



# DANCE MUSIC FORMULA

## COURSE CURRICULUM

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## Module One: Introduction

This first module will get you up and running with this course. You'll arrange your home studio set-up, download and install Ableton Live, and get the DDJT Sound Pack. You'll also get a first look at Live before the end of this module.

## Module Two: Arrange

You'll begin laying the foundation of your production by creating a Song Map, which you'll use as a guide throughout this course. You'll be filling in the Song Map with basic drum and synth loops in this module too, which are the first steps in creating your arrangement.

## Module Three: Drums

You'll zero in on building the beat of your production in this module. You'll add more "oomph" to the drum loops you added in the Arrange module, and I'll show you a trick I use called the Master Drum Clip that makes it quick and easy to edit drums in Live.

## Module Four: Music

This module is all about the melodic elements of your tune. You'll add in basslines, chord loops, melodic loops, as well as vocals here. I'll also teach you enough music theory to understand how chords and melodies are made.

## Module Five: Customise

You'll learn how to add embellishments and make edits that'll add excitement and make your tune sound like it's your own, instead of just a static production filled with straight-out-the-box loops. I'll also introduce you to the concepts of tension and release, why they're important in dance music, and how to add these two elements in your tune.

## Module Six: Improve

Having arranged and created the elements in your production, this module will focus on getting them to sound better through the use of effect plugins. You'll work with EQ, compression, reverb, and delay to tweak certain tracks, leading to a more interesting and polished sound.

## Module Seven: Mix

We'll dive deep into mixing your production here. You'll start off by organising and tidying your project, after which you'll be levelling individual tracks and placing them in different areas of the sound stage through panning. We'll make sure your track is ready for mastering before we end this module.

## **Module Eight: Master & Next Steps**

The final module in this course is all about mastering. We'll create a mixdown file of your project that's ready for mastering, and then I'll show you how to do a DIY pseudo-master in Live. Of course you'll want it to sound like the real thing, so you'll then send your mixdown file to an online mastering service. I end the module by showing you how I get in touch with professional mastering engineers to work on your project.

## **Bonuses**

### **Deep-Dive Coaching Seminars**

Join the class! In these recordings of coaching webinars conducted by course tutor Joey Santos, you get to sit in on a virtual classroom. Across these recordings, hundreds of questions from students about music production are answered, and there are tons of resources mentioned and topics discussed. Dive in for some extra learning, whenever suits you...

### **Complete Course: Secret Producer Shortcuts**

This second full course is a collection of tips and tricks that I've learned through the decades of being a musician, audio engineer, and music producer. I teach you hacks like Drum Tracing for inspired drum parts, Melodic Sketching to help you get in the habit of creating a tune a day, and other little tips and tricks that have made my musical journey more interesting. I also give you advice on how to develop your artistry as a DJ/producer, which is a neverending quest in itself.

### **Complete Course: How To Make Bass Music**

The main course teaches "four four" styles, such as house, techno, trance and on on. This complete additional module gives you an alternative "track" to follow; once you've finished the main course, the Producing Bass Music module will fast-track you to producing styles such as future bass / trap, which comprises much of today's pop music.

### **Complete Course: Getting Your Music Out There**

This first full course is all about how to promote and distribute your tune. I walk you through my Promotions & Distribution Plan, show you how I create a Promotions Schedule, and give you tips on how to promote on Facebook, Instagram, and music blog sites. I also talk about record labels and how to start your own.

### **Behind The Scenes: How I Made The Musical Elements For The Sound Pack**

In this lesson I talk you through my creative thought process in coming up with the different elements we used to create Fall Through, which is the tune you built in this course.



## [ ] Lesson One: Introduction

Welcome to the first module! Your tutor Joey Santos is here to tell you what's in store in this exciting and essential module to get you set up ready to produce. Welcome to your new obsession!

## [ ] Lesson Two: Setting Up Your Home Studio

We go through the essentials needed so you can get started on this course. We also look at two set-ups: speakers, and headphones only. So whether you're using a pair of cans connected to your laptop, or you've got a pair of speaker monitors and an audio interface, we take a look at best practices for setting up your home studio - trust me, you'll be spending a lot of time here.

## [ ] Lesson Three: Downloading & Installing Ableton Live

In this lesson we help you choose which version of Ableton Live the digital audio workstation we're using in this course, and get it installed on your computer. We won't run it just yet, because we've got other items to install after this, so for now let's just hit the ground running by getting Ableton Live on your computer.

