



O3A Head Tracker Plugin
v2.4.0

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1 Introduction

The O3A Head Tracker Plugin modifies a third order ambisonic (O3A) audio stream to take into account head movements. This can be useful when monitoring mixes made with [Blue Ripple Sound's O3A plugins](#) on headphones.

This plugin is experimental and unsupported. It is currently available for Windows only.

Head tracking data is also used in Blue Ripple Sound's "O3A View" plugins, but that is acquired in a different way, for instance from a Virtual Reality system.

In this case, head tracking data is received as Windows joystick data, for instance from the [DIY](#) or [Pro](#) versions of EDTracker.

1.1 Audio Compatibility

O3A streams require audio busses with at least 16 channels, which (at the time of writing) most Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs) cannot handle. Some are limited at 2 channel stereo and many are limited at the 8 channels used for 7.1 surround mixes. **The O3A plugins will not work correctly with these DAWs**, which may even crash.

1.1.1 AAX

The AAX version of this plugin is compatible with [Pro Tools Ultimate](#) or [Studio](#).

1.1.2 VST2

Most VST2-compatible DAWs (such as [Reaper](#)) have a plugin "path", which is a list of directories which will be searched for VST2 plugins. You may need to change this path to point at the location of the plugins, or move the plugins there. By default, these plugins are installed into `/Library/Audio/Plug-Ins/VST` on macOS. Various directories may be used on Windows, but `C:\Program Files\Steinberg\VST2` is not uncommon.

1.2 "Joystick" Compatibility

Head tracking data is received over the standard joystick channels as X, Y, Z data, for instance from the [DIY](#) or [Pro](#) versions of EDTracker. This data is interpreted as 360 degree yaw, pitch and roll.

1.3 Technical Requirements

1.3.1 Operating System

Supported versions of Microsoft Windows are 10 or 11, 64bit Intel.

Supported versions of Apple macOS are 10.14 to 13.5, 64bit Intel or Apple Silicon.

1.3.2 VST Host

The VST plugins require a VST 2 host with shell plugin support.

These plugins do not work with all VST 2 hosts. One reason for this is that the O3A plugins need large numbers of channels on their input or output busses. Check the individual plugins for the channel counts they need, but all of the O3A plugins need at least 16 channels on each track, and

some need more. Also, at the time of writing VST 2 shell plugins are not supported in Nuendo or Cubase.

1.3.3 AAX Host

The AAX plugins require Pro Tools Ultimate or Studio.

Due to channel and stem restrictions, not all plugins are supported in AAX. Please see the plugin descriptions for details.

1.3.4 PC Hardware

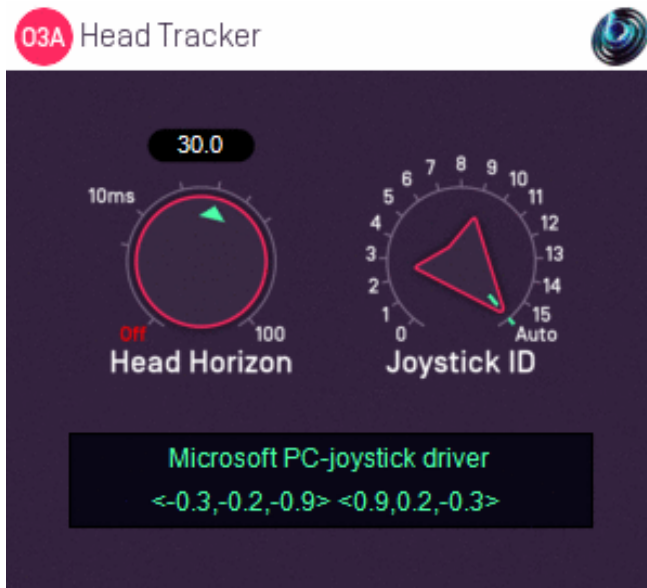
Please check your PC meets the following requirements:

- Intel Core i5 CPU or better, or Apple Silicon.
- 200MB of free disk space.

1.3.5 Permissions

You'll need administrator permissions while installing on Windows. The software probably won't install properly using a "restricted" account.

2 O3A Head Tracker



2.1 Host Support

Host Type	Support
AAX	Yes
VST2	Yes

2.2 Audio

	Channels	Content
Input	16	O3A
Output	16	O3A

2.3 Controls

- [Head Horizon](#)
- [Joystick ID](#)

2.4 Description

This plugin takes data from a head tracker and rotates an O3A audio stream to compensate for it. For instance, if the head is turned to the left, the audio scene is rotated to the right so sounds that were to the left are now heard in front.

When listening on headphones with synthetic binaural, this can be used to keep an O3A audio scene fairly static in space when the head is turned.

This plugin is experimental and unsupported. It is currently available for Windows only.

The results of the head tracked rotation will not be heard until after the audio has passed through your DAW and system audio stack. Consequently, it can be latent. To attempt to compensate for this, a [Head Horizon](#) forward predictor is available. This attempts to guess where the head *will* be, based on the data available. However, best results are typically achieved when latency is very low (a few milliseconds) so it may be worth configuring your DAW with this in mind.

Information about the joystick driver in use is shown in the display box, along with the current 'forward' and 'up' head direction vectors, in ambisonic coordinates (so X is forwards, Y is to the left and Z is up).

2.5 Setting Up

This plugin currently only supports head trackers that present head yaw, pitch and roll as Windows X, Y, Z Joystick data. Either the [DIY](#) or [Pro](#) versions of EDTracker can be used.

If using EDTracker, please ensure that you set your scaling (both Yaw and Pitch) to 1. This is necessary because EDTracker is often used in gaming where head movements are exaggerated when converted to game joystick movements. This is not appropriate here. Also, please ensure you calibrate and reset head orientation before use.

Once everything is working, the effect should be obvious in the Blue Ripple Sound O3A Visualiser plugin when the head tracking device is rotated. Please note that movements on the visualiser will be in the opposite direction to movements of the device.

2.6 Controls

2.6.1 Control: Head Horizon

This dial determines how far into the future the head tracking module will attempt to predict head orientation. Longer predictions are less stable. This module can be turned off. It can be used to help compensate for slow head tracking or latent audio.

2.6.2 Control: Joystick ID

This dial can be used to select which joystick should be used, when more than one is present. When set to "Auto", the first available joystick is used.