

true:level

Loudness and dynamics on track

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true:level is a versatile and precise loudness, dynamics and true peak metering plug-in. Due to its unique Loudness and Dynamics Grid, you'll find that true:level is an excellent help in finding the right trade-off between the loudness and dynamics of a mix. Selectable common references enable you to compare a track against pre-defined loudness standards and typical dynamics values for genres or custom reference tracks.

Whenever you want to make sure that your mix meets the specifications of some streaming platform or you want to compare the dynamics of your sound with your favorite track as reference – true:level is the right tool for the task.

Plus, all the reference options in true:level let you quickly identify potential issues in your mix – and, with a level check it offers great guidance regarding necessary actions to fix problems.

Get started with true:level and have fun getting your track ready for its big release!

System requirements

CPU

Intel Core i5
Apple M1

RAM

4GB

Operating systems

Windows 10+ (64 bit)
Mac OS 10.12+

Graphics

OpenGL Version 3.2+



You will need admin privileges to successfully install the true:level plug-in.

Mac OSX

To start the installation process, please open the disk image **sonible_truelevel_x.x.x.dmg**. This will mount the image and open a finder window showing the content of the installation package.

To install true:level on your system, run the installation file **truelevel.pkg**.

The installer will now guide you through the necessary steps to install true:level on your computer. true:level will automatically be installed in the default locations for audio plug-ins.

Default folders:

Audio Unit

`/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/Components/`

VST

`/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST/`

VST3

`/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3/`

AAX

`/Library/Application Support/Avid/Audio/
Plug-Ins/`

Windows

To start the installation process, extract the downloaded zip-file **sonible_truelevel_win_x.x.x.zip** onto your hard disk and run the installer.

The installer will now guide you through the necessary steps to install true:level on your computer. true:level will automatically be installed in the default locations for audio plug-ins.

Default folders:

VST3

`C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST3\`

VST

`C:\Program Files\Common Files\VST\`

AAX

`C:\Program Files\Common Files\Avid\Audio\Plug-Ins`

Licensing system

You can select between two licensing systems: machine-based or iLok (USB dongle).

By creating a user account on www.sonible.com and registering your products – if they are not already visible in your Dashboard, you can manage your plug-in activations.

Machine-based

Each license key allows you to install true:level on two computers with unique system IDs. These system IDs are computed during license activation.

The same license can be used by multiple users, but each user has to individually unlock the full version of true:level under their account.

In case a system-ID is changed (e.g. replacement of the hard drive), you can revoke/activate the plug-in next to the respective system-ID in the Dashboard of your sonible user account.

iLok

If you want to transfer one activation to your iLok, just make sure the plug-in is registered in your sonible user account. Click on the button „transfer to iLok“ next to the plug-in in your Dashboard and follow the instructions.

Note: 1st gen iLok dongles and the iLok Cloud are currently not supported.

Unlocking

If you purchased a license for true:level online, you receive your license key via email.

Machine-based unlocking

When opening true:level for the first time, a notification window will be displayed asking you to unlock true:level with a valid license key.

Please make sure that your computer is connected to the internet before starting the registration process.

Enter your license key and click „register.“ The plug-in will now communicate with our server to check if the license is valid. If it is – enjoy! :)

iLok

If you transferred your license to an iLok, simply attach the iLok to your computer. The plug-in will then be automatically registered – enjoy!

If you don't receive the email within minutes please check your junk folder first before contacting our support (support@sonible.com).

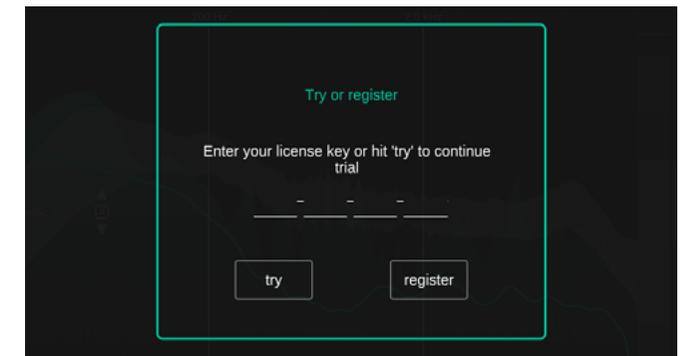
Trial version

To run true:level in demo-mode, simply click "try" and you will then be able to use true:level for a couple of days without any limitations. (Please refer to our website to find out more about the current demo period of true:level)