## [ ] Lesson Four: Downloading & Installing The Sound Pack

Here we grab the DDJT Sound Pack, which contains all the loops and samples you need for this course. These are sounds that are on the same quality and level as the pros use, which will help you come up with a great-sounding production quicker. Industry secret: Even the pros use samples in their own music!

I show you how to install the DDJT Sound Pack in this lesson.



## [ ] Lesson Five: Running Live For The First Time

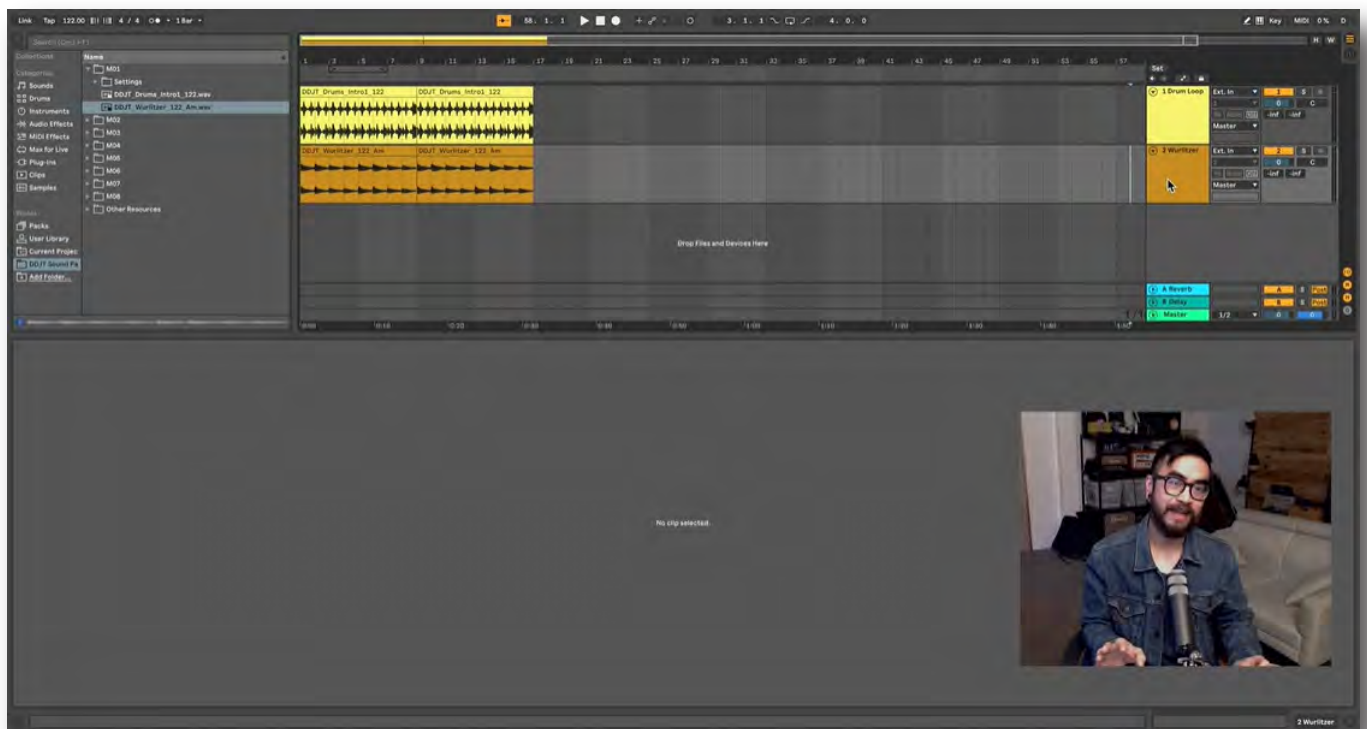
Here, we fire up Ableton Live for the first time and I show you around the interface. We'll also make some settings tweaks to get Live working the way we want it to.

Live has two workflows called Session View and Arrangement View, which have their own strengths and use scenarios. Our focus on this course will be Arrangement View, and though we won't be using Session View in this course, I'll talk you through it so you have a grasp of the interface.

Windows users: You'll find the Preferences window at the top of your screen beside File, Edit, Create and so on. Just go to Options, and then click on Preferences.

## [ ] Lesson Six: Getting Comfy With Arrangement View

In this lesson we're going to add some sounds from the DDJT Sound Pack over onto Live's Arrangement View interface. As I've mentioned previously, this is the view that we'll be using in this course. I'll teach you some basic editing commands to help ease you into the Ableton workflow.



