FREE GUIDE

10 Logic Pro Hacks for Better Vocals

Ten moves, in the order you would make them, using what is already inside Logic Pro.

From **Warren** at Thir13een

Before you start

Hey, Warren here. Thanks for your order. This guide is a free bonus, and it is yours to keep.

Most weak vocals are not a plug-in problem. They come from a level that was too hot, a boost where a cut belonged, or reverb that washed out the words. These 10 hacks fix those problems with the plug-ins that already ship with Logic Pro.

Work through them in order. The order is the vocal chain: record, comp, tune, EQ, compress, de-ess, add space, layer, then check it against the beat.

Every number in this guide is a starting point. Your voice, mic and room are different, so move each setting by ear. Toggle a plug-in off and on and match the loudness, so you judge the tone and not the volume.

Menu and plug-in names come from current Logic Pro on Mac. If a button sits somewhere else in your version, search for its name in the Help menu.

Warren

HACK 01 OF 10

Record low, track fast

A clipped take cannot be repaired. A quiet take can always be raised later. A small buffer also cuts the delay you hear in your headphones, so you sing in time.

EXACT STEPS

1. Open Logic Pro > Settings > Audio and set I/O Buffer Size to 128 samples or lower while you record.
2. Create an Audio track, choose your input, and click R on the track header to arm it.
3. Sing your loudest chorus line and watch the track meter. Turn the interface gain until that line peaks between -12 and -6 dB.
4. Record dry. Put no reverb or echo on the track while you sing. You can add them later but you cannot take them out.
5. When you start to mix, set the buffer back to 512 or higher so heavy plug-ins run without crackles.

FAST SETTING

Loudest line peaks at -12 to -6 dB. Buffer 128 to record, 512 or higher to mix.

HACK 02 OF 10

Loop it, then swipe the best lines

Few singers deliver the perfect take in one pass. Comping the best phrase from three passes often improves a vocal more than any plug-in. The unused takes also become your doubles.

EXACT STEPS

1. Drag across the ruler to set a cycle area over one verse or chorus, then press C to turn Cycle on.
2. Press R to record. Sing three passes. Logic stacks the passes as takes in a take folder.
3. Open the take folder. Drag across the best part of each take with the Pointer tool. Each swipe becomes the active section.
4. Click the take folder name and choose Flatten and Merge to join your swipes into one clean region.
5. Keep the unused takes until the song is done. You may want them for doubles.

FAST SETTING

Cycle on with C, three passes, swipe the best phrase of each, Flatten and Merge.

HACK 03 OF 10

Tune first, then compress

A compressor lifts quiet detail, so small pitch errors get easier to hear. Tuning after compression can also sound uneven. Fix pitch before the compressor and the rest of the chain has less to hide.

EXACT STEPS

1. Double-click the vocal region to open the editor. Turn on Flex View (Command-F) and set the track's Flex mode to Flex Pitch.
2. For a natural result, drag single off notes toward the line, or use the pitch correction slider on the whole region. Keep the moves small.
3. For the hard-tuned sound, insert the Pitch Correction plug-in instead. Set the key and scale of your song first.
4. Set Response slower for a natural sound. A very fast Response gives the stepped, robotic effect.
5. Put the tuning before your EQ and compressor in the signal chain.

FAST SETTING

Natural: Flex Pitch with small moves. Hard-tuned: Pitch Correction with the song's key set and a fast Response.

SHORTCUT

The Auto-Tune Vocal Preset for Logic Pro X is a vocal chain built for pitch correction, from subtle to hard-tuned. Check the key and scale before you record. See it on thir13een.com

HACK 04 OF 10

Cut before you boost

A boost on top of mud only makes the track louder and still muddy. Use Channel EQ to subtract what the voice does not need. Then the vocal fits around the drums and bass.

EXACT STEPS

1. Insert a Channel EQ on the vocal, right after the tuning.
2. Switch on the low cut (the leftmost band) and set it near 80 Hz. Male voices can go to 70 Hz. Female voices can go to 100 to 120 Hz.
3. Cut 2 to 3 dB between 250 and 400 Hz with a medium Q. This opens a boxy sound.
4. Last, lift 1.5 to 3 dB between 3 and 5 kHz so the words come forward. Add a high shelf of +1 to +2 dB above 10 kHz only if the take is not hissy.
5. Click Analyzer to see where your voice holds energy. Bypass the EQ and match the loudness to check the change helps.

FAST SETTING

High-pass at 80 Hz. Cut 2 to 3 dB at 250 to 400 Hz. Lift 1.5 to 3 dB at 3 to 5 kHz.

SHORTCUT

Load the free Toronto Warmth preset and open its EQ to see one finished curve next to yours. See it on thir13een.com

HACK 05 OF 10

Two light compressors

Two light stages sound smoother than one heavy stage. The first evens out the level. The second adds energy. If the meter sits at 8 to 10 dB on every line, you are squashing the voice.

EXACT STEPS

1. Insert a Compressor after the EQ. Pick the Studio VCA or Vintage Opto model.
2. Set Ratio to 2:1 to 3:1, Attack to 10 to 30 ms and Release to 80 to 150 ms.
3. Lower the Threshold until the gain reduction meter shows 3 to 4 dB on your loudest words.
4. For rap or pop, add a second Compressor with the Studio FET model. Use 4:1, a fast attack and a medium release, for 2 to 3 dB.
5. Skip stage two for quiet singer-songwriter vocals. Keep the dynamics.