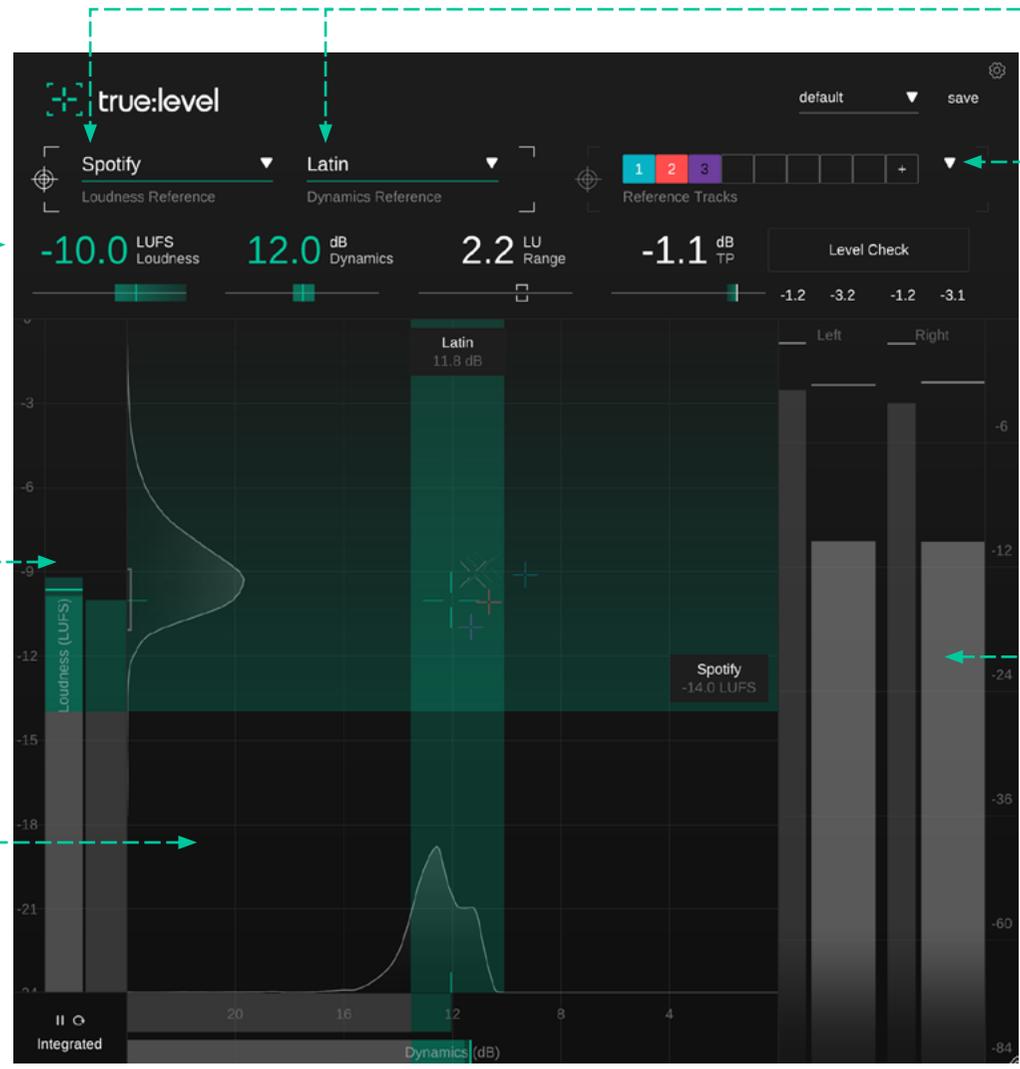
When the demo period expires, you will need to purchase a full license in order to continue using the plug-in.

Internet connection requirements

sonible plug-ins only needs an internet connection during the trial period and for initial license activation. During the trial period, the plug-in needs to go online every time it is used. Once the license of your plug-in has successfully been activated, an internet connection is no longer needed.



Product	License Key	Type	Description	Status	Date	Action
true:level Download	XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-XXXX	PC	XXXXXX	active	2000-00-00	revoke
				not activated		transfer to iLok



Reference Dropdowns

Select a loudness and dynamics reference for easy comparison with loudness standards and typical genre dynamics.

Reference Tracks

Load up to 8 reference tracks for easy comparison with existing mixes.

Metering Section

Monitor the peak and RMS value of your track.

Key Readouts

Monitor the loudness, dynamics, loudness range and true peak of your signal.

Loudness Metering

Monitor your loudness using classical meters and the loudness histogram.

Loudness & Dynamics Grid

Compare your mix to the selected references.

