is never touched, and neither is any capture an open WildCompare is using.

Clear captures

shown when there is a capture to delete or a reference loaded

Deletes the captures WildCompare recorded and clears the loaded reference, after one question that names both. A reference file of your own is unloaded, never deleted. Afterwards the button briefly says how many captures it removed. It hides while the reference is playing.

Your session remembers where the reference file is. If it has moved, or it was a capture that has since been cleared, the card says *File not found* until you load or capture again.

Mode, Monitor and the live reading

Mode

Music or SFX · host-automatable

The switch on top, between A and B; the large mark on the line between them shows the mode in use. **Music** judges a mix or master: 25 differences across loudness and dynamics, tone, tuning, stereo, and noise. Tone is compared with the two loudness-matched, and level is reported on its own. **SFX** judges one sound, as if you are recreating it: 34 differences. It finds the main event in each sound, lines the two up by their starts, and compares timing, punch, tone, movement, pitch, space and noise.

Monitor

Reference or Comparison · default Comparison · host-automatable

What you hear. **Comparison** plays your track. **Reference** plays the reference file in place of your track, from its start each time you switch, looping with half a second of silence between plays (up to its first 120 seconds). Each switch crossfades over 10 ms. The Reference card shows a playhead and the time while it plays. Either way, the comparison and Capture keep reading your track's input.

The COMPARISON card

B · always the live signal through the plugin

The comparison is always what plays through WildCompare, and once it has been read the card draws its waveform under the words, the same way the Reference card does. Music reads the last 20 seconds, every 2 seconds; SFX reads the last 10 seconds, every second. The card says what it is doing: *Play this track to compare*, *Play New Music to Compare* or *Play Sound Effect to Compare* (a reference is in and nothing is playing), *Listening*, or *Quiet now: showing the last sound heard*. When your live audio is found inside the reference, both are read over the same stretch, so identical audio grades A+, and the card shows where it matched. While it listens, a small live waveform of the last moment moves under the words. The COMPARISON title glows coral with the input level.

DIFFERENCES and the grade

The grade

A+ to F · green for A, amber for B and C, red for D and F

Next to the DIFFERENCES heading, one grade for every difference on screen. Each measured difference scores 100 for a match and 90 for close; one that differs scores 70 just past its red line, falling to 0 at five times that line. Matches count 1.5 times and close ones 1.25 times in the average, Level counts twice, and a difference that could not be measured is left out. The average sets the letter: A+ from 96, A from 92, A- from 88, B+ from 84, B from 80, B- from 76, C+ from 72, C from 68, C- from 64, D+ from 60, D from 56, D- from 52, and F below that. With any red difference the grade is B+ at most. With nothing measured it reads *n/a*. While the live input is being read, a coral pulse sweeps under the heading, with *Analysing...* beside the grade where there is room.

Simple and Advanced

beside the heading · remembered for you, Simple until you choose

Simple gives one line per part of the sound, each with its own grade and a short summary (*Close. To fine-tune: Mud, Air*), the lowest grade first: Loudness; Dynamics & punch (Music) or Timing & punch (SFX); Tone; Tuning (Music) or Pitch & movement (SFX); Space & width; and Noise & artifacts.

Advanced shows every difference, problems first: *Not matching yet* holds every red row, then every amber one. Below it, each group holds its matching and not-measured rows, closed until you click its heading. Under the Simple list, one line sums up the grade: *Exact Copy* (A), *Nearly Identical* (B), *Getting There* (C), *Some Key Differences* (D) or *Pretty Different* (F), with a plain sentence and the grade again, large, under it.

MARKER	WHAT IT MEANS
Bloom	Green, five petals: this matches the reference.
Coneflower	Amber, pointed petals: close.
Thistle	Red, spiky: this differs.
Seed head	Grey, dotted: not measured, because neither sound has the thing (<i>Not enough sub to compare</i>). It does not count as a match. Hum, DC offset and Clipping are the exception: none in either is a match.

The summary line (*27 match, 5 close, 2 differ*) uses the same flowers, so it is also the legend.

