

Lead Guitar Track

The lead guitar plays a hook at the beginning of the song and it comes back sparsely at the end of the track in the final chorus. The hook's role is to decorate the very first few bars of the song before the singer comes in. For this particular song, it needs some instrumental music before singing commences. In many commercial tracks, the introduction to the song is an actual chorus and since "Take it Away" doesn't begin using the same format, it needs a hook to introduce the mood of the song.

In your Digital Audio Recording Software you have two tracks of the lead guitar. The first track is a mono recording of an electric guitar playing the hook and the second track is the result of the mono track being sent through Waves *Metaflanger*, Waves *Mondomod* and Waves *L2* Plug-ins. To keep CPU processing to a minimum, we have decided to apply the effects offline and re-import the resulting stereo file to a separate track so that you can compare the differences.

In the song directory "Take it Away" you will find a directory named "Plug-in Presets" and in there are three preset files, one for *Mondomod*, one for *Metaflanger* and one for *L2*.

❖ To re-create the effect you hear on the stereo Lead guitar track, please do the following:

1. Keeping its fader at 0dB, bounce the mono lead guitar track down to a stereo file.
2. Open the stereo file either in your External Wave Editor or to a new stereo track in the arrangement of the song.
3. Open a stereo *Metaflanger* plug-in in slot 1. Do not use "Metaflanger m/s" or "Metaflanger mono". We need to use the stereo versions of this plug-in so that we can achieve a stereo sound. Load the preset named "lead guitar *Metaflanger* preset slot 1"
4. Open a stereo *Mondomod* plug-in in slot 2. Again do not use the m/s or mono versions of this plug-in. Load the preset named "lead guitar *Mondomod* slot 2"
5. Open an *L2* plug-in in slot 3 and load the preset named "lead guitar *L2* slot 3"

The order in which the plug-ins are chained is extremely important if you want to replicate the exact same sound you hear on the stereo lead guitar track.

We've decided that the best way to approach the effects on this guitar is to not hold back and just go for whatever sounds great with the song. Too much "ear candy" can be fatiguing and can quickly become outdated but we've used some serious flanging and stereo effects on a lead guitar so we can get away with slightly exaggerated effects because they only happen for a few seconds. When applying *Metaflanger* to your own tracks, we advise you to experiment with all the settings on these creative effects until you achieve the sound you are after. There are a million different combinations you can create.

Metaflanger - slot 1

In “Take it Away” we have gone for a phased guitar sound and we use a rate of 0.30 to control the speed at which the modulator runs. It passes through the entire spectrum and phases the signal. This effect works great on guitars and synthesizer sounds. Too fast a rate and things begin sounding a little confusing, but if that’s the effect you are after on a particular track then don’t hold back.



For the lead guitar, we need a rate that is moderate enough to ensure the speed of the phaser locks in with the decay of the guitar notes. The general idea is to use faster rates with more complex and faster notes you’ve sequenced and to use slower rates with more legato material. It never hurts to try the opposite as long as it gives you the desired results and it sounds great with the song.

The effects on the lead guitar take the ordinary sounding dry track and make it a lot more interesting and enjoyable. It takes some of the seriousness out of the track and makes it fresher.

Mondomod – slot 2

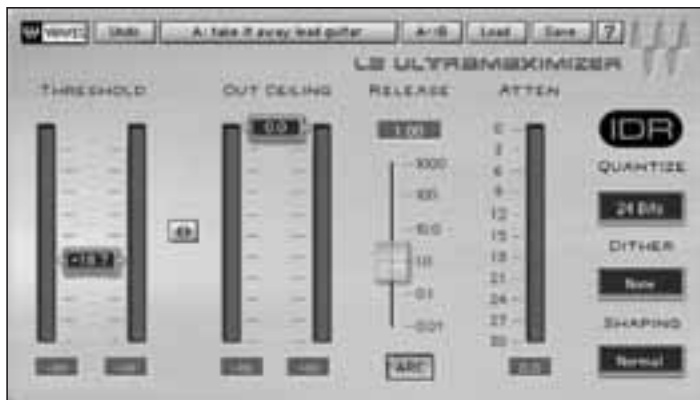
The role of *Mondomod* on the lead guitar is to turn it into a stereo slightly chorused guitar and this is the reason why we’ve used a stereo track on which to do the processing. We want to capture the left and right dimensions that *Mondomod* creates so that we can end up with a stereo guitar that sounds larger than what it does in mono with no processing. The phased signal from *Metaflanger* is fed into the *Mondomod* for some unique stereo treatment. *Mondomod* takes the signal and does some unique rotation from left to right and vice versa. On the top left hand side of the user interface there is a tempo section and



