



PluginHub user manual

How the app works, what each tab means, and the day-to-day workflows.

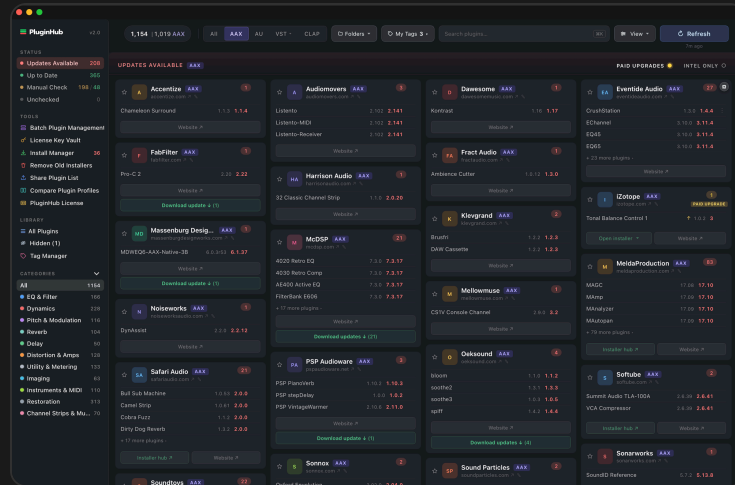
CONTENTS

What PluginHub does The sidebar Status views Paid upgrades Mark a plugin as up to date
Snooze updates Format filter, search & sort The View menu & layouts Keyboard shortcuts
Categories Tags & the Tag Manager All Plugins Intel-only plugins Favorites & pinning
Managing a vendor Plugin row actions Move to Unused Batch Plugin Management
Install Manager Check for Duplicates Remove Old Installers Share Plugin List
Compare Plugin Profiles License Key Vault Plugin folders Custom Install Paths Menu bar
Settings Privacy Troubleshooting

What PluginHub does

PluginHub scans your Mac for installed audio plugins, checks each vendor's website for the latest version, and tells you which ones have updates available. It supports [AAX](#) [AU](#) [VST](#) and [CLAP](#) formats. It is a macOS desktop app: the dashboard opens from the menu bar icon or from the PluginHub icon in the Dock.

Click the menu bar icon — or the PluginHub icon in the dock — to open the dashboard. Click anywhere else to dismiss it. The dashboard does the heavy lifting; the menu bar is a quick launcher with the global update count.



The dashboard: the sidebar down the left with Status, Tools, Library and Categories, vendor cards in the middle, and the format filter, search, View menu and Refresh across the top.

The sidebar

Everything lives down the left side of the window. The sidebar has four sections:

- **Status:** Updates Available, Up to Date, Manual Check and Unchecked. See [Status views](#).
- **Tools:** [Batch Plugin Management](#), [License Key Vault](#), [Install Manager](#), [Remove Old Installers](#), [Share Plugin List](#), [Compare Plugin Profiles](#), and your PluginHub license.

- **Library:** [All Plugins](#), [Hidden](#), and the [Tag Manager](#).
- **Categories:** all eleven groups with a color dot and a count each. See [Categories](#).

Every count stays live as you work. [Install Manager](#) shows in red how many of your pending updates it can download and install for you, so it reads the same way as the Updates Available count above it.

Drag a section heading to put the sections in whatever order suits you. Drag the sidebar's right edge to resize it and its contents scale with the width; double-click that edge to snap it back to the default. Categories starts open and collapses with the chevron on its heading if you would rather keep the list short.

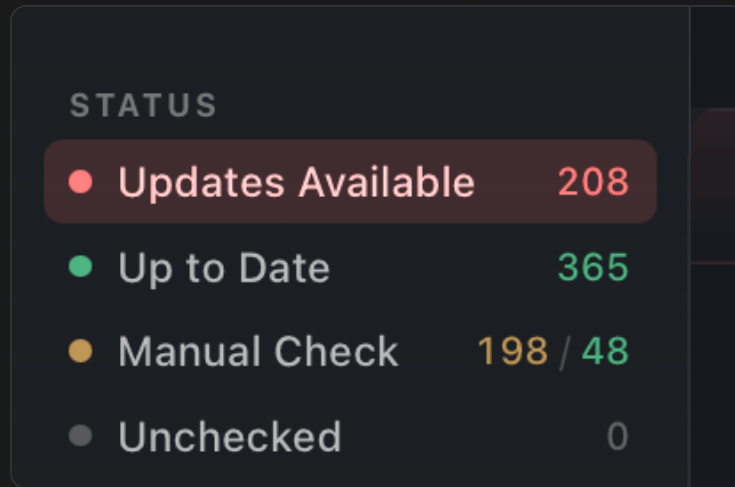
If you prefer the old layout, **View > Navigation** switches back to the top tab row. Nothing is lost either way; only the placement changes.



The sidebar: Status, Tools, Library and Categories, each row carrying its own count.

Status views

The **Status** section at the top of the [sidebar](#) splits your installed catalog four ways, each row carrying its own count. A fifth *Pinned* row appears first when you have starred at least one vendor or plugin:



The Status section of the sidebar: Updates Available, Up to Date, Manual Check and Unchecked, each with its own count.

Pinned *(not shown)*

Vendors and plugins you've starred. Comes first in the Status list only when you've actually pinned something. The count is "pinned plugins with updates / pinned plugins on the current version" — gold-colored to stand out from the green / red of the other rows. Pinning is the quickest way to keep an eye on your most-used plugins without scrolling through everything.

Updates Available

Vendors with at least one plugin where your installed version is older than what the vendor's site currently lists. Click any vendor card to expand it; click a plugin row to see the latest version and a download link. The number badge in red shows how many plugins (not vendors) have updates pending.

Up to date

Everything you have that PluginHub successfully checked and confirmed is current. Green badge. The bulk of a normal collection lives here.

Manual Check

Vendors that require a manual check. Either their site doesn't publish version data PluginHub can read, or they deliver updates through their own installer app. Click **Visit website** or **Open installer** on any card to check

manually. We're working to move vendors from this tab into active checker status.

After you've checked a plugin, right-click it (or open its  menu) and choose **Mark up to date**. The row turns green so you can see at a glance what's already handled. If a newer version gets installed later, the row turns blue and the plugin appears in a notice at the top of the tab so you can re-check and re-mark it. **Reset marked (N)** in the section header reviews and clears every mark in one pass. (Live-checked rows on *Updates Available* have their own version of this — see [Mark a plugin as up to date](#).)

The blue **Export Marked Dates** button (it appears once at least one plugin is marked) opens a review of every mark, grouped by vendor with the oldest checks first, so the top of the list is your re-check queue. Each vendor header shows how long ago its oldest check was, and each entry shows the version you marked, the date, and a *newer installed* flag when the plugin has changed since. Export the whole list as a **PDF**, copy it for **Google Sheets**, or copy it as **CSV**.

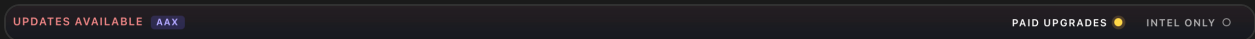
Unchecked

Plugins from vendors PluginHub doesn't have a checker for yet. PluginHub still shows them — installed version, format badges, vendor avatar — and gives you a "Visit website" link so you can manually check for updates. We add new vendors continuously.

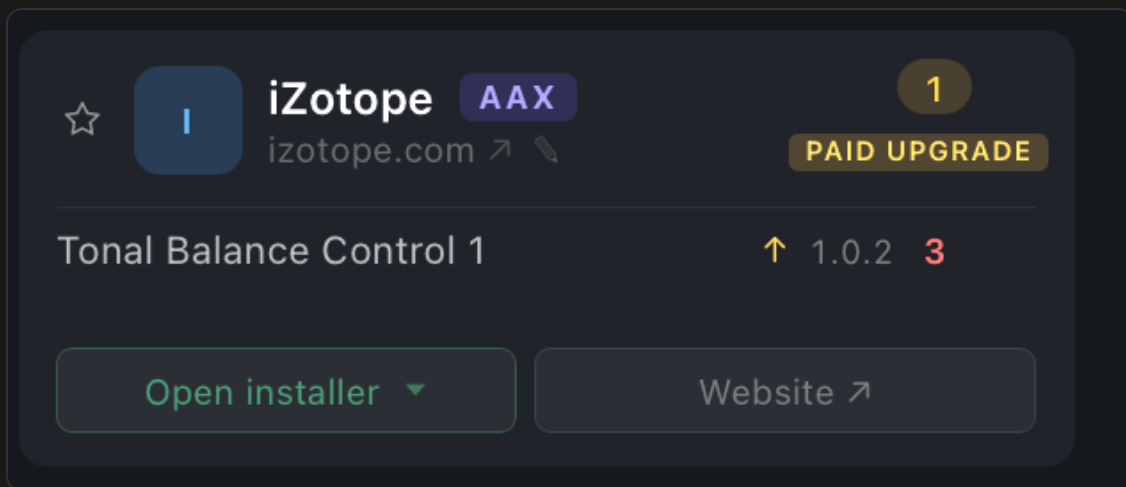
Paid upgrades

Some "updates" are actually paid major-version upgrades — FabFilter Pro-Q 3 → Pro-Q 4, iZotope Ozone 10 → Ozone 11, Waves V14 → V16. PluginHub flags these so they don't get mixed in with free updates: any plugin row whose new version is a paid jump gets an amber **PAID UPGRADE** badge, and a vendor card whose *entire* upgrade list is paid gets a single card-level badge instead of repeating it per row.

The **Paid Upgrades** toggle on the right side of the *Updates Available* section header controls whether those paid items are listed at all:



The Paid Upgrades and Intel Only switches on the right of the Updates Available section header. Paid Upgrades is on here, Intel Only is off.



A vendor card whose whole upgrade list is paid carries one card-level badge instead of repeating it on every row.

- **Toggle ON** (default) — paid upgrades are shown alongside free updates, just visually tagged.
- **Toggle OFF** — paid upgrades are hidden from the dashboard and removed from the global update count. A small "*N paid upgrade(s) hidden*" line replaces them, so you always know they exist; the menu bar number drops to free updates only.

