AICakewalk Effects Cheat Sheet

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Tags	Recipe
Created time	June 12, 2026 9:29 PM

Best Cakewalk Sonar Sonitus Compressor setting (initial settings)
Best Cakewalk Sonar Sonitus Delay setting (initial settings)
Best Cakewalk Sonar Sonitus Reverb setting (initial settings)

Sonitus FX Cheat Sheet

1. Compressor

- **Ratio:** `3.0:1`
- **Attack:** `25 ms`
- **Release:** `150 ms`
- **Knee:** `25`
- **Type:** `Normal`
- **TCR:** `Enabled`
- **Limiter:** `Enabled`
- **Threshold:** Pull down until meter reads `2 dB` to `4 dB` of Gain Reduction.
- **Gain:** Match the amount lost to compression.

2. Delay

- **Tempo Sync:** `Host`
- **Left Factor:** `1/4`
- **Right Factor:** `1/8` (or `1/4D`)
- **Feedback:** `20%`

- **Crossmix:** `10%`
- **Low Cut:** `300 Hz`
- **High Cut:** `3.5 kHz`
- **Mix (Insert):** `12%` (If using an **FX Bus Send**: Set **Dry** to `Inf` and **Delay** to `0.0 dB`).

3. Reverb

- **Base Preset:** `Medium Room` or `Large Hall`
- **Decay Time:** `1.6 s`
- **Pre-Delay:** `30 ms`
- **Room Size:** `70`
- **Diffusion:** `85%`
- **High Damping:** `4.0 kHz`
- **Bass Cut:** `200 Hz`
- **Bass Multiplier:** `0.8x`
- **Mix (Insert):** Dry `0.0 dB` / Reverb `18 dB` (If using an **FX Bus Send**: Set **Dry** to `Inf` and **Reverb** to `0.0 dB`).

The clean, lightweight Sonitus suite in Cakewalk Sonar remains incredibly effective. Because these plug-ins are highly transparent, they serve as excellent "utility" processors.

When establishing baseline settings, the best approach is to configure a transparent, balanced starting point that won't destroy the transient response of your audio, allowing you to fine-tune according to the track.

1. Sonitus Compressor Baseline

This configuration establishes a safe, transparent starting framework. It sets a medium-fast attack to let initial consonants and transients pass through cleanly, paired with an adaptive release to prevent unnatural "pumping" artifacts.

Dial Settings

- **Ratio:** `3.0:1` to `4.0:1` (A solid middle ground for vocals, acoustic guitars, or instrument groups).
- **Attack:** `20 ms` to `35 ms` (Protects the initial "bite" or transient of the notes).
- **Release:** `150 ms`
- **Knee:** `20` to `30` (A soft knee provides a smoother, more transparent transition into compression).
- **Type:** `Normal` (Switch to `Vintage` if you want an optical, LA-2A style emulation where the ratio dynamically eases up on high peaks).
- **TCR (Transient Controlled Release):** `Enabled` (Allows the plug-in to dynamically adjust the release based on the program material, minimizing pumping).
- **Limiter:** `Enabled` (The built-in look-ahead limiter acts as a safety guard to catch rogue peaks at 0 dBFS).

The Dynamic Adjustment Steps

1. Loop the loudest section of the track.
2. Gradually pull the **Threshold** slider down until the Gain Reduction (GR) meter bounces between **-2 dB and -4 dB** on peak moments.
3. Adjust the **Gain** slider upward by the same amount lost to compression to match the original perceived volume.

2. Sonitus Delay Baseline

To achieve a classic, wide studio echo that blends naturally behind a source rather than competing with it, a split-timing approach works beautifully. It breaks up static repetitions by separating the left and right delay times.

Dial Settings

- **Tempo Sync:** `Host` (Ensures the delay stays locked to your project project project project BPM).
- **Left Factor:** `1/4` (Standard Quarter Note).

- **Right Factor:** `1/8` (Eighth Note) or `1/4D` (Dotted Quarter Note for asymmetrical movement).
- **Feedback (Link Enabled):** `20%` to `25%` (Provides 3 to 4 distinct repeats before fading out).
- **Crossmix:** `10%` to `15%` (Bridges a small amount of the left echo into the right side and vice versa, enhancing stereo depth).

Critical Tone-Shaping

Standard, unfiltered digital delays often sound brittle or clutter the mix. Use the integrated high/low filters to thin out the repetitions:

- **Low Cut (High Pass Filter):** Set to `300 Hz` to clean up muddy low-end build-up.
- **High Cut (Low Pass Filter):** Set down to `3.5 kHz` or `4.0 kHz`. This creates an analog, tape-like roll-off that pushes the echos safely into the background.

> **Routing Check:** If loading the delay directly into a track's FX Bin, set **Listen** to `Mix` and start the **Mix slider** at `12%`. If routing as an Aux/Bus Send, toggle **Listen** to `Delay`, drop the track's **Dry** level to `-Inf`, set the **Delay** level to `0.0 dB`, and control the intensity using the track's Send knob.

3. Sonitus Reverb Baseline

The Sonitus Reverb shines brightest when simulating realistic, medium-to-large spaces without adding metallic ring artifacts. To keep the track focused and close to the listener while adding massive depth, utilizing the Pre-delay parameter is essential.

Dial Settings

- **Preset Starting Point:** Select `Large Hall` or `Medium Room` from the drop-down menu to set the underlying algorithm geometry, then modify the parameters below.
- **Decay Time:** `1.6 s` to `1.8 s` (Provides a smooth tail that fits most tempos without overlapping into the next musical phrase).
- **Pre-Delay:** `25 ms` to `40 ms` (Crucial for clarity. It creates a brief gap before the reverb begins, allowing the dry vocal or instrument transient to cut through

cleanly before the ambient space blooms).

- **Room Size:** `70`
- **Diffusion:** `80%` to `90%` (High diffusion smooths out the early reflections, preventing a distinct "flutter echo" sound on sharp transients).
- **High Damping:** Adjust to `4.0 kHz`. This ensures the reverb tail decays faster in the high frequencies, mimicking a real room's air absorption and preventing a sibilant, icy top-end.

Bass Multiplier Taming

- **Bass Cut:** Set to `200 Hz`.
- **Bass Multiplier:** `0.8x` (Slightly reducing the low-frequency decay prevents the reverb tail from turning muddy or drowning out the bass instrument and kick drum tracks).

Routing

Reverbs generally yield much better clarity when configured as a parallel effect bus rather than an insert:

Setup Configuration	Parameter Adjustments
Via FX Bus Send (Recommended)	Set **Dry** to `-Inf` / Set **Reverb** to `0.0 dB` / Set **Output** to `Stereo`. Control the blend using the individual track Send levels.
Direct Track FX Bin Insert	Set **Dry** to `0.0 dB` / Initialize **Reverb** mix slider at `-18 dB` and blend up slowly to taste.