## [ ] Lesson One: Introduction

I give you a glimpse of what's to come in this module, which will have you deconstructing a song, creating a guide from it that you'll use as a template for your tune, and filling it in with loops and samples. By the end of this module, you'll have your very first arrangement filled with basic drum sounds, which we'll build on as we go through this course.

## [ ] Lesson Two: Importing Your Guide Track

A Song Map is like a "grid" for your tune, a rough sketch of its arrangement that helps us to make the track. We will save time by basing our new song on the arrangement of an existing one, so in order to do that, we need to load an existing track into Ableton and set its tempo. That way, Ableton can lay down grid lines over the guide song that we can use to start to make our Song Map.

You can find the Guide Track in the "Other Resources" folder which we installed back in Module 1. If you still don't have it, go back to the Module 1 lesson "Downloading & Installing The Sound Pack" :)

## [ ] Lesson Three: Building Your Song Map

In this lesson, I show you how to create a Song Map using the guide track we imported in the last lesson. We mark all the main parts of the track on our grid (Intro, Outro, Drop, Break etc), so that when we remove the Guide Track, we're left with an outline of the guide track's arrangement which we can use to build our new, original track on.

## [ ] Lesson Four: Adding More Sounds To Your Song Map

You now have a Song Map, and you've already got a few bars of drums and the Wurli synth loop going. It's always a good idea to start "fresh" when you've built your Song Map, so we're going to remove the clips that we added previously, add them back in, and then continue to fill in the sections of our Song Map. We'll also add one more Wurli synth loop in this lesson.

By the end of this, you will be able to hear the basic structure of your production.



## [ ] Lesson One: Introduction

In the last module, we laid the foundation for your track by creating a template, called the Song Map, and filled it in with some basic loops. In this module, we'll focus on the drums by adding in our own drum sounds and percussion which will add power to our tune.

We're starting with drums because they're the most important element of a dance track, so getting it solid is a priority.

## [ ] Lesson Two: Creating The Main Beat With The Master Drum Clip

In this lesson, I show you how to make the main beat using Ableton's Drum Rack. We demystify this powerful instrument, and I talk about a basic rhythm concept that musicians use known as the quarter note, which will help you understand how the beat is made. You'll then begin to create what I call the "Master Drum Clip" by adding a basic kick drum beat, and by the end of it, you'll have added some serious "punch" to your drums. Get ready, Ibiza!

## [ ] Lesson Three: Adding Snares To Your Master Drum Clip

There's so much more to dance music than just kicks. In this video, we'll draw in some snare sounds in the Drum Rack to thicken your drums to make them "groove" and add some excitement.

## [ ] Lesson Four: Adding Rimshot Percussion To Your Master Drum Clip

In this lesson, we'll continue working on the Master Drum Clip, this time adding some flavour to it by way of a classic percussion sound known as the rimshot. We'll work with two more note values here: the eighth note, and the sixteenth note.

## [ ] Lesson Five: Finishing All The Main Drums

In this final video, I show you how to copy the Master Drum Clip we've been working on to the other sections of your song. We'll also edit the Master Drum Clip differently for each section because that lets your drums ebb and flow as the listener goes from one section to the next - if you just copy and paste the Master Drum Clip as is to all sections, then there wouldn't be any differences and it will begin to sound stale. We are going for movement in our drums, so we need to edit them slightly differently per section. We're at the end of this module, so let's finish strong!

**[ ] Lesson One: Introduction**

Watch this to check out what's in this module, which has everything to do with adding melodic elements to your track. I'll teach you how to create a chord and write chord progressions in Live, how to make a simple bassline, and how to create an electronic music production staple known as an arpeggio. We'll also add vocals here plus a few more loops that will round out your tune. By the end of this module, you'll have a project that already sounds like a rough cut of the track, which we'll be polishing as we go through the next modules.

**[ ] Lesson Two: Making Your First Chord**

In this lesson, I show you how to make your very first chord. This is important because you'll be able to make your own chord progressions that can support your tune without having to rely solely on pre-made loops which can be limiting later on.

I introduce you to the two main scales in modern music known as the major and minor scales, and since a large chunk of dance music is made in the minor scale, that's what we'll use in this course. I then show you how chords are built, and then you'll add your first chord using a simple formula. You will use one of Ableton Live's instruments called Simpler to add a new piano sound, which is where we'll be making our chord.