Useful when you've already decided not to buy a particular major version and don't want it nagging you in the count every day. The toggle only appears when you actually have at least one paid upgrade pending — no clutter when there's nothing to hide.

Mark a plugin as up to date

Sometimes PluginHub is technically right that a newer version exists, but the row shouldn't be on your to-do list. Two common cases: you've decided you're happy on your current version, or a vendor's installer stamps a slightly different version number inside the plugin file than the release it came from, so the row can never clear on its own no matter how many times you reinstall.

Right-click any plugin row on *Updates Available*, or click the `:` button at the end of the row, and choose **Mark as up to date**. The plugin moves to the *Up to date* tab immediately — the tab counts and the menu bar number follow — and its row carries a *Marked up to date* note showing the date and the version the checker reported when you marked it. This works everywhere update rows appear, including the All Plugins view.

The mark is version-aware, not permanent. The moment the vendor ships a version *newer* than the one you marked, the plugin returns to *Updates Available* on its own — you'll never miss a real release because of an old mark. To undo a mark early, open the same menu and choose **Unmark up to date**.

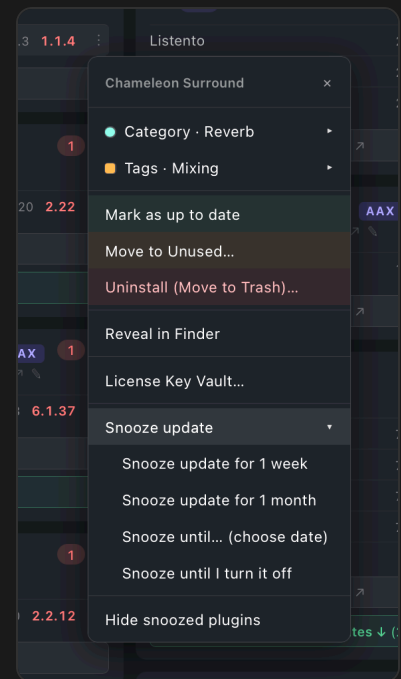
Marking and snoozing are two answers to the same nag, so they never stack: marking a plugin clears any snooze on it, and snoozing a plugin clears its mark. Manual-check vendors have their own version of marking (covered under [Dashboard tabs → Manual Check](#)) that records the date you last checked, so the two features stay consistent wherever a row lives.

Snooze updates

Sometimes an update is real but not for right now: you're mid-project and don't want to change anything, or you'd rather wait for a fresh release to settle. Right-click any plugin row on *Updates Available*, or click the  button at the end of the row, and pick a snooze:

- **Snooze update for 1 week / 1 month:** timed snoozes that wake on their own.
- **Snooze until... (choose date):** pick the exact date the update comes back.
- **Snooze until I turn it off:** indefinite, for updates you've decided to sit out.

A snoozed update drops out of the *Updates Available* count and the menu bar number, so it stops nagging you. The row itself stays in its vendor card, greyed out with a snooze label, so nothing silently disappears. To wake one early, open the same menu and choose **Stop snoozing (show update)**.



The plugin row menu on an Updates Available row: four snooze durations above the standard row actions.

Showing or hiding snoozed plugins

If you'd rather snoozed rows disappear from the dashboard entirely instead of sitting there dimmed, turn off **Show Snoozed Plugins**. The setting lives in the menu bar under **Settings**, and the same toggle appears in every plugin row's right-click /  menu and on the snooze note itself — flip it anywhere and every view updates at once.

With it off, snoozed rows are removed from their vendor cards, and any card that's hiding some shows a "*No snoozed plugins hidden*" line in its footer, so you always know they exist and nothing is ever silently gone. Turn the setting back on to bring the dimmed rows back exactly as they were.

One housekeeping note: snoozing and [marking a plugin as up to date](#) never stack — applying one clears the other, so a plugin is always in exactly one state.

Format filter, search & sort

The segmented control in the top bar, next to the plugin count, filters every view by format: **All** **AAX** **AU** **VST** **CLAP**. The selection is sticky — switch to AU once and the dashboard stays AU-filtered until you change it.



The top bar, left to right: the plugin count, the format segments, the Folders and My Tags chips, search, the View menu, and Refresh.

Next to the format segments sit two dropdowns: **Folders**, which opens the plugin folders on disk (see [Plugin folders](#)), and **My Tags**, which filters the dashboard by your own tags (see [Tags & the Tag Manager](#)). Search takes the rest of the bar, and matches vendor names, plugin names and categories.

The sort dropdown lives in the **View** menu (see [The View menu & layouts](#)). Three modes:

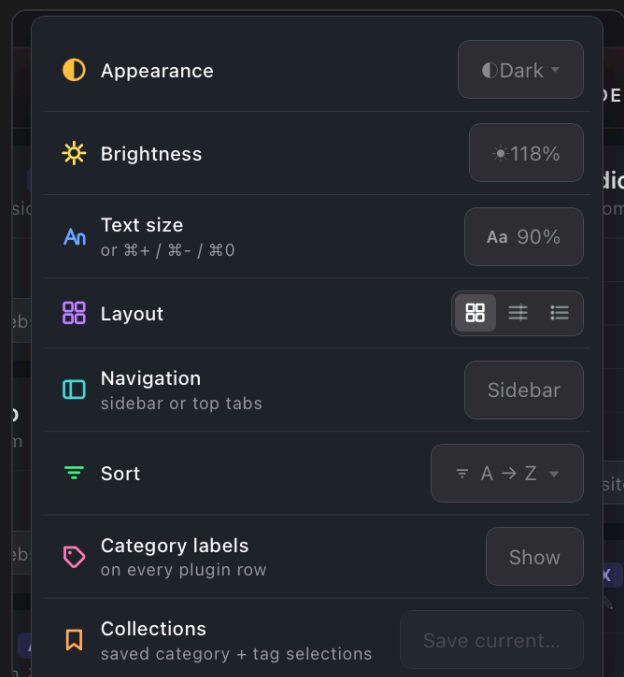
- **A → Z** — alphabetical by vendor name. The default.
- **Newest install / update first** — most-recently-touched vendors at the top. Catches both fresh installs and updates that overwrite the bundle.
- **Oldest first** — vendors you haven't touched in the longest time. Useful for spotting stale installs.

Sort selection persists across launches.

The View menu & layouts

The **View** menu in the top bar collects every display setting in one place.

- **Appearance**: Light, Dark or System, plus the colorblind-friendly status colors toggle.
- **Brightness**: dim or brighten the whole dashboard for your room.
- **Text size**: preset sizes, or $\mathbb{A}+$ / $\mathbb{A}-$ / $\mathbb{A}0$ from anywhere.
- **Layout**: cards, list or ledger, covered below.
- **Navigation**: the [sidebar](#) or the old top tab row.
- **Sort**: the vendor sort modes covered in [Format filter, search & sort](#).
- **Category labels**: show or hide the category name on every plugin row.
- **Collections**: save the category and tag selection you are looking at, and bring it back later in one click.



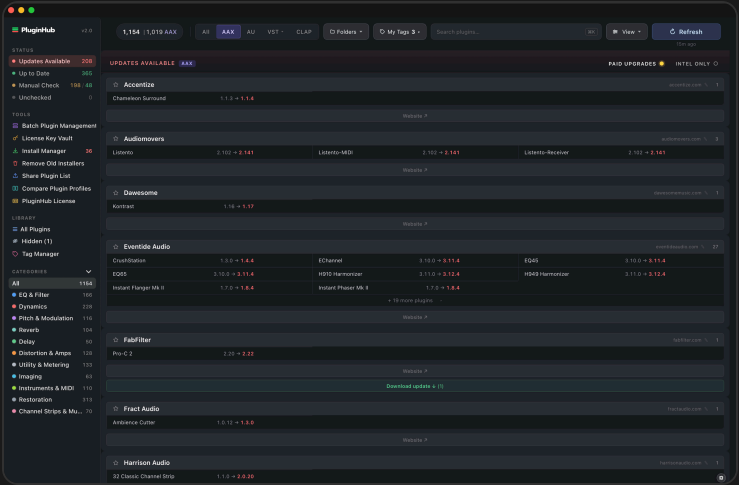
The View menu: appearance, brightness, text size, layout, navigation, sort, category labels and collections.

Cards

The default. One card per vendor, each only as tall as its own plugin list, laid out in columns so more fits on screen without shrinking the text.

List

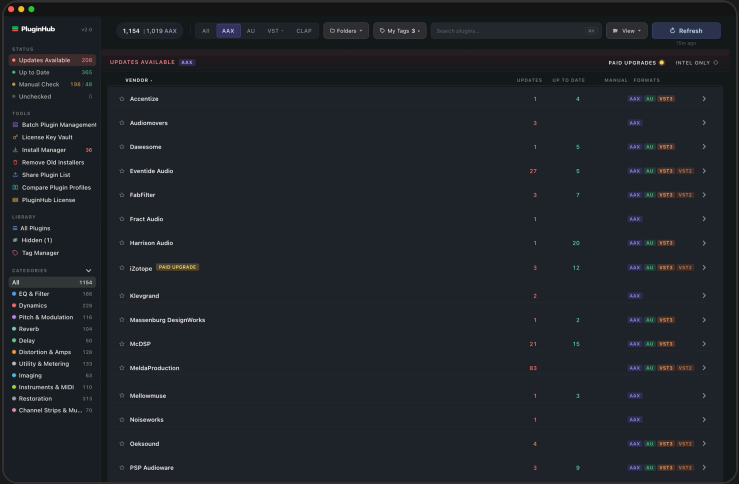
Vendors stacked full width with several plugins to a line. Better when you want to read a lot of version numbers at once.



List layout: full-width vendor blocks, several plugins to a line.

Ledger

One line per vendor with the numbers in columns: updates, up to date, manual check, and the formats you own from them. Click any column heading to sort by it, and click a vendor to open its plugins underneath.



Ledger layout: one row per vendor, counts in columns, sortable by any heading.