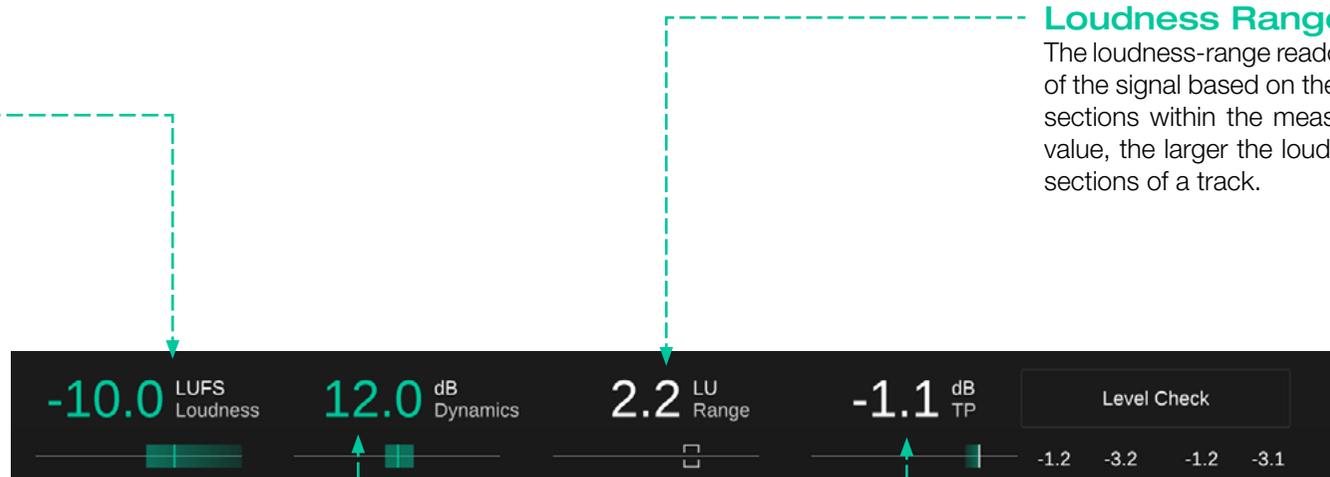
Dynamics Metering

Monitor your dynamics using classical meters and the dynamics histogram.

The key-readout section provides a quick overview over the most important metering values. Target indicators below each readout make it easy to track changes made to the signal. The target indicator and the respective readout turn green if the measured value meets the value of the reference.

Loudness (LUFS)

The loudness readout shows the current integrated, short-term or momentary loudness of your track.



Loudness Range (LRA)

The loudness-range readout shows the loudness variation of the signal based on the loudest and quietest non-silent sections within the measurement period. The larger the value, the larger the loudness variation between different sections of a track.

Dynamics (dB)

The dynamics readout shows the current integrated, short-term or momentary dynamics value of your track.

true:level is using the median of all measured PSR (peak to short-term loudness ratio) values for measuring the dynamics of a track. Compared to the well-known PLR (peak to long-term loudness ratio) value used by other tools, our experiments showed that our PSR based descriptor better traces the actual dynamics of a track, including short-term dynamics.

True Peak (TP)

The true-peak readout shows the maximum true-peak value for all channels observed during the measurement period. The value turns orange, when the peak exceeds the true-peak value of the reference.

The time base used to compute the loudness and dynamics values (integrated, short term, momentary) can be changed by clicking the measurement mode selector in the bottom right corner of the user interface.

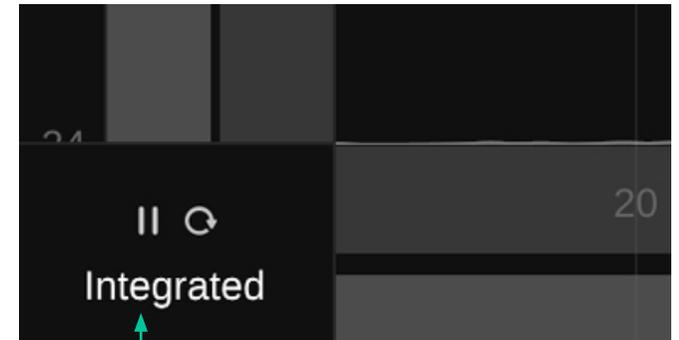
You can pause or reset the measurement by clicking the play/pause and the reset icon next to the selected measurement mode.

What is loudness?

The perceived loudness of a piece of audio is commonly measured in LUFS (Loudness Units relative to Full Scale) according to the EBU R128 standard. Technically speaking, LUFS are the unit of measurement used in the process of quantifying the loudness of audio material. To compute the LUFS value of some piece of music (often referred to as program loudness), the average level of the audio material combined with perceptual filters are analyzed over time.

What is loudness normalization?

Two pieces of music with the same LUFS level are be perceived as equally loud. That's why most streaming platforms nowadays normalize all audio material to a certain LUFS level – to guarantee a consistent perceived loudness among consecutive tracks. They turn down tracks louder than a certain reference loudness and most of them also turn up tracks that are quieter than this reference.



Integrated

The integrated measurement represents the average loudness and dynamics over a long observation period – when measured over the entire audio track, the loudness qualifies as the so-called program loudness. The program loudness is also the value streaming platforms are referring to when talking about the loudness of a track. Please note that only long observation periods (>60s) allow for a valid integrated measurement according to the EBU R128 standard.

Short-term

The short-term measurement values are computed over sliding blocks of 3 seconds. The values typically change over time and provide valuable information regarding the loudness and dynamics of different sections of a track.

Momentary

The momentary measurement values are computed over sliding blocks of 400ms and help to identify overly dynamic loudness peaks.

The loudness and the dynamics of a track are highly interrelated. Increasing the loudness of a signal often reduces its dynamics, for example when using a limiter. The Loudness and Dynamics Grid helps to find the right trade-off between the loudness of a track and its dynamics – and provides a holistic overview over both values.

The vertical axis of the grid represents the loudness in LUFS while the horizontal axis represents the dynamics in dB. The grid also shows a reference loudness area as specified by your chosen loudness reference as well as a suggested dynamics area based on your dynamics reference.

Loudness & Dynamics Crosshairs

The position of the crosshairs represents the integrated loudness (vertical position) and dynamics (horizontal position) of your track. The smaller gray crosshairs in the background represent a trail of short-term values.

The lines of the crosshairs are initially white and turn green once your track lies within the area of the recommended loudness or dynamics.