**[ ] Lesson Three: Creating Your Own Chord Progression**

Now that you've got one chord that you made yourself, let's add some more to make a chord progression. In this lesson, we'll build two more chords using another formula, this time for major chords.

**[ ] Lesson Four: Making Your Second Chord Progression**

In this lesson, we'll work on a new chord progression which we'll be using to fill in the Break song sections of our tune. You already know most of the chords in this progression, so it should be a piece of cake!

**[ ] Lesson Five: Adding The Bassline Loops**

We've got a nice drum rhythm going, and a strong chord progression, but I bet you notice that there's still something missing: the bass! The bassline is basically a melody, and a good rule of thumb to follow is that when there are two melodic parts, one has to be simpler than the other to avoid them fighting for attention in a track. We'll drop nice, complex bassline loops to add character and groove to your musical elements.

## [ ] Lesson Six: Creating Your Own Bassline

Here I'll teach you how to write your own bassline, because sometimes you want to make your own, or you're inspired by a bass loop but want to make some changes to it. I show you how to pick the some notes we used for our chords to create a simple bassline, and then you'll copy paste them to the Intro and Outro song sections.

## [ ] Lesson Seven: Creating Your Own Arpeggio Melody

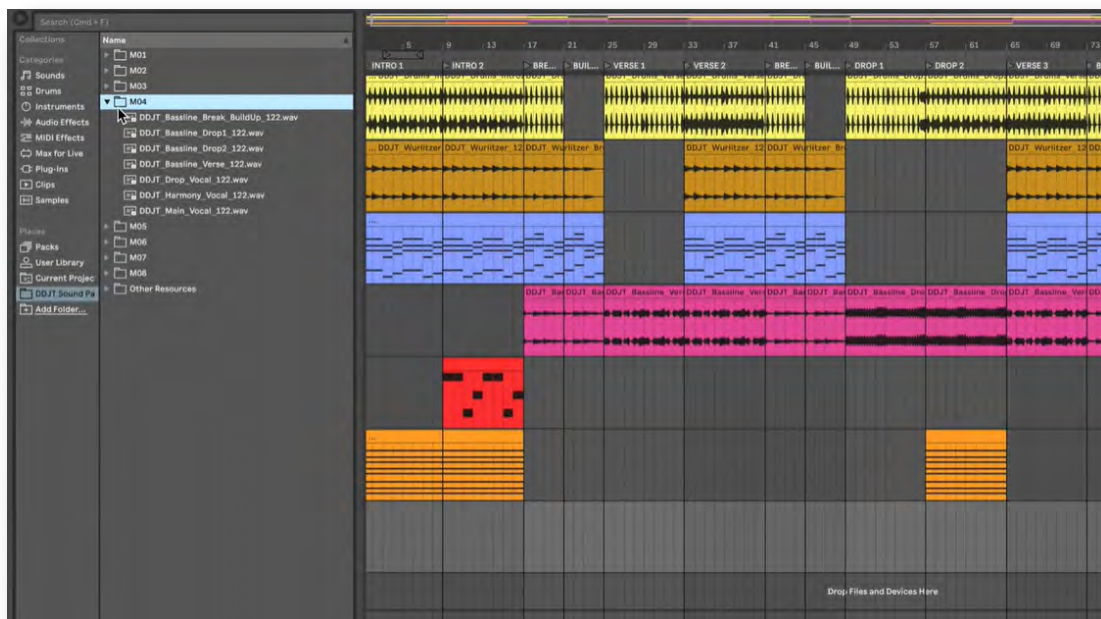
In this lesson I'll show you how to create a special kind of chord known as an "arpeggio". Musicians also call this a "broken chord" because in an arpeggio, the notes of the chord are played one after another in either an ascending or descending order. This adds a rhythmic movement to your production, and has been a technique used by dance music producers since the disco era.

To create this chord we're going to use an effect in Ableton Live known as the Arpeggiator.

## [ ] Lesson Eight: Adding The Vocals To Your Production

In this last lesson we're going to add the vocal tracks to your production. Often when you're collaborating with a vocalist (especially when you're communicating online) he or she will work on the track in his or her home studio and then send you files known as "vocal stems". These could be one or more tracks that contain all the vocals that the singer recorded. Unlike loops, you simply drop the vocal stems into your project: one audio track per vocal stem file. I show you how in this quick lesson.