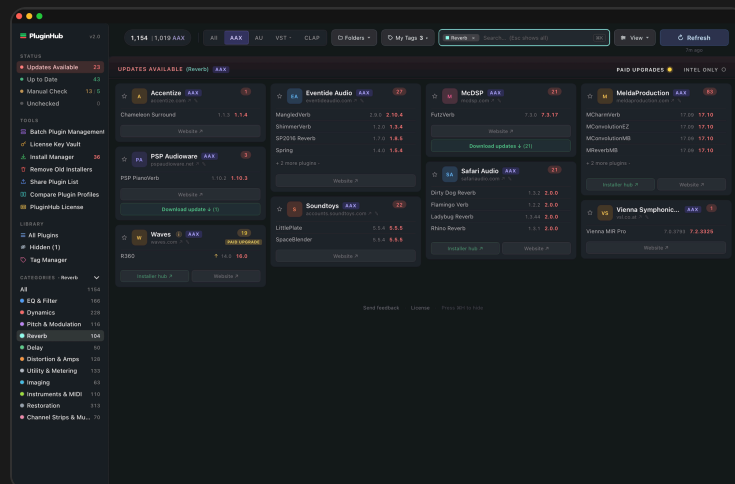
Keyboard shortcuts

The dashboard has a handful worth learning: **⌘K** jumps into search from anywhere (Return keeps your results and leaves the field, Escape clears the search), the **~** key cycles the format filter the way it switches modes in Pro Tools (All, AAX, AU, VST, VST3, VST2, and CLAP when you have CLAP plugins), **Tab** moves between the status views (**⇧Tab** goes backwards), and **⌘R** runs a refresh.

If you switch to the old layout under **View > Navigation**, the sidebar is replaced by the top tab row and a **Tools** button, which opens a window listing every tool on one carousel. The sidebar's Tools section replaces it, so in the default layout there is no Tools button and no Tools window. Nothing is missing either way: every tool is also in the [menu bar](#).

Categories

Every plugin you own is sorted into one of eleven groups: EQ & Filter, Dynamics, Pitch & Modulation, Reverb, Delay, Distortion & Amps, Utility & Metering, Imaging, Instruments & MIDI, Restoration, and Channel Strips & More. The **Categories** section of the [sidebar](#) lists all eleven with a color dot and a count.



Reverb selected: the sidebar row lights up, a chip appears next to the search field, and every view narrows to reverbs until you clear it.

Click a category to filter the whole dashboard. Shift-click to add another category to the selection, and click a selected category again to go back to All. The chip that appears next to the search field clears the filter from its X. The filter carries through to the [All Plugins](#) view and to [Batch Plugin Management](#), so you can act on a whole category at once.

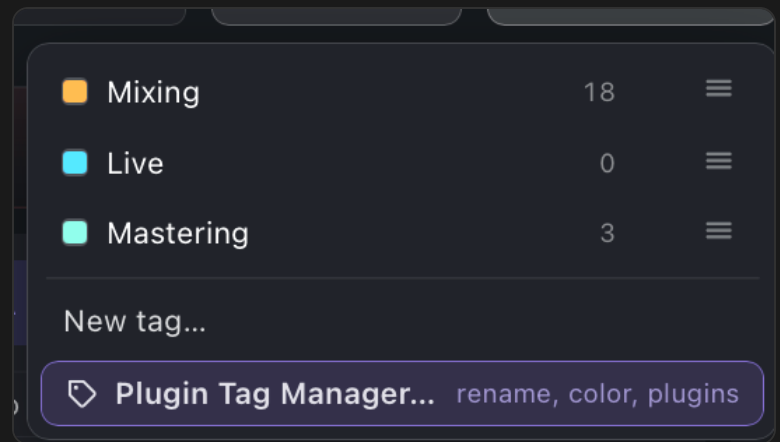
If you disagree with where a plugin landed, open its **:** menu and pick a different category. The change sticks on your Mac. Each category's color comes from the dot beside its name in the sidebar; click the dot to change it.

View > Category labels puts the category name on every plugin row, and **View > Collections** saves a category and tag selection you use often.

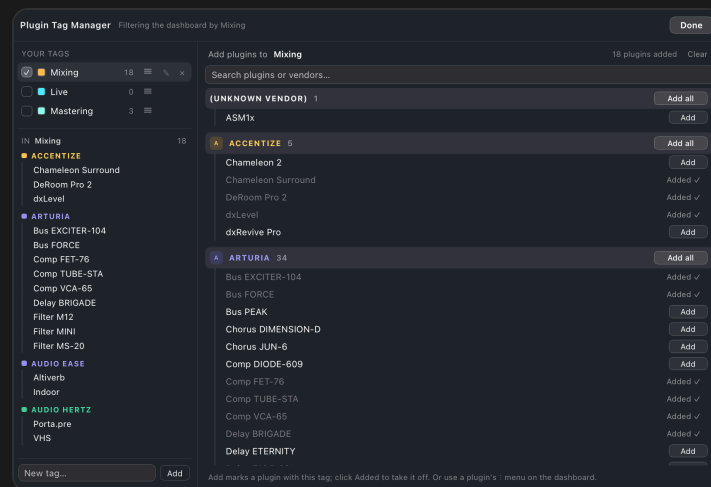
Tags & the Tag Manager

Categories are ours. Tags are yours: any group of plugins you want to keep together, from any vendors, in any combination. A mix session, a mastering chain, a client's rig, the twelve things you actually reach for.

My Tags in the top bar filters the dashboard the way a category does, and shift-click combines tags the same way. The same dropdown creates a new tag and opens the Tag Manager.



The My Tags dropdown filters the dashboard by one of your own tags.

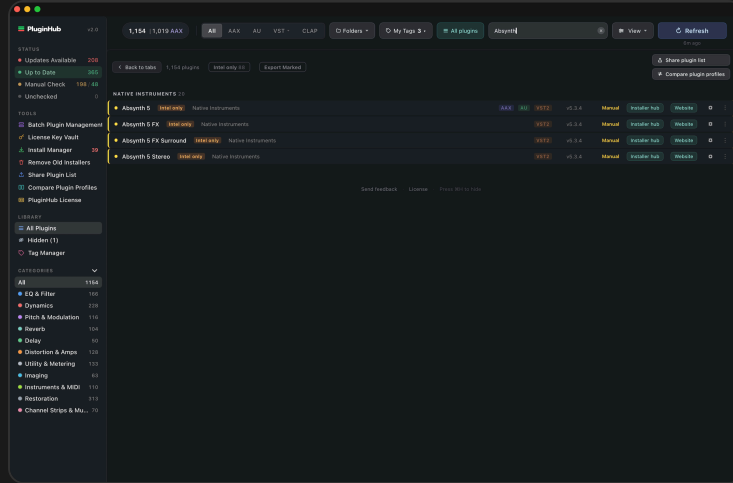


The Tag Manager: your tags on the left, the plugin picker on the right. Check a tag to see and edit what is in it.

The **Tag Manager**, in the sidebar under Library, is where tags get built. Check a tag on the left and the right side fills with every plugin you own, grouped by vendor, the ones already tagged marked as added. Add plugins one at a time or a whole vendor at once with **Add all**. Tags can be renamed, recolored, and dragged into the order you want them in.

All Plugins

All Plugins, in the sidebar under Library, drops the vendor cards and lists every plugin on your Mac in one flat table: name, vendor, formats, installed version, status, and the same row actions you get everywhere else.



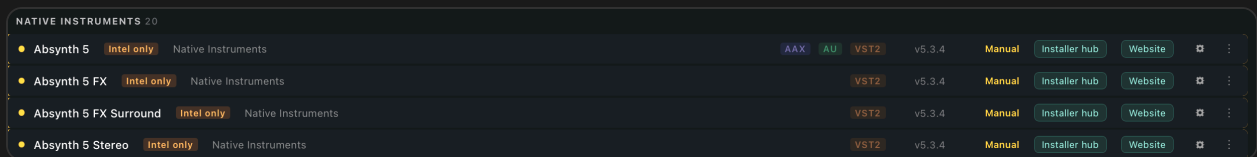
The All Plugins view: every plugin in one list, with search, the Intel only chip, and Export Marked across the top.

Everything that works on the dashboard works here: the format filter, search, [categories](#), [tags](#), favorites, and the [⋮](#) menu. The chips across the top add an [Intel only](#) filter and **Export Marked**, and **Back to tabs** returns you to the vendor cards.

Intel-only plugins

Apple is retiring Rosetta 2, the translation layer that lets plugins built only for Intel processors run on Apple Silicon Macs. Starting in macOS 28, Intel-only plugins stop working. On an Apple Silicon Mac, PluginHub checks every installed plugin for a native Apple Silicon build and flags the ones that don't have one:

- An **Intel only** badge appears on affected plugin rows across the dashboard. The **Intel Only** switch in the section header shows or hides the badges.
- A heads-up banner counts your at-risk plugins and names a few of them. Dismiss it with the **x**, or click **View in All Plugins** to jump to the full list.
- In the *All Plugins* view, the gold **Intel only** chip in the header filters the list down to just the at-risk set.



The All Plugins view filtered by the Intel only chip: every installed plugin without an Apple Silicon build.

When a plugin is flagged, check the vendor's site for a universal or Apple Silicon build: many products added native support in later versions, and updating clears the badge. For plugins that were never updated, it's worth planning a replacement before you move to macOS 28. Detection runs only on Apple Silicon Macs; on an Intel Mac there's nothing to flag, so you won't see badges or the banner.

Favorites & pinning

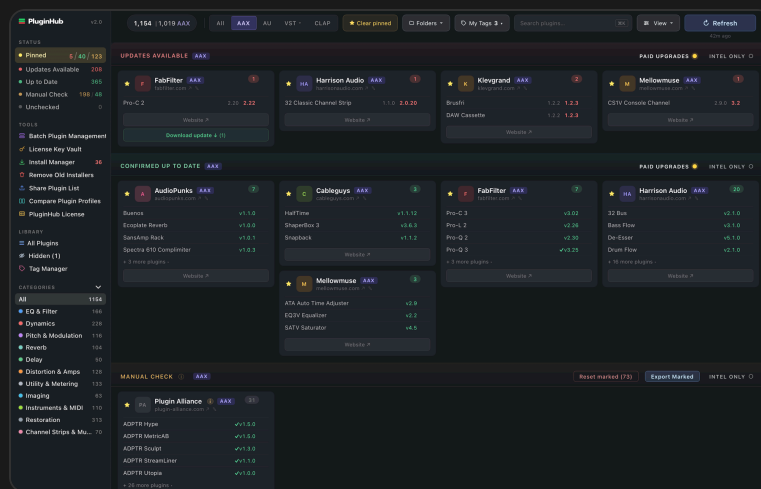
Click the star on any vendor card to pin the whole vendor. Click the star next to an individual plugin name to pin just that plugin. Pinned items get their own **Pinned** row at the top of the sidebar's Status list, sorted with vendors first then loose plugins.