Loudness Meter

The loudness meter on the left displays the current short-term (foreground) and momentary (background) loudness value.

The loudness meter on the right displays the current integrated loudness value. The color of the integrated meter is gray for values below the reference loudness, green for loudness values falling into the recommended loudness area and yellow or red for values exceeding the recommended loudness. The current loudness range (LRA) is indicated by a gray brace next to the integrated meter.

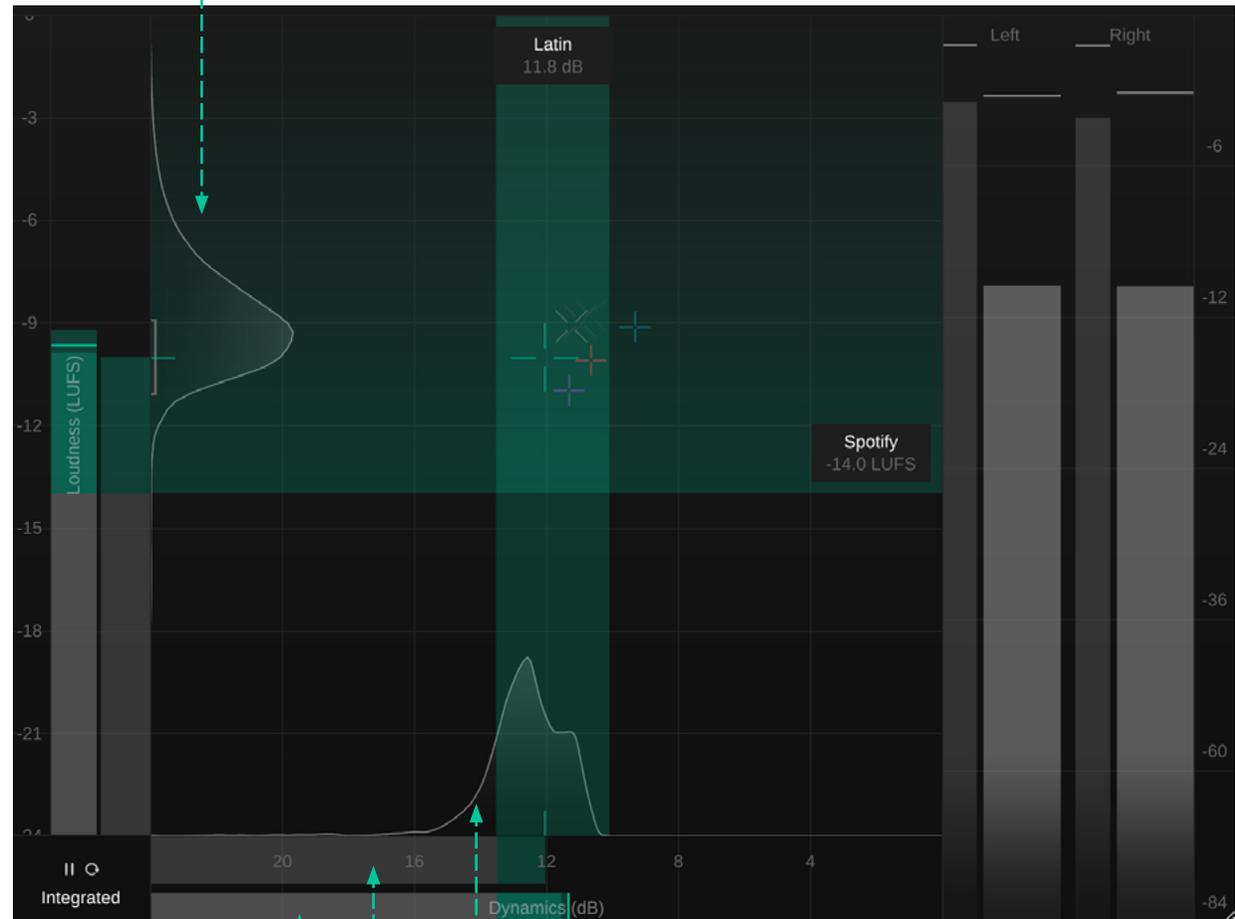


Speed and Measurement Controls

Use these buttons to change the measurement between short-term, momentary and integrated as well as pause or reset the measurement.

Loudness Histogram

The histogram next to the loudness meters indicates how often a certain short-term loudness value was observed. The shape of the histogram tells you if the observed signal has a more or less constant loudness over the whole observation period (one small peak), a slightly varying loudness over time (one broad peak) or two (or more) significantly differing sections (two or more peaks).



Dynamics Meter

The dynamics meter on the bottom displays the current short-term (foreground) and momentary (background) dynamics value.

The dynamics meter above displays the current integrated dynamics value. The color of the integrated meter is gray for values below the reference dynamics, green for values falling into the recommended dynamics and yellow for values exceeding the recommended range.