After you're done with this course and you start making your own tracks, you can also use vocals and vocal clips that come from loop and sample packs. Just remember to pick vocals that are in the same musical key and tempo as your production to increase the chances of it sounding great in your tune :)



## [ ] Lesson One: Introduction

This is an important module in the course because this is where we begin to really dig into your tune to add little tweaks and details that'll make it sound like a professionally produced track. We'll create tension and release in the Break and Build Up sections, and I'll teach you techniques that you can use to truly make a tune "yours".

## [ ] Lesson Two: Tension & Release I: Adding More Sounds To The Breakdown & Buildup

Dance music is all about creating two moods: tension and release. Tension is the anticipation of the listener on the dancefloor as they go through a quiet portion in your song that slowly builds into a mountain of energy that erupts, creating release. Tension is created in the Break and Build Up sections, while release is created during the Drop. You'll be placing sounds from our DDJT Sound Pack, known as a bass slide and a riser, that will add more tension your Break and Build Up sections in this lesson.

## [ ] Lesson Three: Tension & Release II: Adding Your Own Kicks & Snares For The Break & Build Up

In this lesson, you'll draw in your own kick and snare hits, which are essential in a breakdown and buildup. I show you how to create a high-energy build you hear in a lot of dance music using the drum sounds in our Drum Rack.

## [ ] Lesson Four: Adding Extra Details Using Crashes

Here we're going to add some flourishes to accentuate the start of some portions of our tune. We'll do this through the use of a new drum sound known as a crash cymbal. This is important to do because producers spend a lot of time adding these little details to break any possible monotony in their tune, which in turn makes each section of the song exciting for the listener.

## [ ] Lesson Five: Chopping Bits To Emphasise Sections

Just as it is important to add little details to make our production stand out, removing a few elements in our production can also be used as a clever technique to "clear space" and add emphasis to certain aspects of our tune. I call this process "chopping" and in this lesson we'll chop the end bits of some song sections so we can make way for some snare roll fills which will add excitement and flavour to our song sections.

## [ ] Lesson Six: Adding Kick & Snare Rolls To Further Emphasise Sections

In this final lesson of the module, we're going to fill in the spaces we chopped out previously. We're going to use sixteenth notes to create a drum fill known as a snare roll, and I'll also introduce you to the Midi Note Editor's Velocity window which lets you add little variations to the volume of each snare hit. This lets you get really granular with your production, and is one of the keys to having a production that sounds "polished".

## [ ] Lesson One: Introduction

Now that we've completed the arrangement of your production, along with adding in and removing elements to make it sound like it's your own, it's time to get them to sound even better by using audio plugins. Plugins are little pieces of software that let you do specific things, and in this module we'll go through four of them: EQ, Compressor, Delay, and Reverb.

## [ ] Lesson Two: EQ I: Adding The Channel EQ Plugin

EQ is an important tool in the music producer's toolkit, but what exactly does it do and why do we need it? I give you the lowdown in this video, and I also explain the audio frequency chart, which shows you where the Lows, Mids and Highs are. Finally, I show you how to use the Channel EQ plugin we'll be using in this course.

## [ ] Lesson Three: EQ II: Brightening, Dulling, And Adding Extra Melodic Elements

In this lesson, we'll make some of our tracks "pop" and make other stay in the sidelines using EQ. This lets you highlight specific tracks by altering the way that they sound, while de-emphasising those that only serve as support roles, sitting further back in the overall track. This is a very general form of EQing, much like a painter using broad strokes. I'll also show you a technique that producers and engineers use which I call the "Notch trick" that lets you zero in on which frequencies to attack. Finally, we'll add another loop which will help fill out the spaces in some song sections - you can download this loop called "DDJT Verse Pads" below.

## [ ] Lesson Four: EQ III: Removing Unnecessary Low End With EQ

One of the biggest secrets for a big-sounding mix is to cut bass frequencies. Sounds weird? Not if the bass that you'll be removing are from tracks that don't need them, like hi-hats for instance. You'll cut out some unnecessary low end from your tracks using the Roll Off / Low Cut button on the Channel EQ, which eats up "bandwidth" in your mix, allowing tracks that do need low end to shine.