Hover tips

Hover any row or line for how to get closer, worded for your mode and for which way it differs (more than the reference, or less). A Simple line lists the tips of the differences inside it. A match says *This already matches the reference*.

What WildCompare listens for

Each difference in Advanced belongs to one of seven groups. Names marked (*SFX*) show only in SFX mode, and (*Music*) only in Music mode; the rest show in both.

GROUP	DIFFERENCES
Level & dynamics	Level; Peaks, Crest, Punch, Dynamic range and Pumping (Music).
Envelope & transients	Density; Speed, Attack, Transient punch, Attack tone, Decay shape and Tail (SFX).
Tone	Sub, Low end, Mud, Boxiness, Presence, Bite, Brightness and Air; Tone vs noise and Resonance (SFX).
Movement	Brightness movement, Tremolo, Pitch movement and Vibrato (SFX).
Pitch & harmonics	Pitch and Harmonics (SFX); Tuning (Music), the mix's offset from standard A440 tuning.
Space & stereo	Width, Low-end width, High width, Left-right balance and Mono safety; Tail width (SFX).
Noise & artifacts	Clean (hiss in the quiet moments), Hum, DC offset and Clipping.

The eight tone bands are read loudness-matched, so a louder sound does not read as a brighter one:

BAND	RANGE	BAND	RANGE
Sub	20-50 Hz	Presence	1-2 kHz
Low end	50-200 Hz	Bite	2-4.5 kHz
Mud	200-500 Hz	Brightness	4.5-10 kHz
Boxiness	500 Hz-1 kHz	Air	10-16 kHz

Recreating a sound? In SFX mode, start with the red lines in Simple. Timing and punch usually tell you the most about how close you are.

Fix

Fix Now

on a difference WildCompare can correct now

In Advanced the button sits on the row; in Simple it sits on the line and fixes every fixable difference in it at once. Its tip says what it adds (*Fix: adds Trim +3.5 dB to this track, before the comparison*).

Shown faint, its tip says why it cannot fix right now: it is waiting for a new reading, Fixes are off, the fix is at its limit, it can take this away but not add it, or the EQ has no free band left. Once pressed it reads *Added* until the next reading.

What a fix does

It applies the measured difference once, to your track, **before the comparison**, so you hear it and the differences re-measure from the fixed sound. Every press adds its own new module: a second Level fix adds a second Trim, and each tone fix adds its own EQ band. After one reading you can press Fix on every difference in turn. Once you change the drawer, every row waits for a fresh reading through the new fixes (*Waiting for a new reading with the last fix*). Some differences take a second press to finish. The reference is never fixed, and Capture records before the fixes.

DIFFERENCE	FIXED BY
Level	TRIM
The eight tone bands	EQ: a shelf for Sub and Air, a bell for the rest
Resonance	EQ: a narrow cut, when yours rings more
Width, Left-right balance	WIDTH

Every other difference, Transient punch, Hum and DC offset included, has no Fix, and its tip says how to get closer by hand.

Fixes on

on by default · host-automatable

The tick at the right of the FIXES strip. Untick it to hear and compare this track without the fixes: the sound passes through untouched after a 20 ms fade, and no Fix is offered until you tick it again.

The FIXES drawer

The drawer sits under the face, and the window grows when it opens. Shut, it is a thin strip showing how many fixes there are. It opens by itself on your first fix, and open or shut is saved with your session. Inside, the chain reads left to right: **Comparison Signal**, the fixes in the order they run, then the **COMPARE Engine**. Fixes of one kind share one card, titled with the count, such as **EQ (3)**. A kind not in use shows as a dashed outline saying what it does, with an **Add** button.

- **Add your own:** press **Add** on a dashed card, or **Add a fix** at the left of the strip and pick a kind. It starts flat: turn its dials to hear it. Fixes you add read *Added by you*, apart from the ones Fix Now added, and are saved with your session.
- **Move a card:** press the < or > in its title, or drag its title along the chain.
- **Remove a card:** press the **x** in its title. **Clear fixes**, at the left of the FIXES strip, removes every fix at once.
- **Change a setting:** drag or scroll the dial, double-click the value to type one, or double-click the dial to reset it.
- **One fix at a time:** a card with several fixes shows one. The < and > at its foot step through them (each EQ band is one fix); the **x** beside them removes the one shown.