Dynamics Histogram

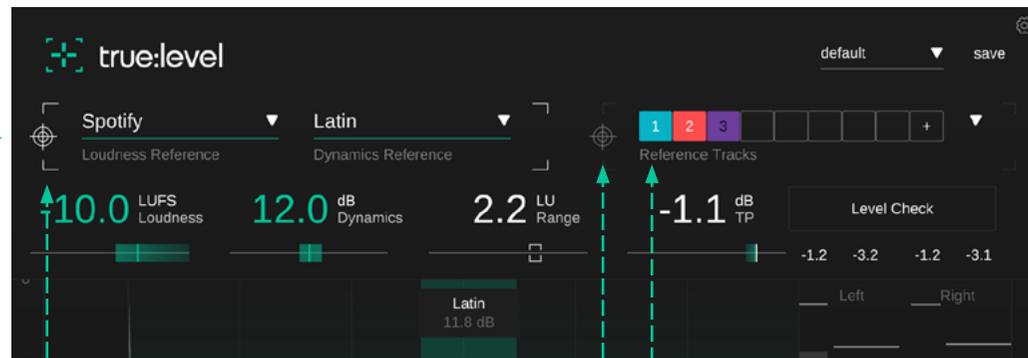
The histogram above the dynamics meters indicates how often a certain short-term dynamics value was observed. The shape of the histogram tells you if the observed signal has more or less constant dynamics over the whole observation period (one small peak), slightly varying dynamics over time (one broad peak) or two (or more) significantly differing sections (two or more peaks).

Making sure that loudness and dynamics are in a good shape is important when publishing a track. Hitting the right loudness level helps to avoid any surprises when publishing the track to different publishing targets (e.g. streaming platforms) and nailing the dynamics is important for the overall quality of the mix.

true:level's references provide two simple, yet precise ways to compare the qualities of a mix against references:

Common References

Predefined loudness standards and genre-based dynamics references



Reference Tracks

User-defined reference tracks that create custom reference targets

Reference Selector

By clicking the reference selector, you can define if the common references, or the reference tracks are used as the current loudness and dynamics targets.

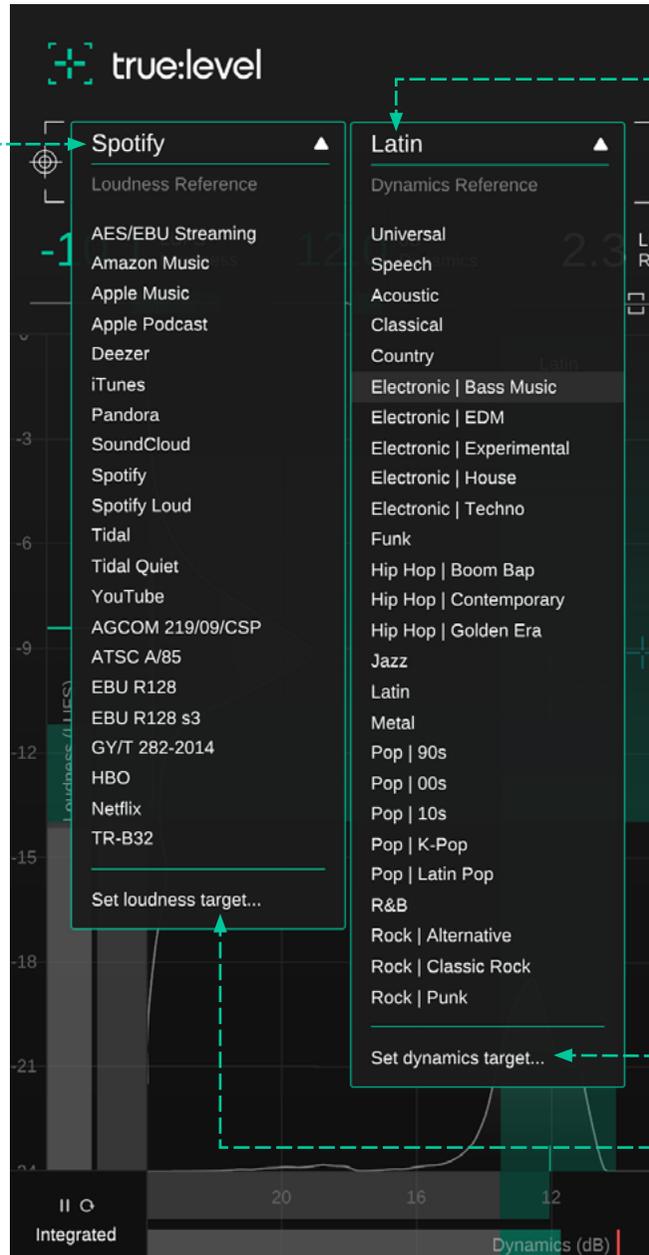
The common references for loudness and dynamics provide an extensive list of predefined reference targets. While the loudness references cover the specifications for different delivery platforms and loudness standards, the pre-defined dynamics references are based on the typical dynamics of musical genres.

Loudness References

The loudness references are based on different publishing targets: streaming platforms, loudness standards or custom reference values. Each reference covers information regarding the loudness and recommended true peak value of the target.

Most streaming platforms only require a certain minimum loudness. All loudness values above this loudness are fine as indicated by a green area inside the Loudness and Dynamics grid.

Loudness standards suggest actual loudness target values. In this case, only the target value (plus a tolerance area) represents a good loudness value, indicated by a green horizontal bar inside the Loudness and Dynamics grid.