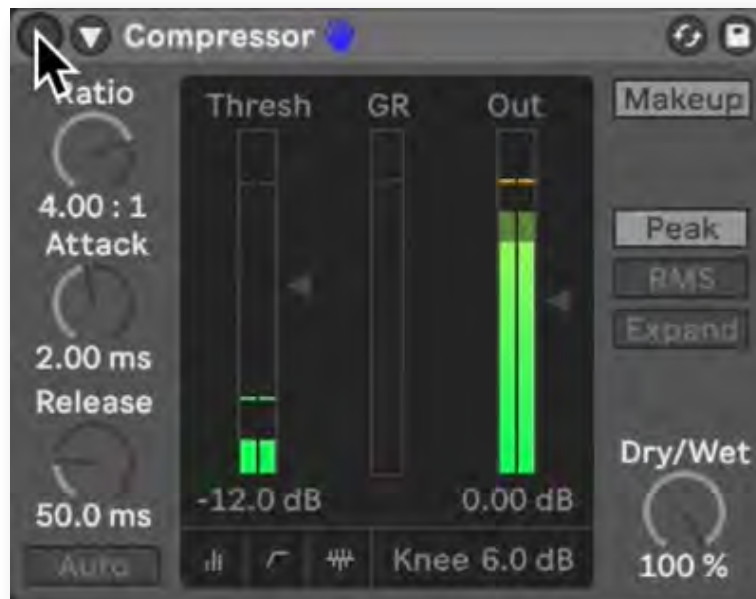
## [ ] Lesson Five: Compression I: An Introduction To The Compressor Plugin

Wonder how some synths, drums, or instruments sound "in your face" when listening to a track? That's what compression does, and in this lesson I introduce you to the plugin. I'll give you examples of conservative and over-compression, and then I'll walk you through the controls of Live's Compressor plugin which we'll add to the Drum Rack.



## [ ] Lesson Six: Compression II: Adding Compression To The Tracks

Modern electronic dance music makes use of a lot of compression, and in this lesson we'll begin adding Compressor plugins to the tracks in your project that need compression to give them more energy and get them in front of your production's mix.



## [ ] Lesson Seven: Compression III: Sidechaining To Add Movement

In this lesson, we'll make your tracks pump using a production trick called sidechaining. I'm sure you know the track One More Time by Daft Punk, or Satisfaction by Benny Benassi - that's sidechain compression in action. In this video I'll show you a production trick that's used in a ton of dance music tracks called side-chain compression. It's an important part of our production because it lets tracks that have the plugin "pump" along with the drums, creating a "grooving" sound, and it lets your kick drum have more impact overall.

## [ ] Lesson Eight: Delay: Make The Arpeggio Fuller & Add Interest

Here you'll add Live's Delay plugin effect in our Arpeggio track to thicken up its sound and give it a nice, spacey vibe. This also gives it a slightly different tonal character, and works nicely with the sidechain compression we added to it in the previous lesson. We'll continue adding more Delay later on in the Mix module using what's known as Sends & Returns.

## [ ] Lesson Nine: Reverb: Add Depth & Space To The Drum Rack

Some tracks in your production will benefit from sounding like it's in a bigger, deeper place than it initially appears to be in. Reverb is an effect that can simulate acoustic spaces, and in this lesson I show you how to add the Reverb plugin to the Drum Rack to give it a "3D" sense of depth. Like the Delay in the last lesson, we'll continue adding more Reverb later on in the Mix module using Sends & Returns.

## [ ] Lesson One: Introduction

In this lesson I explain the concept behind mixing, which is to make the important elements of a production shine while keeping the less crucial ones in the background as support. We'll organise the tracks in your project so they're easier to spot, and then we'll start levelling and placing sounds in the stereo field.

## [ ] Lesson Two: Organising Your Mix I: Grouping Tracks

We've now got a bunch of tracks in our project, and things can get out of hand when you don't do enough housekeeping. Let's clean up our project by arranging and grouping similar tracks together. This lets you fold them up and expand only when needed, which is useful if you're working on a small screen, and also lets you find tracks faster.

## [ ] Lesson Three: Organising Your Mix II: Colour Coding Tracks

To easily spot tracks in a sprawling project, colour coding them is a must. We'll add colours to our groups and tracks in this lesson, which will give our project a sense of visual order and make them easier to spot while scrolling through it.

## [ ] Lesson Four: Levelling Your Individual Tracks

In this lesson, I show you which parts of your track should stand out and which one should sit by the sidelines. You will level the tracks in your tune to emphasise the important production elements of your tune so they're the most dominant parts, while lowering the volume of the ones that should only be supporting them.



## [ ] Lesson Five: Creating Space In Your Mix With Panning

In this lesson, we'll use a technique called panning, which lets you put a track anywhere between the left and right speaker. This allows you to create a "wider" sounding-track, and lets important elements and bass-heavy tracks in the middle of your production take centrestage (literally!). It also further declutters your mix by having sounds sit to the left or right speaker.