this is where you define exactly how fast the rotations from left and right occur. The faster you set it, the less obvious it becomes that the signal is rotating. We set the tempo to 1.2Hz which is fast enough to make a mono sounding recording appear to have more dimensions than it actually has. The rotation doesn't happen so fast that it sounds like a zipper noise but it's fast enough to really widen the lead guitar track. The FM depth is set to 5, which is a setting that gives a slight chorusing effect. Setting it higher than 5 creates obvious pitch bending effects which would be cool to use in other styles of music where more drastic effects are required. Such styles of music might include Garage, Electronica, Urban and some Techno music. In "Take it Away" we want to keep things simple as it is primarily a groove and vocal song.

Waves L2 – slot 3

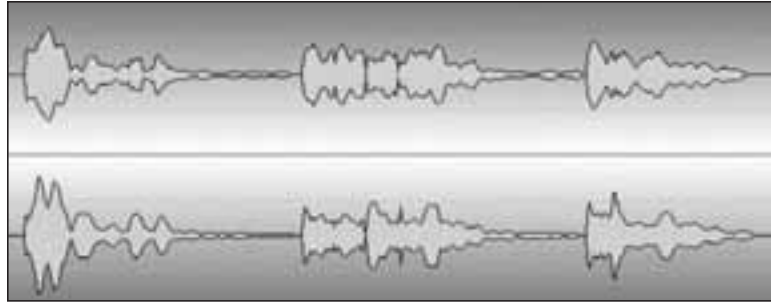
The *L2* limiter in slot 3 is used to control the extra frantic dynamic range that is created after the signal has left the *Metaflanger*. The phasing that occurs within the *Metaflanger* visits many different frequencies and applies resonance to them, which in turn applies louder spikes of volumes at certain frequencies more than others. If an instrument contained most of its frequencies at 900 Hz – 4 kHz then whenever the phaser visits these frequencies and applies resonance to them, it is essentially boosting those frequencies even more than what they already are and other frequencies that might not be so evident such as 400 Hz for example, won't be effected/boosted nearly as much as frequencies between 900 Hz – 4 kHz.



We need to compensate for these bumps and spikes otherwise they will stick out of the music and make it impossible to find a good spot in the mix for the guitar. Flattening the phased guitar with an *L2* ensures that there is more consistency in the overall dynamics of the phased guitar sound. Resonance will still occur in all the correct places but the spikes will be knocked down to exist at roughly the same level as the not so loud parts of the lead guitar. The result is a track that fits in the mix better.

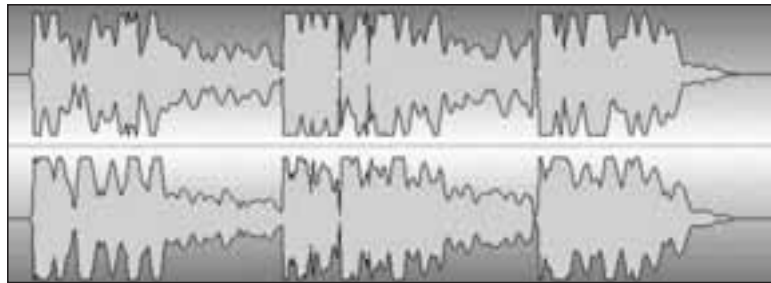
The resulting stereo lead guitar track has been processed with all three plug-ins and the new level for it in the mix has been found using the fader.

Below is the lead guitar processed with *Metaflanger* and *Mondomod* without any *L2* limiting:



You can see how the very first note is leaping out above the rest and at the end of the phrase there is also some inconsistency.

Below is the lead guitar with all three slots activated:



While the results might be visually drastic, the track still contains dynamics and mixes perfectly into the bed of the music the way it is supposed to. The *L2* has not only just limited the peaks of the guitar but it has also worked as a compressor to lift some soft notes out into the audible range of the mix.