Custom Reference Loudness

For specific custom loudness values, you can set custom reference parameters including a tolerance.

Dynamics References

The dynamics references are based on the typical dynamics of different musical genres. The suggested dynamics area for a specific genre is indicated by a green vertical bar inside the Loudness and Dynamics grid.

Custom Reference Dynamics

For specific custom dynamics values, you can set custom reference parameters including a tolerance.

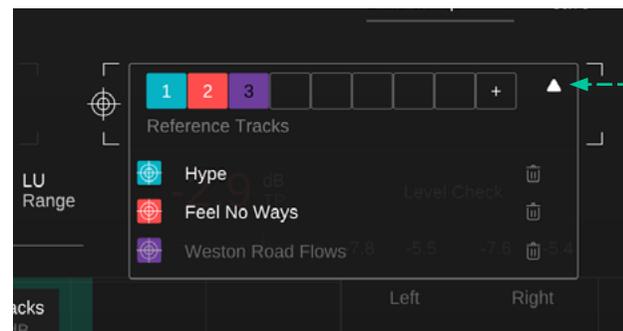
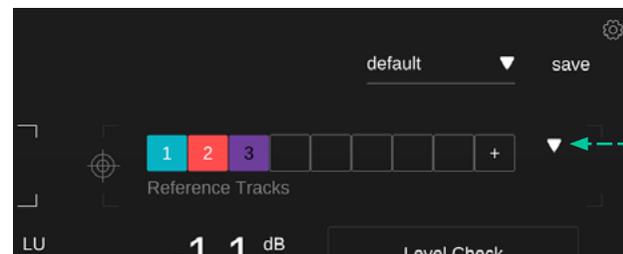
To compare your track against one or multiple existing mixes, you can load up to 8 reference tracks. Every track will be analyzed and its loudness and dynamics information will be extracted.

If the reference-track section is selected as the current target, the combined information from all active reference tracks is used to compute the reference zone. Active reference tracks are displayed inside the Loudness and Dynamics grid as small crosshair in the color of the track.

Handling Reference Tracks

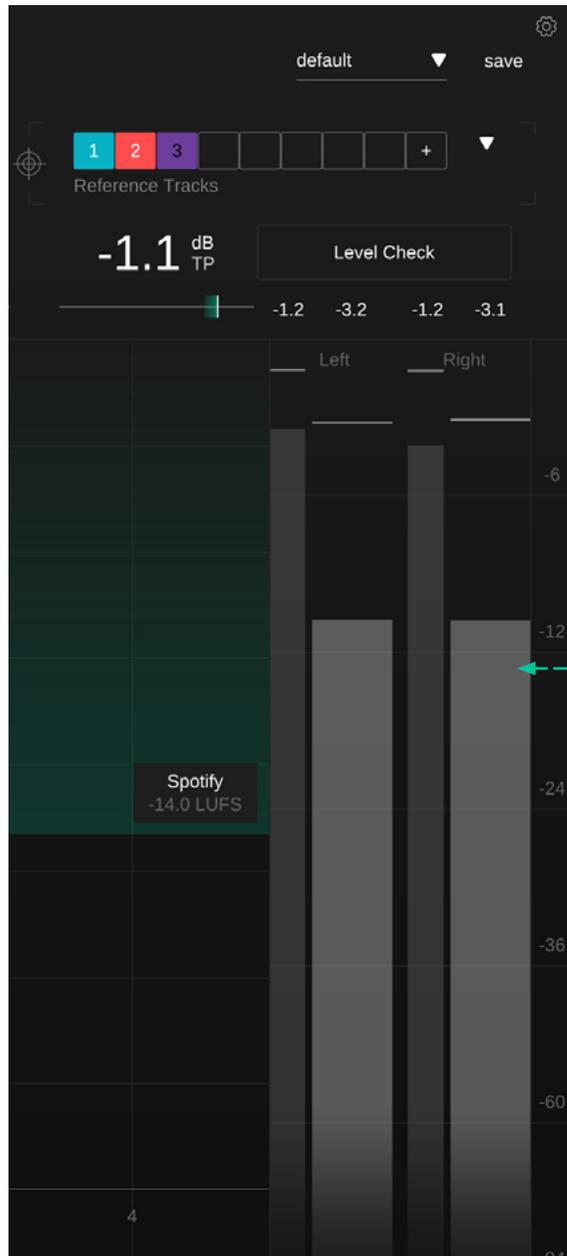
A new reference track can be loaded by either dragging and dropping one or multiple audio files onto the plug-in window or by clicking the “+” button in the reference track section.

A reference track can be activated or deactivated by clicking the respective number.