## [ ] Lesson Six: Automation: Adjusting Panning For Certain Sections

In this lesson I introduce you to Automation. It's a feature that lets you tell Ableton Live to make changes to a particular control that you can specify. I'll show you how to add Automation to the panning control of the Arpeggio and Riser tracks which will get them moving from the right speaker to the left as the song progresses.

## [ ] Lesson Seven: Sends & Returns I: Adding Reverb To Tracks

Your computer can only have so many plugins running at the same time. Sends and Returns let you insert one plugin to be used by multiple tracks. In this lesson, we'll add a Reverb and "send" tracks to it to get your tracks sounding like they're in one "place".

## [ ] Lesson Eight: Sends & Returns II: Adding Delay To Tracks

In this lesson, we'll use Sends and Returns again but this time with the Delay effect. We'll use a shorter Delay Time here which gives a different sound compared to the longer Delay Time we used for the Arpeggio track in a previous module.

## [ ] Lesson One: Introduction

Mastering is the final polish given to the completed track once you've finished mixing it. I explain the vital importance of this final step in finishing a professional track, and then we'll create the mixdown file that we'll send to the LANDR online mastering service. Congratulations on making it this far, you're close to finishing your tune!

## [ ] Lesson Two: Preparing Your Song For Mastering

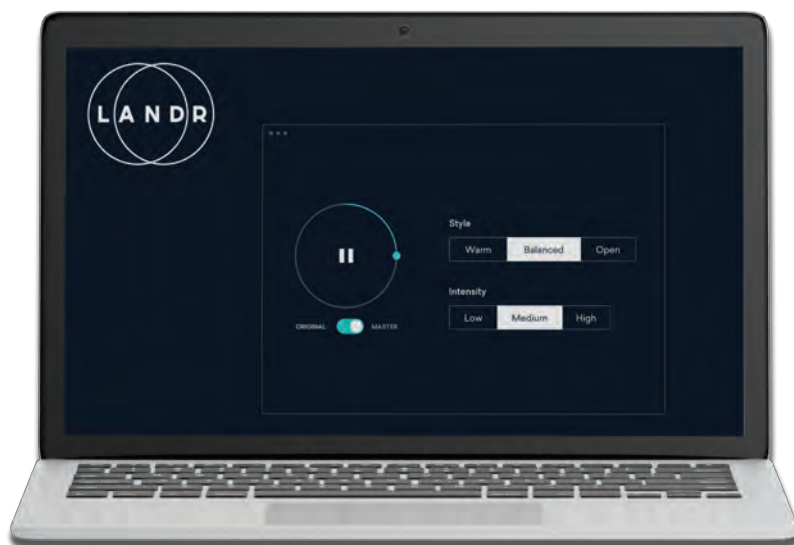
In this lesson, you'll make sure that your tune is ready for mastering by checking that none of your tracks are distorting, which will make it sound its best when it's mastered. I show you what headroom is and why you need it in order to help your tune sound as "big" as possible when it goes through the mastering process. At the end of this video, you will also export your project into a stereo track which will be ready to be sent out for mastering.

## [ ] Lesson Three: Uploading Your Song To LANDR

In this lesson we'll send your mixdown file to an online mastering service called LANDR. Online mastering services can get you pretty close to the results of a real-life engineer, and offers great value and an immediate turnaround. By the end of this lesson, you'll have a mastered, polished tune that's ready to unleash to the world! Congratulations!

## [ ] Lesson Four: Next Steps On Your Journey To Producing Your Own Tracks

Congratulations on finishing your track! In this final lesson I talk you through what steps to take next as you venture out on your own as a music producer and artist (hint: keep making music!)



**[ ] Coaching Seminar 1**

- Do you think age is a barrier to success in this field?
- How do you know which effects improve the sound of a track, and when do you know you've added too much?
- Any significant differences between Ableton 9 that the course uses and the current Ableton 10 version?
- Where can I find finished tracks that have been done as a result of taking this course? Would love to hear them!
- I was in last year's class and have used the Song Map technique extensively. What's another way to get started on a new song?
- Do you plan to exceed the 16-track limit of Ableton Live 10 Intro in this course?
- How to find your own style?
- A lot of dance tracks are over six minutes long. What would you call some of the other sections on your Song Map?
- What version of Ableton Live can I use with this course?
- Is it best to use the Drum Rack, or should I put drum sounds in individual tracks?
- If you could have only one piece of hardware to compliment Ableton, what would it be?
- When do we learn how to add vocals and other musical elements?
- I don't have a music background and I don't know how to play any musical instrument. Would the Captain Plugins be a good idea?
- Which third-party VST plugins are we going to learn in this course?