The "Clear pinned" chip in the top bar, visible only when something is pinned, empties the entire favorites set in one click.

STATUS

- Pinned 5 / 40 / 84
- Updates Available 208
- Up to Date 365
- Manual Check 198 / 48
- Unchecked 0

The Pinned row joins the Status list once you have starred something.



The Pinned view keeps your starred vendors and plugins grouped by status, so a short list of the things you actually use reads the same way the full dashboard does.

Managing a vendor

Every vendor card has a gear icon in its upper-right corner. Click it to open the **Manage** panel for that vendor. The panel shows the vendor name and how many of its plugins you have installed, then offers four actions:

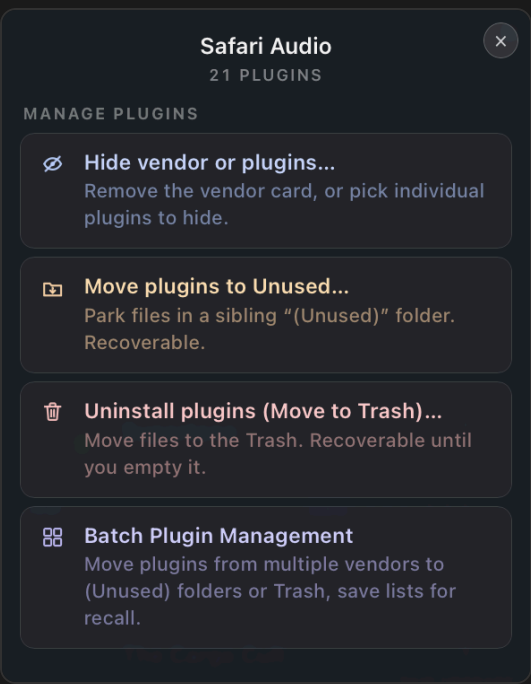
- **Hide vendor** — removes the vendor card from the dashboard and drops it from the global update count. Nothing on disk changes.
- **Choose plugins to hide...** — hide individual plugins from this vendor instead of the whole card.
- **Move plugins to Unused...** — park the vendor's plugin files in a sibling (*Unused*) folder so your DAW stops scanning them, while the files stay on disk. Recoverable. See [Move to Unused](#) below.
- **Uninstall plugins (Move to Trash)...** — send the vendor's plugin files to the macOS Trash. Recoverable until you empty it. See [Plugin row actions](#) for the per-plugin version.

Universal Audio users: UA Connect installs every UAD plugin on your drive, owned or not, and PluginHub never reads your license information. Both Universal Audio cards carry an amber line that opens **Which UAD plugins do I own?** Choose **Mark what I own...** and follow the three steps: sign in to your UA account, open your full product

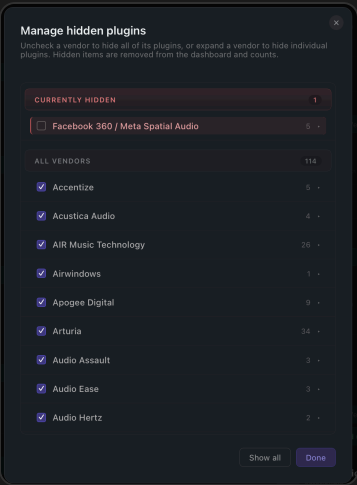
list, then copy it and paste it into PluginHub. PluginHub marks what you own, lists anything it couldn't match, and offers to hide, move to (Unused) or uninstall the rest in one go. Hidden plugins stay hidden through UA updates. Plugins you moved or uninstalled come back with each UA update, and PluginHub then offers to move or uninstall them again.

The two hide actions are tinted blue (they only change what you see), Move to Unused is amber (recoverable), and Uninstall is red (it touches the Trash). Hidden vendors and plugins are tracked under the **Hidden (N)** chip in the header. When you hide a vendor the chip briefly lights up so you can see where it went, and the card stays in place for a few seconds with an **Undo** button before it disappears.

The panel also carries a **Batch Plugin Management** row — a shortcut into the [multi-vendor batch tool](#) for moving or uninstalling plugins across many vendors at once.



The vendor Manage panel, opened from the gear icon on any vendor card. Four actions, grouped by how much each one changes on disk.



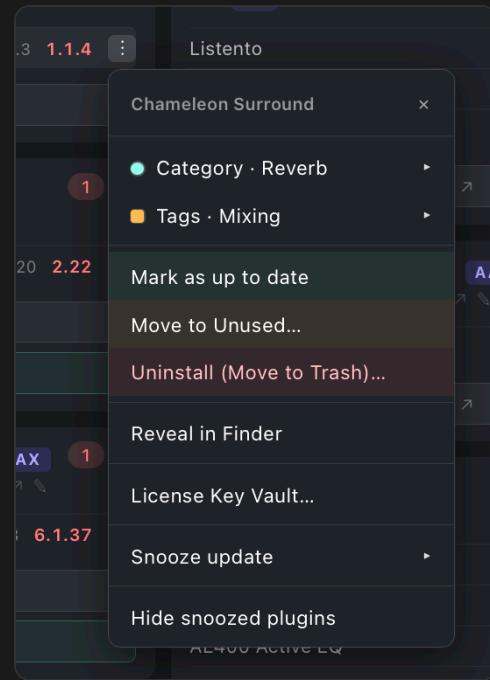
The Hidden chip in the header showing a count, and the modal listing every hidden vendor / plugin with one-click unhide.

Plugin row actions

Every plugin row, on every tab, has its own actions. Right-click the row or click the  button at the end of it to open a menu with three choices:

- **Reveal in Finder** — opens a Finder window with the plugin's file selected. With a format filter active (AAX, AU, VST3, and so on) it reveals just that format's file. In *All* view, if the plugin is installed in more than one format, PluginHub tells you how many Finder windows it will open and asks first.
- **Move to Unused...** — parks just this plugin in the sibling (*Unused*) folder, using the same chooser as the vendor-level action with this plugin pre-selected.
- **Uninstall (Move to Trash)...** — opens a confirmation listing every installed file for this plugin (AAX, AU, VST3, VST2), each with its own checkbox plus an **All formats** master toggle. Tick what you want gone and confirm. Files go to the macOS Trash, recoverable until you empty it. PluginHub never permanently deletes anything.

For plugins installed system-wide (in `/Library/...`), the Move and Uninstall actions ask for your macOS password once, then handle the whole batch.



Right-click any plugin row, or click the  button at the end of the row, for per-plugin actions.

Waves note: Waves plugins run through a shared WaveShell rather than individual plugin files, so per-plugin uninstall isn't available for them. Reveal in Finder still shows where the WaveShell lives; use Waves Central to remove individual Waves plugins.

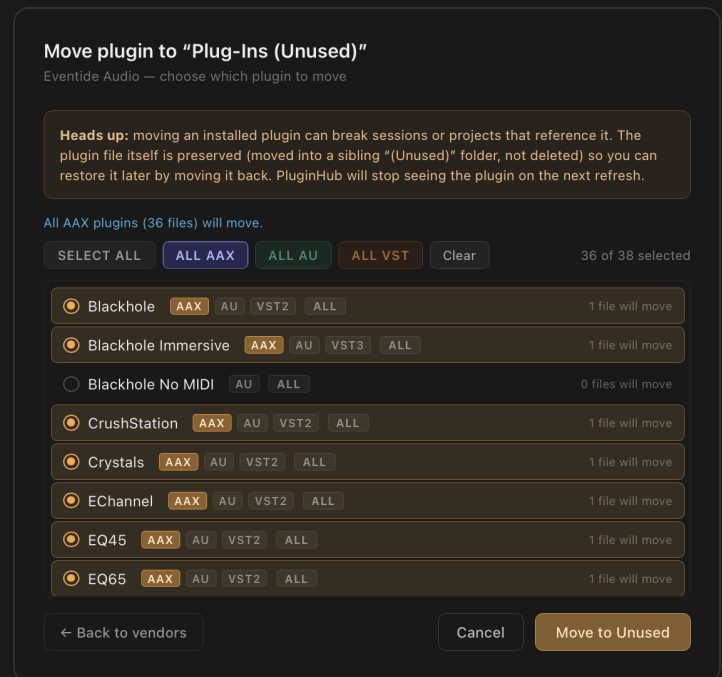
Move to Unused

Sometimes you want to *physically* remove plugins from your DAW's scan path without uninstalling them. Open a vendor's gear menu and choose **Move plugins to Unused...**, or use **Move to Unused...** on an individual plugin row. PluginHub moves the bundle files into a sibling **(Unused)** folder next to your active plugin folder — your DAW stops seeing the plugin on next rescan, but the files are preserved.

The Move modal lists every plugin from the chosen vendor with checkboxes per format. Pill row at the top for bulk selection:

- **SELECT ALL** — every plugin × every on-disk format.
- **ALL AAX / AU / VST / CLAP** — every plugin matching that format. Each pill is colored in its format's tint and dimmed when it isn't the current selection. Replace-not-additive — clicking *ALL AU* after *ALL AAX* swaps the selection rather than adding. Hold **shift** to add instead: shift-click stacks a second format onto the selection, and shift-clicking a fully-selected format removes it.
- **Clear** — wipes the selection.

Confirm requires admin authentication for plugins in **/Library/...** (system-wide installs) — single password prompt for the whole batch, not one per plugin.



Move-to-Unused modal — pill row at top, per-plugin rows with format checkboxes, status text below.

