

**ATTACK**  
One handy software enhancement is a full choice of attack times

**MID SIDES**  
Process your stereo sources in either LR stereo or M/S mid sides modes

**DISPLAY**  
Get handy feedback on the signal flow or currently selected processor

**PATHS**  
Balance the three parallel paths using their respective trims



**SIDE CHAIN**  
Use the 3-band side chain equalizer on either internal or external side chain sources

**AUTO GAIN**  
The EQ has a handy gain compensation option based on the amount of applied gain



**STEPPED CONTROLS**  
On all plugins you can choose between stepped or continuous controls

**RANGE**  
Use the software enhancement to set the overall amount of EQ curve applied

**PHASE**  
Choose from linear or minimum phase processing

**PROCESSORS**  
The four processors are modelled on classic and contemporary analogue designs

# Arturia PC MAC FX Collection 2 €399

Finding the right effects bundle can massively boost your creativity. But is this updated collection really made up of effects you'll actually use?

> Arturia has steadily built a formidable library of hardware-inspired effects featuring modulations, delays, dynamics and beyond. These successfully emulate the originals and then supersize them with numerous software extras. Recent additions include the Juno-6 style Jun-6 Chorus and last year's '3 modulations' bundle which added Dimension-D chorus, Bi-Tron phaser and BL-20 flanger.

## New collection

They've now turned their attention to updating their FX Collection which bundles together all these effects in a cost-effective package. The original 15 effects are now joined by the four effects mentioned above and three new Mix Bus focused processors - Bus Force, Comp Diode-609 and EQ Sitral-295. So FX Collection 2 (VST, VST3, AU, AAX) now has an impressive 22 effects with four modulations, three compressors, three reverbs, three delays, three filters, three

preamps, and those three bus effects. Among these you'll find emulations of typical classics such as the Urei 1176 compressor, Roland Space Echo delay and EMT 140 plate alongside rarer examples like the REDD V76 preamp and Grampian 636 spring reverb. We've covered most of these before, including the most recent modulations pack (10/10 cm288) so here we'll focus on the new Mix Bus additions and the bundle as a whole (see box out).

## Force of nature

Although we see parallel processing implemented in individual plugins, it's less common to see a mastering processor built on the concept, but that's exactly what Bus Force does. It splits a stereo signal into three parallel processing paths: Dry, Compression and Saturation with level and mute for each. There are four processing modules - Equalizer, Filter, Compressor and Saturation - pre-assigned to

the paths, with all four available in the Saturation path, and some modules can be individually de-activated in those paths to make a total of 36 routing combinations. Finally, the summed signal passes through a Clipping stage and the whole thing is topped and tailed by Input and Output Trims. Confused? Don't worry, a handy signal path graphic shows the active modules, their routing and the levels set. The same graphic also switches to provide analyzer feedback for whichever module you're editing. Bus Force's EQ and filter are based on classic analogue designs from Pultec and Oberheim, with the compressor and saturation taking their lead from modern hardware by Overstayer. There are also global settings for phase (linear or minimum) and DC removal. Bus Force is an impressively flexible processor that combines a lot of the processing we like in a handy parallel format. Its uses go way beyond master bus duties and we loved the control available to

“With so many plugins available, it’s becoming harder and harder for devs to differentiate their designs”

create heavily saturated sounds which we could blend to taste. You’ve also got 50 or so presets that ably demo its more interesting sounds.

## Retro classics

Comp Diode-609 is a recreation of Neve’s very popular 33609 compressor/limiter. Renowned for its transparent gain control, hard limiting options and transformer stage, it’s a great tool for submixes and master mixes. Much like the original hardware, the plugin runs in both stereo and dual mono modes. However, the plugin adds a choice of either stepped or continuous controls, providing great precision from the outset. If you know the original, you’ll see that the layout has been swapped around a bit. Software extras include M/S processing, fully flexible attack times (5ms to 75ms), more ratio options and a mix blend. Click on the VU meters and you’ll find a real-time gain reduction graph.

Further software enhancements are available on the foldaway Processor Advanced Controls panel at the bottom. Here you’ll find our favourite enhancement, the 3-band sidechain EQ for both internal and external sidechain sources. But there’s also adjustable lookahead (0 to 5ms) and an Input Drive, which influences the diode-bridge emulation, adding subtle, primarily third harmonic, distortions.

EQ Sitral-295 takes inspiration from a more obscure processor. The original is a 1970s transistor-based EQ from Siemens, and has a very sweet sound. The EQ has a bell-shaped mid band (300Hz to 8kHz), high and low shelves and high and low-pass filters. Once again, stepped or continuous controls can be selected, as can M/S operation. The shelving bands have three frequency settings each, and we particularly like the 30kHz option on the high shelf for adding silky smooth air. Enhancements include optional Auto Gain, which compensates for the applied



The in-app tutorials provide multi-step walkthroughs for a quick grounding in each plugin’s features

## Value Meal

With so many plugins available, it’s becoming harder and harder for developers to differentiate their designs. Nevertheless, with FX Collection 2, Arturia are doing their very best to persuade you. First up, by opting for the FX Collection 2, you are saving considerably on the individual plugin pricing (£99 each). So assuming you pay the full and quite hefty £399 price tag, it works out at around £18 per plugin, which is very reasonable.

Next up, and this is a big one for us, added extras. Arturia’s plugins combine authentic hardware emulation with plenty of extra features.

Whether that’s the modulation matrix in the M12 filter, the Time Warp feature in the FET-76 compressor or the Range control on the Sitral-295 EQ, to name just three examples, there’s always something useful or creative that lifts the plugin.

Finally, in-app tutorials. All FX Collection 2 plugins include a fold-out side panel that handles quick tour and tutorial duties. These have multi-page walkthroughs, highlighting relevant sections as they go. So if you’ve not used the plugin before, you can be fully briefed in five minutes, and no need to head to the manual.

gain, and our favourite, Range, which is a depth setting for the overall EQ curve. You also have a handy foldaway signal Visualizer with before and after (input and output) curves and a character setting for the overall processing, which applies a slightly more saturated flavour. EQ Sitral-295 is a gentle shaping tool rather than surgical one. We found it did this task excellently on pretty much everything we tried it on.

Overall we love the new plugins contained in Arturia’s FX Collection 2. And yes, combined with the other established processors, excellent sonics and software enhancements, you have a highly desirable package of effects you’ll definitely want to use. Top marks. **cm**

Web [arturia.com](http://arturia.com)

## Alternatively

**Slate Digital All Access Pass**  
**\$14.99 per month**

For subscription fans, Slate’s massive offering includes their own Analog plugins alongside designs from Overloud and Kilohearts

**FabFilter Mixing Bundle**  
**£499**

If analogue hardware emulation isn’t important to you, this 7-plugin bundle is a great choice

## Verdict

**For** Awesome new Bus Force effect  
Two great classic hardware emulations  
Highly engaging visual interfaces with handy in app tutorials  
Very authentic sonics  
Extensive software enhancements  
Exclusive upgrade and crossgrade offers for registered Arturia owners

**Against** The overall bundle price may deter some

FX Collection 2 bundles together some great existing plugins and adds some new ones, delivering a creative and sonically inspiring effects toolbox

**10/10**



All plugins include excellent software enhancements