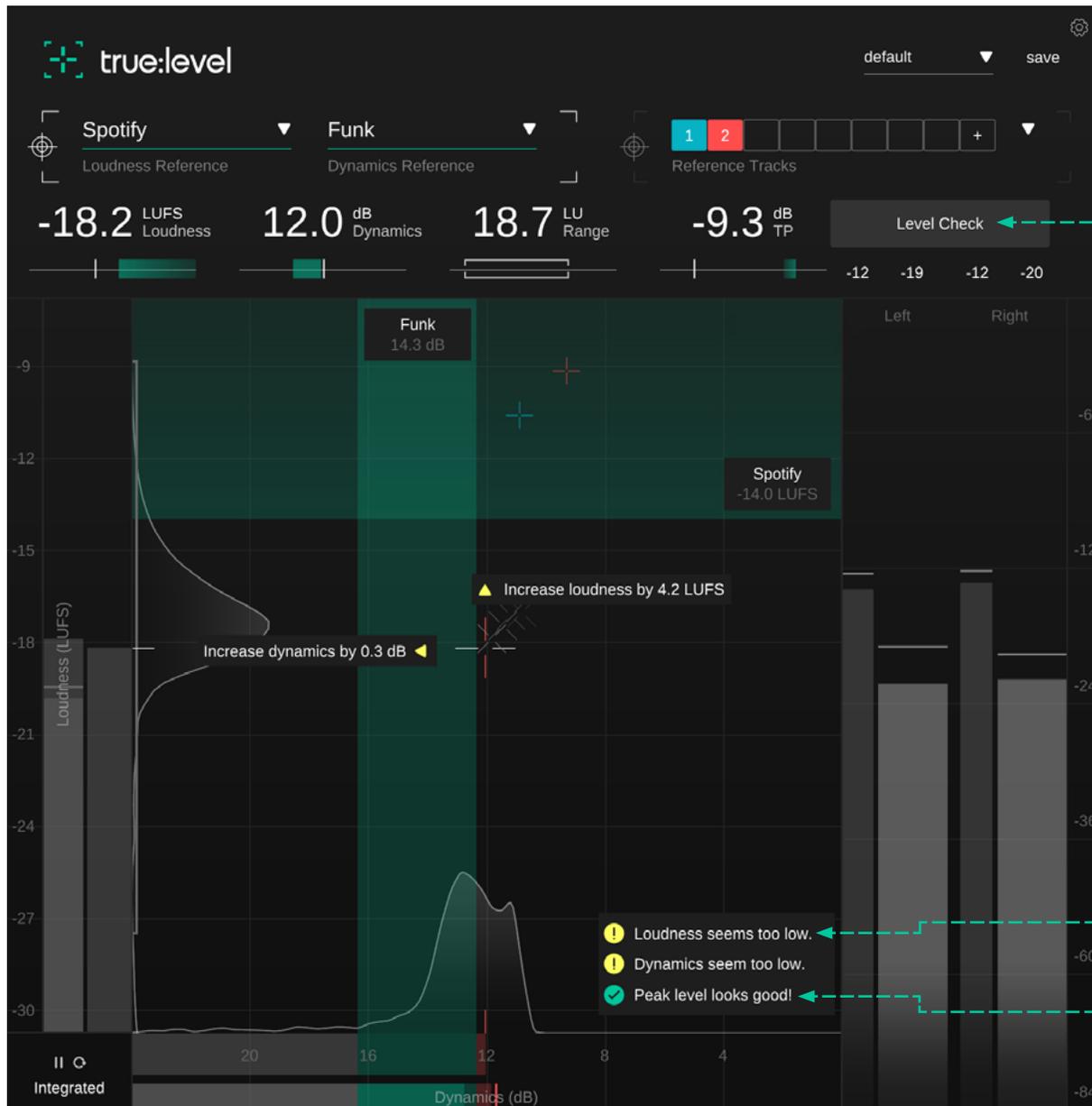
Reference-Track Dropdown

The reference-track dropdown shows the full filename of a reference and allows to activate/deactivate a track or to remove it from the list.



Output Meter

The output meter displays the current true peak (thin meter, left) and RMS value (broad meter, right) for each channel. The small number above the meter indicates a peak-hold value for the respective value.

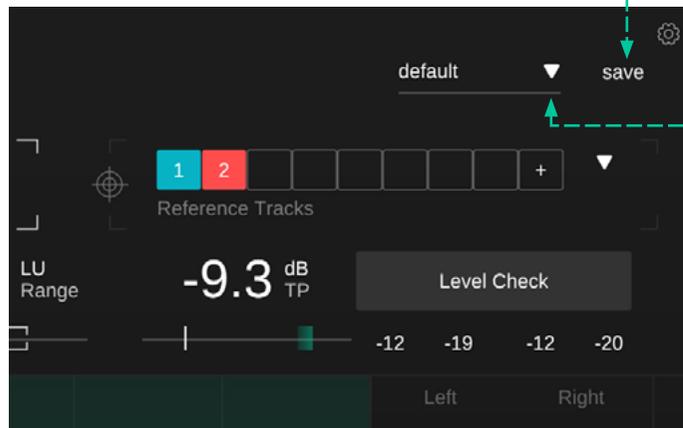


Level Check

The level check feature of true:level analyzes the dynamics and loudness of your signal and compares the values with the chosen loudness and dynamics reference. Based on the analysis, an info box lets you know if the values are on track or if you should probably tweak the mix before publishing it.

- ⚠ There's a potential issue with this parameter that should be fixed.
- ✅ All good!

A preset saves the settings of the plug-in, including all currently loaded reference tracks. This means that a preset can be used to compare multiple different tracks (e.g. of an album) against the same custom references.