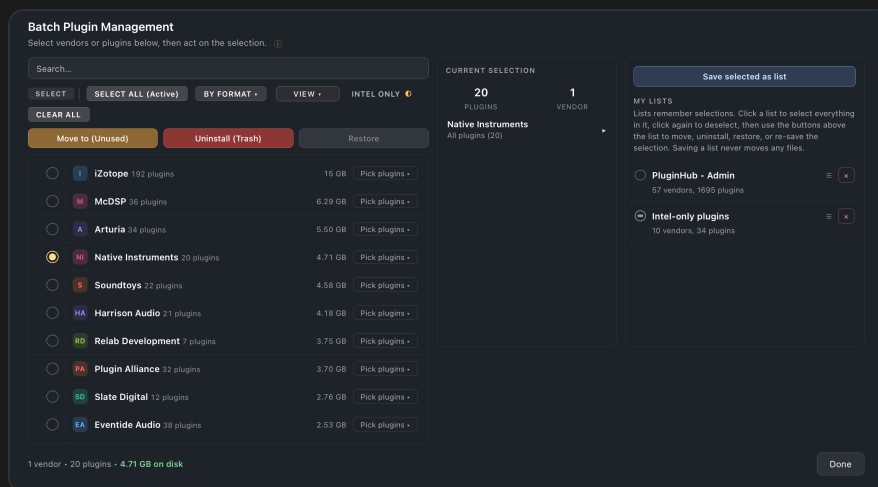
Heads up: moving an actively-loaded plugin can cause "missing plugin" errors when you reopen DAW sessions that reference it. PluginHub warns you before moving anything from an active folder, but if you're mid-mix, finish the session first.

Offload folder (optional). To send every plugin you move to *(Unused)* to one place, on another drive for example, choose an offload folder at the top of [Custom Install Paths](#). Inside it, each plugin lands in a folder named after the one it came from (*VST3 (Unused)*, *Components (Unused)*, *Plug-Ins (Unused)* for AAX, a custom folder by its own name), with any vendor subfolder kept, so *Restore* still puts it back exactly where it came from, and PluginHub never mixes up plugins from different folders. If that drive isn't connected when you move something, PluginHub says so and moves nothing rather than parking it on your internal disk. Clearing the offload folder goes back to parking plugins beside their own folder; whatever is already in the old offload folder stays there and *Restore* keeps finding it.

Restore

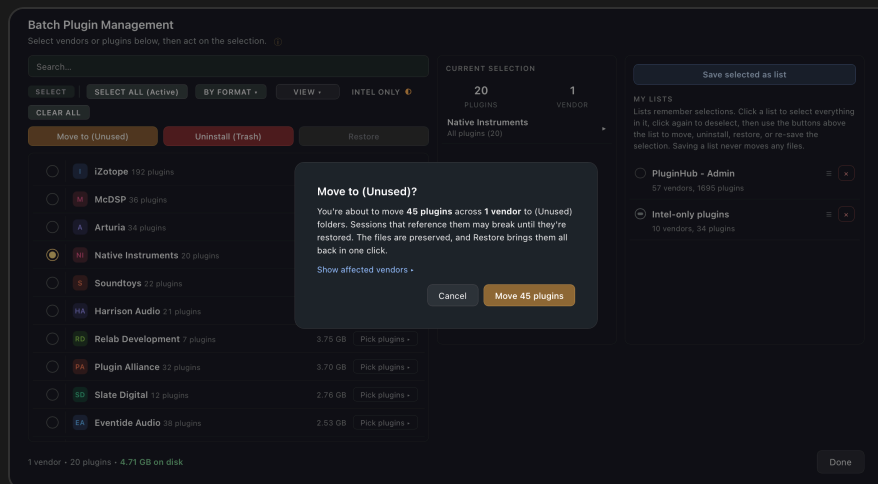
After a move, a temporary "↔ Recently moved" chip appears in the header for 20 seconds — click **Restore all** or any individual **Restore** to put plugins back. After the chip fades, the persistent path is **Plugin folders → Restore plugins from "(Unused)"**, which scans every **(Unused)** folder on disk and lets you pick what to bring back. Same pill row for bulk selection, and one row per plugin with all of its format chips — no separate tabs per format.

Batch Plugin Management



The Batch Plugin Management window — action buttons on top, vendor picker on the left, current selection in the middle, saved lists on the right.

The per-vendor Move and Uninstall windows work one vendor at a time. **Batch Plugin Management** works across your whole collection at once: pick plugins from as many vendors as you like, then move them to their (*Unused*) folders, uninstall them, or restore them in one pass. Great for studios where different engineers use different plugin sets, or for slimming your DAW down to a core set before a session. Open it from the [sidebar](#) under Tools, or from the menu bar: **Tools ► Batch Plugin Management...**



Every batch action confirms first, naming exactly how many plugins across how many vendors it is about to touch.

Build a selection on the left, watch it take shape in the middle, then act on it with the buttons at the top:

- **Picking** — click a vendor row to select the whole vendor, or **Pick plugins ►** to choose individual plugins and formats. Format pills select everything in one format; **shift-click** stacks a second format on top, and clicking a fully-selected format again clears it.
- **SELECT ALL (Active) / SELECT ALL (Inactive)** — grab every active plugin, or everything already parked in (*Unused*), in one click. The search box finds any vendor or plugin, including ones already in (*Unused*), and the **Show** filter narrows the view to active or inactive plugins only.
- **Move to (Unused) / Uninstall (Trash) / Restore** — every action shows a summary of exactly which vendors and how many files are affected before anything happens, and asks for your macOS password once for the whole

batch. Anything moved to *(Unused)* can be restored to its main folders in one click.

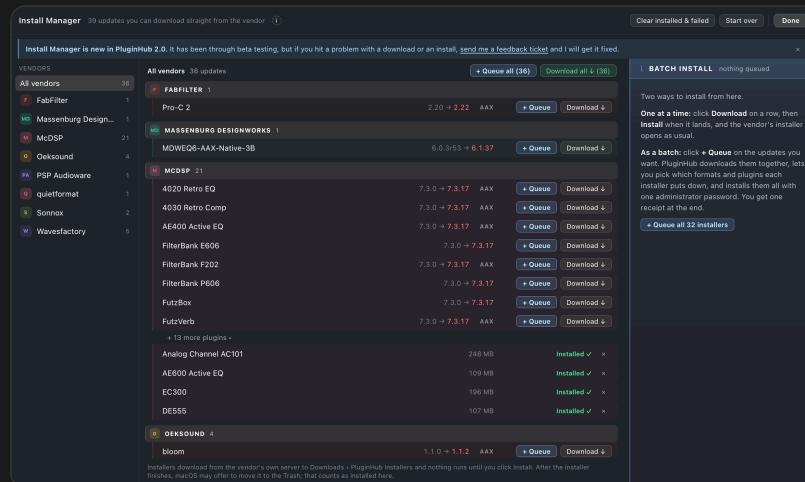
Save selected as list keeps the current selection for later. Click a list to select everything in it, then move, uninstall, restore, or re-save. A list whose plugins have been moved shows under **MOVED TO (UNUSED)** — check it and hit **Restore** to bring the whole set back. Lists can be renamed (double-click the name), reordered by dragging the ≡ handle, and updated in one click after you change a selection. Deleting a list never touches any files.

Big batches show a progress window from start to finish: a live bar tracks actual file movement, including the stretch that needs your password, and a clear note covers the refresh that follows while the dashboard repopulates. If anything can't be moved, PluginHub says so plainly, and your files stay safe in *(Unused)* until a restore brings them home.

Heads up: the same DAW-session caution as any move applies — plugins moved to *(Unused)* or the Trash disappear from your DAW on its next rescan. Finish open sessions first.

Install Manager

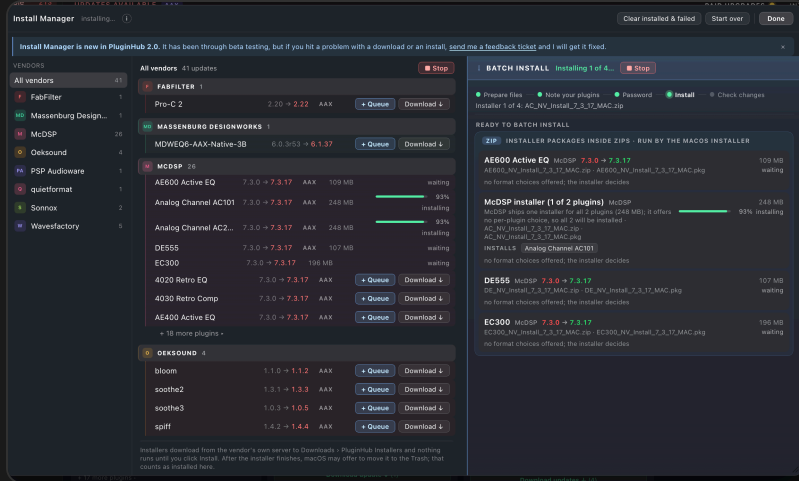
Install Manager downloads an update straight from the vendor's own server and installs it for you, one at a time or several together. It sits in the sidebar under Tools with a count of how many of your pending updates it can handle.



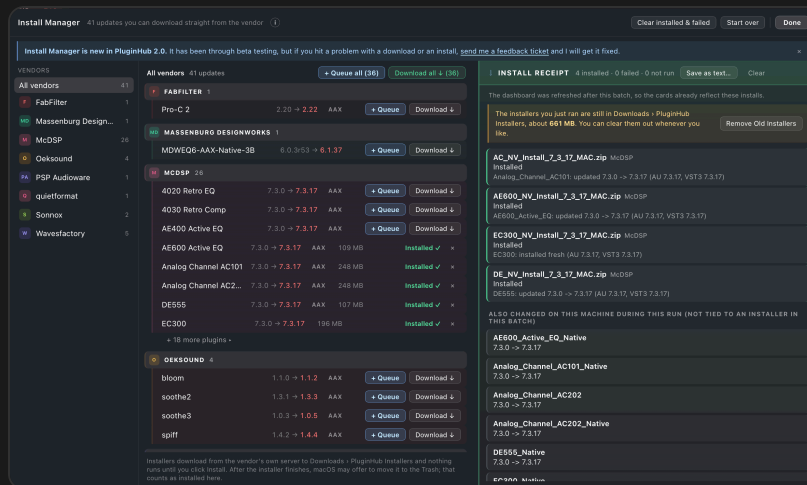
Install Manager: vendors on the left, one row per available download in the middle, the batch queue on the right.