BLOCK	SETTING	RANGE AND WHAT IT DOES
TRIM	Gain	-24 to +24 dB. Turns this track up or down.
EQ	Frequency	20 Hz to 20 kHz. Where the band sits.
	Gain	-18 to +18 dB. How much the band lifts or cuts.
	Width (Q)	0.3 to 16. A higher number is narrower. Up to 12 bands.
WIDTH	Width	-24 to +12 dB. How much the stereo sides are raised or lowered.
	Balance	-12 to +12 dB. Moves the sound left or right: turn it right to move the sound right.
TRANSIENTS	Attack	-18 to +18 dB. Lifts or softens the first moment of each hit.
CLEAN-UP	Mains	50 Hz or 60 Hz. The mains frequency the hum cut follows.
	Hum cut	0 to 60 dB. How deep the hum notches cut.
	DC filter	On or off. Takes out a DC offset.

TRANSIENTS and CLEAN-UP are yours to add: no difference adds them with Fix Now.

The drawer's settings are saved with your session. They are not host parameters, so your DAW's automation reaches Mode, Monitor and Fixes on. The fixes add no latency.

The header

WildCompare has no presets: it holds no sound settings worth recalling. Your session remembers the reference, the window size and the fixes.

Tooltips

Hover any control, difference or fix for a short description. The **Tooltips** checkbox turns those hints on or off, and your choice is remembered across sessions and every Wildflower plugin.

Large Text

Draws the text 1.35 times larger inside the same window: the cards grow and the panels below make room. Shared with every Wildflower plugin.

Size

75, 100, 125, 150 or 200%

Changes the size of the window. 75% fits a 1366 x 768 laptop screen. Remembered with the session.

Display

Smooth (default) or Light

Smooth shows a new reading within a frame, and the spectrum curves and level bars glide to their new values. **Light** updates less often with no gliding, for older computers or many open instances. Your choice is shared with every plugin that offers it.

Manual and the version

The small **Manual** button in the header opens this guide any time. That is the copy the installer put on your computer; if it is missing, the plugin says so and offers our website instead. The version number in the top-right turns red when a newer version is out; hover it for the details.

Specifications

Formats	macOS: VST3, AU and AAX (Pro Tools). Windows: VST3 and AAX (Pro Tools). AU is a macOS format.
Channels	Mono, stereo, and mono in to stereo out. No surround.
Latency	None. With no fixes, or Fixes off, your audio passes through bit for bit unchanged.
Reference files	WAV, AIFF, FLAC, OGG or MP3, up to 10 minutes. Monitor plays up to the first 120 seconds, converted to your session's sample rate when the two differ.
CPU	The audio path uses well under 1% of one core at 48 kHz, even with every kind of fix running. The reading runs in the background: a share of one core while sound plays (more in SFX mode and at high sample rates), and nothing when it is silent.
Automation	Mode, Monitor and Fixes on are host-automatable with stable parameter IDs.

A few favorite moves

- **Recreate an impact:** SFX mode, the original as the reference, then work through the red lines in Simple until the grade climbs.
- **Check it first:** play the reference itself through WildCompare. Identical audio grades A+.
- **Hear the gap:** flip Monitor between Reference and Comparison while you tweak.
- **Match the tone fast:** play once, press Fix on Loudness and Tone in Simple, then fine-tune the EQ bands in the drawer.
- **Check a mix before delivery:** Music mode against a master you trust, then look at Mono safety, Low-end width and Clipping.

Remember: a fix changes what you hear. Untick **Fixes on** any time to hear and compare your track untouched.



THANKS

Thanks for using WildCompare

If you hit a bug, have a question, or make something you're proud of with WildCompare, we'd genuinely like to hear from you. Your feedback is how the tools get better.

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