To save your preset, click “save” next to the preset drop-down.

To load a saved preset, choose the respective preset name from the dropdown.

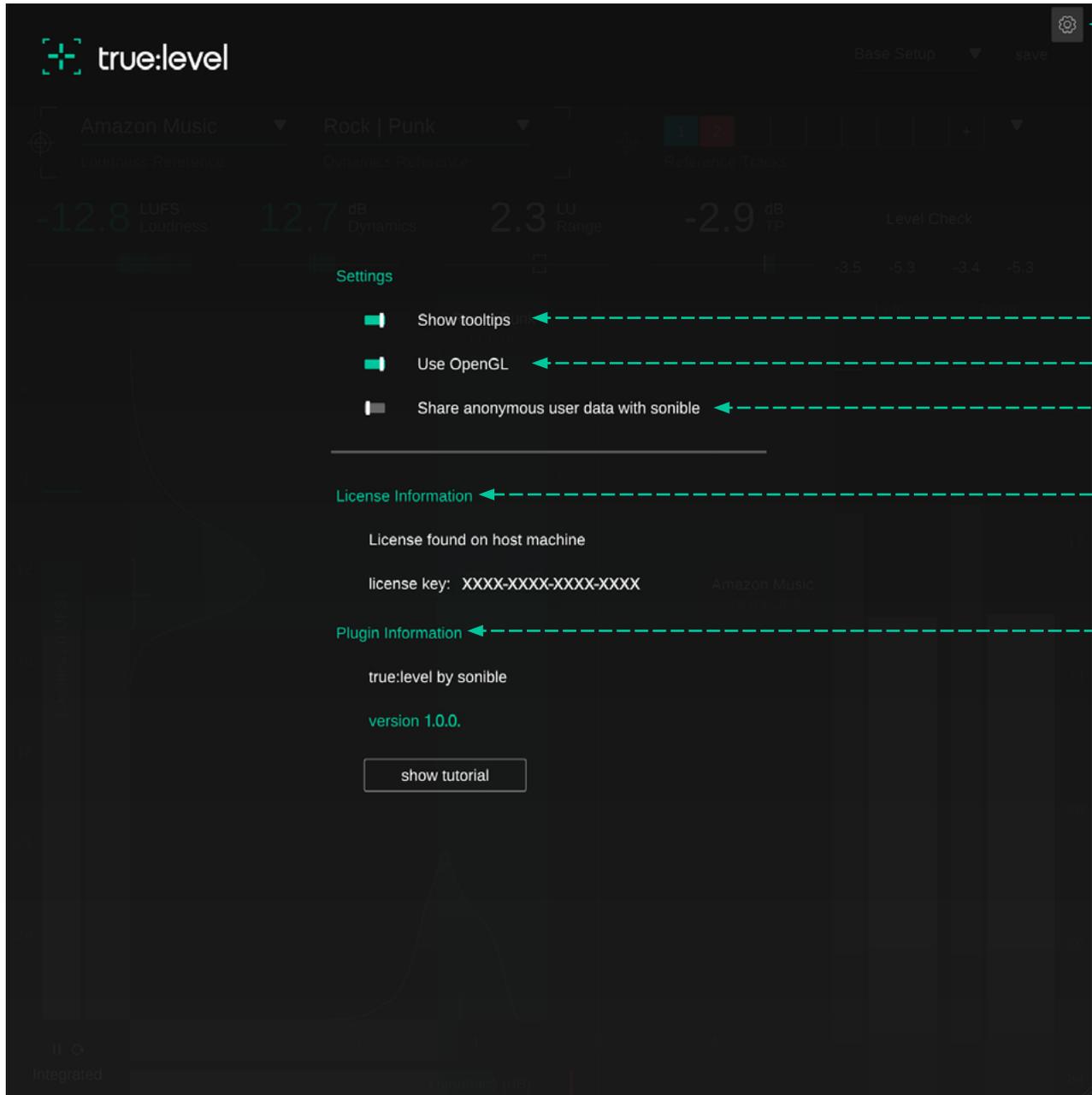
To delete a preset or change its name, go to the preset folder in your local file explorer.

You can easily share your presets among different workstations. All presets are saved with the file extension “.spr” in the following folders:

Preset Folders

OSX: ~/Library/Audio/Presets/sonible/truelevel

Windows: My Documents\Presets\sonible\truelevel



To visit the settings page, click the cogwheel in the upper right corner.

Show Tooltips

Enable/disable tooltips on hover.

Use OpenGL

OpenGL might cause rendering issues on certain computer hardware. Use this option to disable OpenGL.

Share anonymous user data with sonible

Enable to share fully anonymous user data with sonible and help us improve our plug-ins.

License Information

This will display your license state and number (when not licensed via iLok)

Plug-in Information

Here you can find the name and version of your plug-in. Start the welcome tour – a quick overview of the plug-in – features by clicking on “show tutorial”.

Update Notification

When a new version of the plug-in is available, you'll receive a notification here and it's also indicated by a little dot on the cogwheel in the main view of true:level. Click on the green text to download the latest version.

www.sonible.com/truelevel

All specifications are subject to change without notice.

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