There are two ways to use it:

- **One at a time.** Click **Download** on a row. PluginHub fetches the file and, once it has landed, opens the vendor's own installer exactly as if you had downloaded it yourself.
- **As a batch.** Click **Queue** on as many rows as you like, then **Install**. PluginHub downloads them all, asks for your administrator password once, runs each vendor's installer in turn, and writes a receipt at the end.



A batch in progress: every row reports its own state as it downloads and installs.



The receipt at the end of a batch: what installed, anything that did not, and a shortcut to [Remove Old Installers](#) for the files left behind.

What it will and will not download

Only files a vendor publishes openly on their own site. Anything behind a login, an account manager, or a vendor's own installer app is left alone, and those plugins keep their **Visit website** and **Open installer** buttons instead. Demo and trial builds are never offered. PluginHub never signs in anywhere on your behalf, so it never sees or stores a vendor account, and it never hosts or modifies a vendor's files.

The ⓘ button beside the window title says all of this inside the app too, so nobody has to take it on trust from a manual.

Downloads land in `~/Downloads/PluginHub Installers` and stay there until you remove them, so nothing installs behind your back and you keep the original files. [Remove Old Installers](#) clears them out when you are done, and the receipt links straight to it.

Check for Duplicates

When you have the same plugin (same name, same format) installed at more than one path on disk, PluginHub flags it. A **N duplicates** chip appears in the dashboard header. Click it to open the *Duplicate plugins detected* modal.

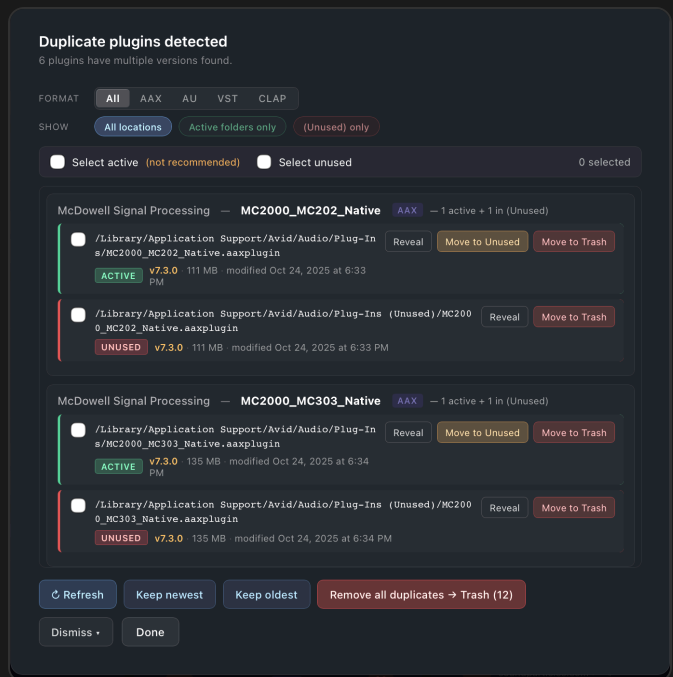
Each duplicate group lists every copy with its full path, file size, install date, and a **ACTIVE** or **UNUSED** badge. Per-row actions:

- **Reveal** — opens the bundle's containing folder in Finder.
- **Move to Unused** — archives this specific copy into your *(Unused)* sibling folder, where it's hidden from your DAW but kept on disk in case you change your mind.
- **Move to Trash** — sends this copy to the macOS Trash (recoverable until you empty it, with Finder's *Put Back* entry intact). PluginHub never permanently deletes anything.

Two filter rows narrow what you see at the top: **Format** (*All / AAX / AU / VST / CLAP*) and **Show** (*All locations / Active folders only / (Unused) only*). The bottom-bar **Remove all from (Unused) → Trash** button moves every (Unused) copy that matches the current filter to the Trash. It never touches an active copy, so the plugins your DAW loads stay where they are. To remove an active copy, use that row's own **Move to Trash**.

Dismissing the chip

The **Dismiss** menu inside the modal lets you pause the chip for a week, a month, or only-when-asked. Bring it back any time via the menu bar's **Check for duplicates ▶ Show duplicate alerts on dashboard** toggle. The toggle and the modal stay in sync.



The *Duplicate plugins detected* modal — grouped by plugin, with **ACTIVE** and **UNUSED** rows, format and location filter pills, and per-row actions.

Remove Old Installers

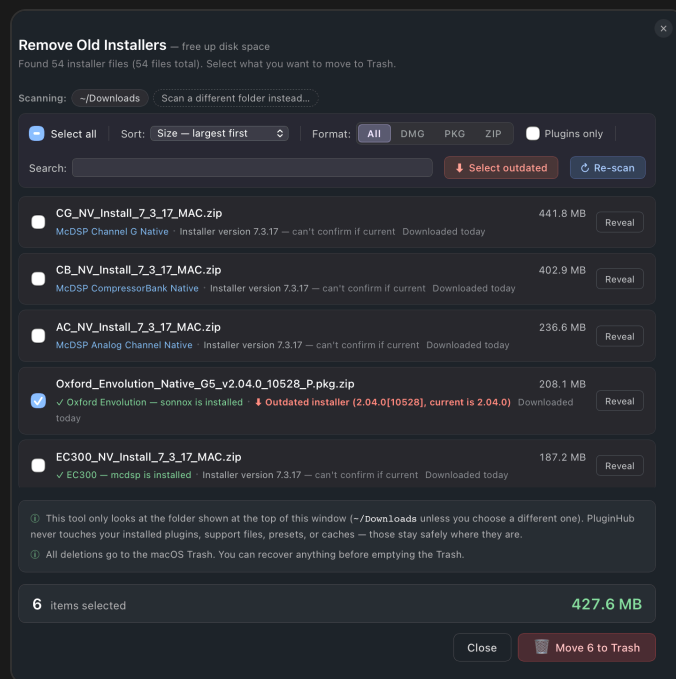
Plugin installers add up. After you've double-clicked a `.dmg` and dragged the app into *Applications*, the original installer file usually just sits in `~/Downloads` forever. Over a year of buying plugins that's typically several gigabytes of dead weight.

Open **Remove Old Installers** from the [sidebar](#) under Tools, or from the menu bar, to scan `~/Downloads` for stale plugin installers. That includes the folder [Install Manager](#) downloads into, so a batch install cleans up here afterwards. Each row shows the file name, size, age, and — when PluginHub recognizes the installer — which plugin or vendor it belongs to (e.g. "*Blackhole Immersive — eventide is installed*"). Files that can't be identified are still listed so you can review and decide.

- **Select all** ticks every checkbox in one click. The running total at the bottom updates live as you select or deselect rows.
- **Sort** dropdown — size (largest first by default), date, or name. Biggest space wins always float to the top.
- **Re-scan Downloads** picks up newly-added or just-deleted files without closing the modal.
- **Reveal** on each row opens the file in Finder so you can verify before deciding.
- **Select outdated** ticks every installer PluginHub can tell is older than what you already have installed, so the obvious wins are one click away.
- **Move N to Trash** sweeps every checked row to the macOS Trash in a single pass.

Two guarantees the modal restates inline so you can read them without leaving the screen:

- The tool only looks at `~/Downloads`. PluginHub never touches your installed plugins, support files, presets, or caches.
- Everything goes to the macOS Trash. You can *Put Back* any file in Finder before emptying the Trash if you change your mind.



The Remove Old Installers window: every `.dmg` / `.pkg` / `.zip` in `~/Downloads`, sorted biggest first by default, with a running selection total at the bottom.

Share Plugin List

Send a complete inventory of your installed plugins to anyone — a collaborator, a producer, a friend mixing your record — without exposing your machine. Open **Tools ▸ Share Plugin List...** from the menu bar to compose a share.

Fill in the modal:

- **Label** — a short name the recipient sees ("Zach's Studio Mac", "Road rig"). Required.
- **Expires in** — 1 day, 7 days (default), 30 days, or never. After expiry the link returns "share not found" and the data is removed from PluginHub's servers.
- **Passkey** — optional 4–6 digit code the recipient must enter to view the list. Leave blank for a public link.
- **Format** — scope the list to a single plugin format (*AAX only*, *AU only*, *All VST*, etc.) so you can send a Pro Tools rig the AAX cut, an Ableton user just the VSTs, and so on. *All formats* sends everything.
- **Include in list** — three optional fields per plugin: installed version, formats, install date. All three are on by default.
- **Exclude vendors** — opens a vendor picker. Anything you exclude is omitted from the share entirely. Useful for keeping a private demo or beta plugin out of a public list.

Hit **Create share link** and PluginHub returns a short code (e.g. `PHX3-7K9M`) plus a full URL. Copy either, or use the native macOS share sheet via the share button on the result screen.

The Share Plugin List modal — label, expiry, optional passkey, format scope, per-field include toggles, and session imports from Pro Tools, Logic, or Cubase.

The result screen — share code, full URL, expiry, plus quick copy and native share-sheet buttons.

The recipient opens the link in any browser to see a clean web view of your list, grouped by vendor with format coverage, install dates, and versions where you opted to include them. They don't need PluginHub installed.

Export formats

From the result screen you can also export the same list as a **CSV**, push it to a new **Google Sheet**, or save a printable **PDF**. The export respects whatever format filter and exclude-vendors selections you set when composing the share.

Session imports — Pro Tools, Logic, and Cubase

Import a session file on the share dialog and PluginHub reads out the plugins that session actually uses, then builds a list of just those plugins. Three session types are supported: a Pro Tools session (`.ptx`), a Logic Pro project (`.logicx`), and a Cubase project (`.cpr`). Handy for sharing a session-specific plugin checklist with a collaborator — they can see exactly what's needed to open your session without rifling through their DAW's missing-plugin dialog.