FAST SETTING

Stage 1: 3:1, 3 to 4 dB of reduction. Stage 2: 4:1, 2 to 3 dB.

HACK 06 OF 10

Parallel punch with Mix

Sometimes you want the weight of heavy compression without losing the natural dynamics. The Compressor has a Mix control that blends the dry signal with the compressed signal. That gives you parallel compression inside one plug-in.

EXACT STEPS

1. On your second Compressor (Studio FET), set Ratio to 4:1 and lower the Threshold until the meter shows about 6 dB of reduction.
2. Turn the Mix control down to about 30%.
3. Raise Mix slowly until the vocal sounds closer and fuller. Stop before breaths and room noise come up.
4. Bypass the plug-in and match the loudness. Keep it only if the vocal still sounds better.

FAST SETTING

Studio FET, 4:1, about 6 dB of reduction, Mix at 30%. These are starting points.

HACK 07 OF 10

De-ess last

Compression and a presence lift both make S and T sounds louder. DeEsser 2 turns down only the sibilant band. Put it after the compressor so it sees the sound the listener will hear.

EXACT STEPS

1. Insert DeEsser 2 after the Compressor.
2. Set the detection frequency in the 5 to 8 kHz range. Use the monitor option to hear where the harsh sound lives for your voice.
3. Raise the suppression until the harshness drops by 2 to 4 dB on the loudest S sounds.
4. Compare with the plug-in bypassed. If the S now sounds like a lisp, back off.
5. Stacked layers add up their S sounds, so use a little less de-essing on harmonies than on the lead.

FAST SETTING

Frequency 5 to 8 kHz. Take 2 to 4 dB off the loudest S sounds.

HACK 08 OF 10

Space on sends

Sends keep the dry vocal clear and let one reverb serve many tracks. Put reverb on the vocal itself and the compressor pumps it with every word.

EXACT STEPS

1. Press X to open the Mixer. Click an empty Sends slot on the vocal channel and choose Bus 1. Logic creates an aux channel for it.
2. On that aux, insert ChromaVerb. Pick a plate or short hall. Set Decay to 1.0 to 1.8 seconds and Pre-Delay to 20 to 40 ms so each word lands before the tail.
3. On a second send (Bus 2), insert Echo. Sync it to an eighth or quarter note and set Feedback to 15 to 25%.
4. Roll off the lows and highs in Echo's feedback filters so the repeats sit behind the voice.
5. Raise each send until you notice the effect only when you mute it.

FAST SETTING

ChromaVerb: Decay 1.0 to 1.8 s, Pre-Delay 20 to 40 ms. Echo: eighth note, Feedback 15 to 25%.

SHORTCUT

For R&B space already set up, the Dynamic R&B Vocal Preset is built for smooth, warm R&B vocals with stock Logic plug-ins. See it on thir13een.com

HACK 09 OF 10

Stack the layers

A lead vocal alone can feel thin on a chorus. Layers fix that, but only if you treat them differently from the lead. A Track Stack lets one set of EQ and compression glue them together.

EXACT STEPS

1. Record or duplicate your doubles and harmonies. Pan two doubles slightly left and right, or keep one in the centre and tuck the other under it. Keep the timing tight.
2. Select the layer tracks and choose Track > Create Track Stack. Pick a Summing Stack.
3. Open the stack's channel strip. Add a Channel EQ and a light Compressor to glue the layers.
4. Give ad-libs a darker EQ. Cut the presence lift by 1 to 2 dB and send them more reverb so they sit behind the lead.
5. To make a double sound less like a copy, add Vocal Transformer to it. Leave Pitch at 0 and nudge Formant a little.
6. Send every layer to the same reverb. Mute the layers and check that the lead alone still works.

FAST SETTING

One reverb for every layer. If the lead alone does not work, fix the lead first.

HACK 10 OF 10

Beat check, then save it

A vocal that sounds perfect solo often disappears in the full beat. Set the level with the beat playing. Then save the chain, so the next song starts from a good place and not from an empty strip.

EXACT STEPS

1. Play the whole song. Set the vocal level with the beat on, not solo.
2. If the vocal fights the beat, put a Channel EQ on the beat and cut 1 to 2 dB around 2 to 4 kHz. This makes room without touching the vocal.
3. Check the mix on laptop speakers, headphones and a phone. The lyric must stay clear on all three.
4. Leave headroom on the master. The loudest part should peak below 0 dB.
5. Select the vocal track and press Y to open the Library. Click Save and name the setting. Load it on the next vocal in one click.

FAST SETTING

Beat -1 to -2 dB around 2 to 4 kHz. Master peaks below 0 dB. Save the chain.

SHORTCUT

Thir13een presets are .cst channel strip files, so they load the same way as the chain you just saved. Each one still needs small level changes for your voice.
See it on thir13een.com

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The live deal

Buy 2 Logic Pro X presets, get 1 free

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Vocal Preset Mega Bundle for Logic Pro X, $49

Every vocal chain preset in the Logic Pro X catalog, in one download. Stock Logic plug-ins only, so there is nothing else to buy.

Get the Mega Bundle

https://www.thir13een.com/products/logic-pro-vocal-presets?utm_source=guide&utm_medium=pdf&utm_campaign=logic_hacks

Not ready to buy? The Toronto Warmth preset is free. Get Toronto Warmth free

These were the live offers on the day this guide was written, November 2026. The page shows today's offer. Presets are starting points: each one needs small level changes for your voice and mic.

Thanks for reading. Warren