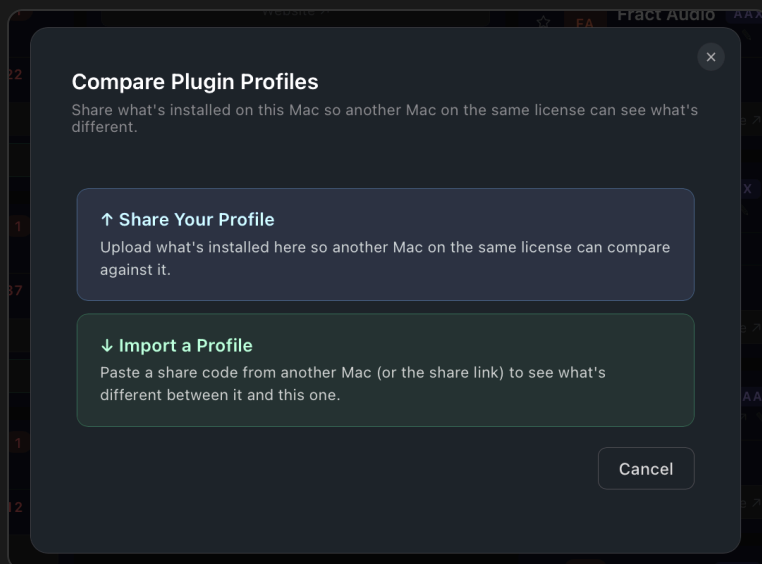
Compare Plugin Profiles

Compare your plugin lineup against another Mac you own on the same PluginHub License Key. Open **Tools** ▶ **Compare Plugin Profiles...** from the menu bar on either machine.

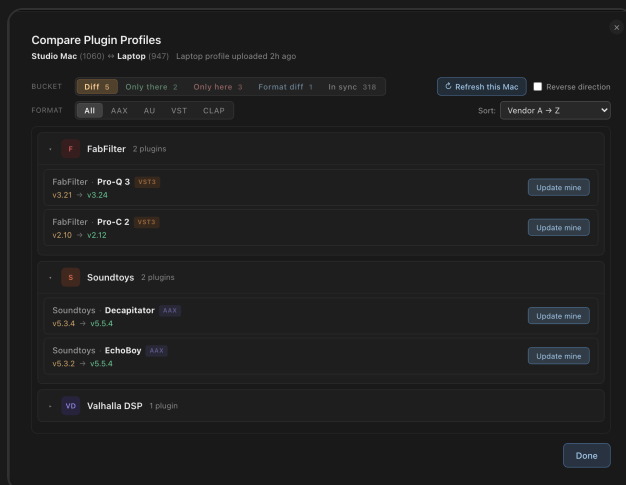
The flow has two sides:

- **This Mac** — click **Share this Mac's profile** to publish a short-lived profile (its own share code, separate from the Share Plugin List flow above).
- **Other Mac** — paste the code from the first Mac into the receive field and click **Compare**.

PluginHub then runs a side-by-side diff and surfaces the result in a five-bucket modal:



The Compare Plugin Profiles modal — share a profile from one Mac, paste the code into the other to start the diff.



The diff view — five buckets across the top, vendor cards below, and a format filter / sort row.

- **In sync** — same plugin, same version, both Macs. The bulk of a well-matched pair lives here.
- **Version diverged** — both Macs have the plugin but on different versions. The newer version is highlighted in green; the older one is shown alongside so you can see the gap without guessing direction.
- **Only on this Mac** — installed locally but missing on the other side.
- **Only on the other Mac** — installed on the remote profile but not locally.
- **Format mismatch** — same plugin and version on both, but installed in different formats (e.g. AAX on the studio rig, VST3 on the laptop).

The format filter and sort dropdown at the top of the diff narrow what's shown — switch to *AAX only* to compare just your Pro Tools coverage, or sort by *Most divergent first* to focus on the biggest gaps.

Update mine to match

When a vendor card in the *Version diverged* bucket has your Mac on the *older* side, an **Update mine** button appears that links straight to the right download or hub app. PluginHub never offers to "update" you to an older version — if the other Mac is behind, the prompt is shown to *them*, not you.

Cross-license note

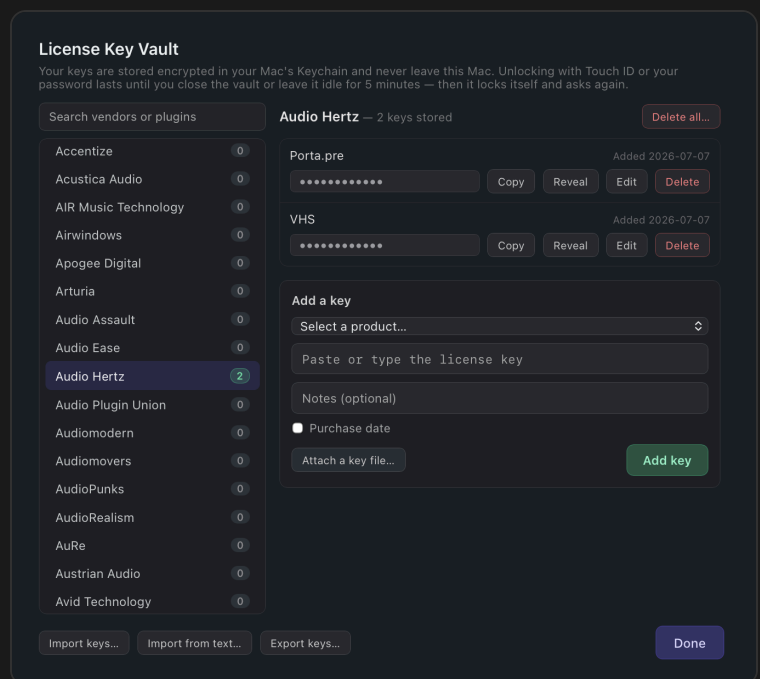
Compare Plugin Profiles is scoped to Macs activated on the *same* PluginHub license key. If you paste a code from a Mac on a different license, the dashboard returns "share not found" — the profile data is scoped per-license so unrelated users can't see each other's lists.

License Key Vault

Some vendors deliver plugins with their own license key, and that key is always buried in an email, or sitting in your account with that vendor, exactly when you need it. The License Key Vault gives those keys one place to live. Open **Tools ► License Key Vault...** from the menu bar, or right-click any plugin row (or click its : menu) and choose **License Key Vault...** to jump straight to that vendor's keys.

Opening the vault takes **Touch ID or your Mac password** (on Macs without Touch ID, your login password does the same job). The vault stays unlocked while you're using it, then locks itself again when you close it or leave it idle for five minutes.

- **Add a key.** Pick the product the key belongs to, or choose Other... and type your own name ('Everything Bundle' works fine for bundle and account-level keys). Paste the key, done. Notes and a purchase date are optional.



The License Key Vault: vendors with key counts on the left, masked keys with Copy / Reveal / Edit / Delete on the right, and Import / Export in the footer.

- **Attach a key file.** Some vendors send an actual license file instead of a text key (Freakshow Audio's `.freakshow` files, for example). **Attach a key file...** stores the file itself, encrypted in your Keychain like any key, and remembers where it came from. Its row gets a **Save a copy...** button that writes an exact copy of the file back out whenever you need it again.
- **Search.** The search bar finds keys by vendor or by plugin name; searching by plugin jumps to the vendor that owns it.
- **Copy.** Puts a key on your clipboard without ever showing it on screen, then clears the clipboard a minute later so it doesn't linger.
- **Reveal / Hide.** Shows a key in place when you need to read it. A revealed key hides itself again after 20 seconds.
- **Delete.** Removes a key from your Keychain after a confirmation. There's no undo, so keep the vendor's original email if you might ever need the key again.
- **Delete all.** When a vendor holds two or more keys, a **Delete all...** button next to the vendor's name clears every one of them in a single confirmed step.

Built private from the start:

- Keys are stored **encrypted in your Mac's own Keychain** and never leave your Mac.
- Only what you type in yourself goes in. PluginHub never reads license keys off your system (see [Privacy](#)).
- Keys never appear in shared plugin lists, exports, or debug logs.
- Your keys survive reinstalling PluginHub, and [Reset PluginHub](#) leaves them untouched.

iLok note: the vault is for keys vendors send you directly. iLok-licensed plugins keep their licenses in iLok License Manager; PluginHub never loads or touches iLok licenses.

Moving keys to another Mac

The vault can hand its keys to PluginHub on another Mac with a single encrypted transfer file. Click **Export keys...** at the bottom of the vault, confirm with Touch ID or your password, and choose how the file is protected:

- **Your PluginHub license (recommended).** The file opens only on Macs activated with the same PluginHub license key. Nothing extra to remember.
- **A passphrase instead.** The file opens on any Mac running PluginHub once that passphrase is entered. The right choice when your machines are on different PluginHub licenses, and the mode to use when moving keys into OneRig. There is no way to recover a forgotten passphrase, so pick one you'll remember.

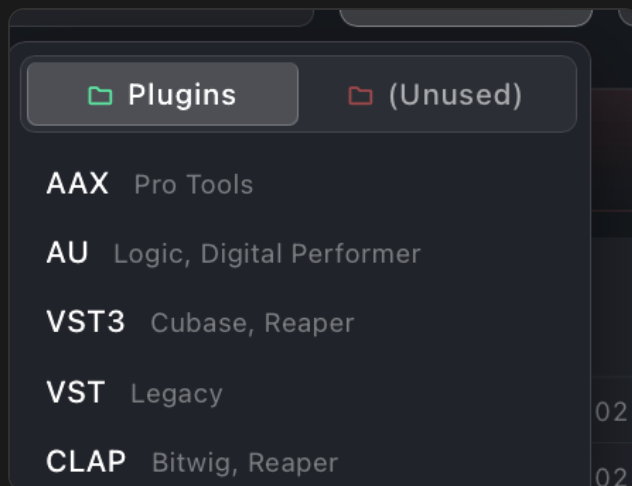
Move the `.phvault` file to the other Mac however you like (AirDrop works great), then click **Import keys...** in the vault there. If the file is passphrase protected, PluginHub asks for the passphrase first. Either way, nothing lands until you review what's inside: pick exactly which vendors and plugins to bring in, with keys you already have greyed out as "already here". Importing never creates duplicates and never touches the keys already in your vault, so repeating the round trip as your collection grows is always safe. Attached key files travel along with your text keys.

The transfer file is encrypted end to end, and PluginHub never uploads it anywhere: it exists only where you put it.

Plugin folders

The **Plugin folders** chip in the dashboard header opens a small dropdown with two tabs:

- 📁 **Plugins** — quick links to the four canonical plugin folders (AAX in `/Library/Application Support/Avid`, AU in `/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/Components`, VST3 in `/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST3`, VST in `/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST`). Click any to open it in Finder.
- 📁 **(Unused)** — same set, but the sibling `(Unused)` folders. Only enabled once you've actually moved something there.

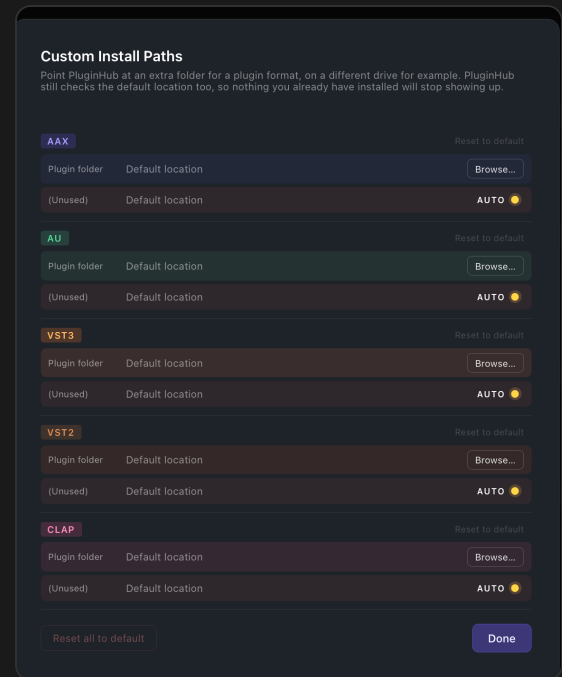


Plugin folders dropdown with the green (Plugins) tab active showing AAX / AU / VST3 / VST / CLAP entries.

Custom Install Paths

By default PluginHub scans the standard macOS plugin folders. If you also keep plugins somewhere else, on an external SSD for example, open **Settings** > **Custom Install Paths...** from the menu bar and add those folders. Each format can have as many extra folders as you need.

- **Additive, never a replacement.** The default location is always still scanned, so nothing you already have installed stops showing up. A custom folder that goes missing (an unplugged drive, say) can never make plugins disappear either.
- **Add a folder...** under a format adds its first extra folder; **Add another folder...** adds more. **Remove** beside a folder stops PluginHub checking it. Nothing on disk is moved or deleted.
- **Each folder has its own (Unused).** [Move to Unused](#) parks a plugin in an *(Unused)* folder right beside the folder it came from (for a folder called *VST3 SSD*, that is *VST3 SSD (Unused)*), and Restore puts it back in that same folder. PluginHub creates the *(Unused)* folder the first time you move something.
- **Or one offload folder for everything.** Choose an offload folder at the top of the window (on another drive, say) and every plugin you move to *(Unused)* goes there instead, into a folder named after the one it came from (*VST3 (Unused)*, *Plug-Ins (Unused)* for AAX, a custom folder by its own name), so Restore still puts it back where it came from. If that drive isn't connected, PluginHub refuses the move rather than parking the plugin on your internal disk. Clearing the offload folder goes back to parking beside each folder; Restore keeps reading the old one.
- **Folders PluginHub can read are enough.** A folder owned by the system works too; moving plugins out of it asks for your password, as with the standard folders. PluginHub warns you before using a folder inside *Desktop*, *Documents* or *Downloads*: macOS protects those, so a plugin an installer put there can't be moved to *(Unused)* even with your password.
- **Reset per format, or all at once.** Each format has its own **Reset to default**, and the button at the bottom resets everything. A confirmation lists each custom folder with Finder access, so you can move plugin files back first if you want to. Resetting only changes where PluginHub looks: it never moves your files.



Custom Install Paths: extra plugin folders per format, each with its own reset.

AAX note: Pro Tools only loads AAX plugins from the default location. PluginHub warns you before you pick a custom AAX folder: it's fine for storage or staging, but AAX plugins in a custom location won't show up in Pro Tools.

The [Plugin folders](#) dropdown lists each custom folder under its format (for example *VST3 · SSD*), with its own *(Unused)* row, and the Restore picker finds plugins in every *(Unused)* folder. If you chose a separate *(Unused)* location in an earlier version, it stays listed under its format and Restore still finds what you moved there.

Menu bar

The PluginHub menu bar icon is the global launcher. Click it to see:

- **PluginHub vX.Y.Z** — version header (greyed-out, just informational).
- **Open Dashboard → / Hide Dashboard ⌘H** — toggle the dashboard window.
- **Check for Updates...** — checks for a newer version of PluginHub itself (separate from plugin update checks).
- **Updates available / All plugins up to date ✓** — current global status.
- **Last checked: ...** — timestamp of the most recent scan.
- **Refresh ⌘R** — runs a full plugin rescan + version check now.
- **Settings ▸** — auto-check frequency, sound on update, launch at login, show snoozed plugins, anonymous data sharing, custom install paths, reset.
- **Tools ▸** — [License Key Vault](#), [Batch Plugin Management](#), [Remove Old Installers](#), [Share Plugin List](#), [Compare Plugin Profiles](#), and Uninstall PluginHub.
- **Check for duplicates ▸** — run a duplicate check on demand, plus the dashboard alerts toggle.
- **Update troubleshooting... / Copy debug log / About permissions...** — diagnostic helpers.
- **About PluginHub** — opens a small floating window with version + manual + support links.
- **PluginHub License...** — manage the PluginHub license this Mac is activated on (not to be confused with the [License Key Vault](#), which holds your plugin vendors' keys).
- **Quit PluginHub** — exits the app.

Settings

Auto Check Frequency

Daily / Weekly / Monthly. Default daily. PluginHub runs a quiet check on this cadence in the background; the menu bar count refreshes automatically when it lands.

Sound on new plugin update

Off by default. Enable to get a brief audible cue when a scan finds new updates.

Launch at login

Off by default. Adds PluginHub to your macOS Login Items so it starts automatically with the system.

Show Snoozed Plugins

On by default. Controls whether snoozed plugins stay visible in their vendor cards (dimmed, with a snooze label) or are hidden from the dashboard entirely, with each affected card noting how many it's hiding. Also toggleable from any plugin row's `:` menu. Covered in full in [Snooze updates](#).

Anonymous data sharing

Opt-in. When enabled, PluginHub sends anonymized aggregate data on which vendors and plugins our user base has installed. We use this to prioritize new vendor support — see [Privacy](#) for what's shared (and what isn't).

Custom Install Paths...

Add extra plugin folders for each format, on top of the defaults. Covered in full in [Custom Install Paths](#).

Reset PluginHub...

Two-step destructive confirm. Clears every PluginHub data file, cache, and preference. Does *not* remove plugins from disk, the .app bundle, saved vendor logins, or your [License Key Vault](#) keys (both live in your macOS Keychain, which a reset never touches). Useful when you want a clean first-install state.

Privacy

What PluginHub reads on your Mac

To identify which plugins you have installed and which versions are current, PluginHub reads from two kinds of sources on disk:

- Plugin bundle metadata in the standard plugin folders — Info.plist files inside `.aaxplugin` / `.vst3` / `.component` / `.vst` / `.clap` bundles.
- Catalog files written by vendor installer apps — for example Native Instruments Service Center, iZotope iZ Service Center, Waves Central's catalog index, Universal Audio's UAD snapshot files, and similar catalog files from ujam Hub and XLN Online Installer. These tell PluginHub what's installed from vendors that ship through their own installer apps instead of standalone plugin bundles.

PluginHub **never** reads:

- License keys, serial numbers, or authorization tokens of any kind. (Keys in the [License Key Vault](#) are only ever typed in by you, never read from disk or from other apps.)
- Vendor account credentials stored by other apps.
- The contents of DAW projects or session files.
- Anything from your Documents, Desktop, or other personal folders. (The optional installer-cleanup feature only reads filenames from `~/Downloads`.)

What PluginHub shares when anonymous data sharing is enabled

Anonymous data sharing is opt-in and off by default. When enabled, PluginHub sends:

- Plugin names, vendor names, installed version numbers.
- Format counts (how many AAX vs AU vs VST3 vs CLAP).
- OS version and PluginHub version.

PluginHub **never** shares:

- Personal information of any kind.
- File paths, including any folder names that might identify you.
- License keys, serial numbers, vendor login credentials.
- The contents of any DAW projects.

Vendor login credentials for PluginHub's own vendor-website auto-login feature are stored in your macOS Keychain and never leave your machine.

The same is true of the [License Key Vault](#): keys you add are hand-entered by you, stored encrypted in your macOS Keychain, and never leave your Mac. They are never included in shared plugin lists, exports, debug logs, or anonymous data.

Troubleshooting

"PluginHub doesn't see a plugin I just installed"

Click **Refresh** from the menu bar. PluginHub builds an in-memory index from the on-disk catalog only when a scan runs.

"A vendor's check keeps failing"

The vendor's website may have changed how it publishes versions, or it may be blocking automated requests. PluginHub falls back to the cached version from our centralized catalog when this happens. If the failure persists across multiple refreshes, send us the debug log via **Copy debug log → email support: support@pluginhubapp.com**.

"The macOS password prompt didn't appear when I tried to move plugins"

On macOS Ventura specifically, the prompt can sometimes spawn behind another app. PluginHub now brings itself to front before each prompt, but if you ever see *"Awaiting password..."* for more than a minute, just click Move again — the modal recovers automatically and the next try usually surfaces the prompt correctly.

"PluginHub is asking for App Management permission"

macOS's App Management system gates apps that move plugin bundles inside `/Library`. Pick **About permissions...** from the menu bar for a walkthrough on granting access in System Settings → Privacy & Security.

Send a debug report

Menu bar → **Copy debug log**. Pastes a single block to your clipboard with version info, recent scan results, and any error logs. Email it to support@pluginhubapp.com with a description of what went wrong.