**[ ] Coaching Seminar 2**

- How do I find a song's musical key?
- Are audio loops mastered?
- How do you make exact, pin-point changes to the velocities in the Midi Note Editor?
- What plugins are essential for intermediate music production?
- Would love to watch the course even when I'm not connected to the internet. Any chance of the lessons being available "offline"?
- My view in Ableton 10 is slightly different to the videos. Is this just a Mac / PC thing?
- How do we differentiate between verses in the Song Map? Is there a rule or set of best practices for defining a Song Map?
- Is it essential to be thorough in chords and chord progressions (and playing the keyboard/piano) to produce decent electronic music?
- How can I create a more "hyped up" energy in my tracks? The atmosphere is good, but I miss the hands in the air kind of feeling.
- Is it worth getting a keyboard/ pad controller to experiment with at this stage in the course?



- What is a basic sound design workflow to introduce external sounds into our music? I'd love to add nature sounds in mine
- How long does it take to for one to feel comfortable when using Ableton? One year? Five years?
- How can I relate what I've learned in this course to other genres of music?
- What's the best way of recording vocals to use in dance music, and what's a good studio quality mic to use?
- How do I select loops to include in a production, given the number of choices available?

### [ ] Coaching Seminar 3

- When I have an Idea, some sounds, drums, a melody snippet: Which song section is best to start on? Drop, Verse, Intro...?
- Will we be able to "adapt" the track we are making and change it to make our own version? Is it wrong to do this in principle?
- Any best practices for using the Midi Note Editor to create my own melodies instead of using loops?
- Do the kicks and synths always have to be in the same musical key?
- Life intervenes and I've fallen behind. How long do I have access to these courses? Thanks.
- How can you record your own sounds in Ableton? Can you do it with a condenser microphone, and how would you connect it to a PC?
- Any sites or services you can recommend for creating acapellas?
- You have provided us a deconstruction of a track.. does the same blueprint apply for all tracks, or does it differ much?
- When adding synths to a production, is it better to create your own, or use loops?
- Tips for finishing an arrangement? As I arrange keep getting new ideas for track direction, should I complete one track then try others?
- Can I produce properly in my little spare time - or do I have to quit everything and totally commit to stand a chance?
- What other common / nice effects are applied to dance music tracks? (like side chain) Where can I find more info about these?
- It's easy to get stuck and not finish a track because I think it sounds bad. How do I overcome this?
- Have not been able to attend the course lately due to school! How many of these are left?

**[ ] Coaching Seminar 4**

- Is it OK for my audio track volume level to go into the “yellow”?
- Do we always need to use a Drum Rack to add kick, hi-hat, snare, etc? I notice some people on YouTube don’t and they just add the sounds straight to the audio tracks.
- You've said in one of the webinars that it's important to set aside a time for creativity. When is your best time to create?
- What is one of the best ways to get your music to the right people and or person to get it posted and or heard?
- What’s the best type of Midi controller to buy for new producers?
- What's the best way to get the same loudness and punch found in other dance songs into my mixdowns? I can never match them.
- Is it a good idea to go through the course multiple times?
- Is it advisable to mix fully in mono, and then make everything stereo during the final mixdown right before the mastering phase?
- This course has taught me a lot! Can you recommend some exercises or challenges to grow our skills and knowledge?
- Ableton has tons of add-ons. Which are OK for a beginner?
- Is it always necessary to have a synth pad?
- What’s the best way to get past “producer’s block”?
- What’s the best way to get Midi for a vocal piece - melodyne? Thanks
- Song's musical key: chicken or egg? What comes first? Do you start the track then decide the key or vice versa?
- Should I be focusing on a track I like to get ideas for my arrangement?
- Have any personal favorite tips for climbing out of the dreaded “keep rewriting other people’s (hit) songs” rut?
- Any advice on how to release music across different platforms? And how do I best credit others in my production (eg do I use artist, feat.?)

**[ ] Coaching Seminar 5**

- Is there a way to DJ with Serato and Ableton simultaneously?
- Can you go into more depth regarding bootlegs and remixes? How are they different?
- Can you give us tips for picking which instruments or synths to use in our productions?
- I don't really play the piano. What is a good method/tool to help me create a melody?
- Is it OK to use hi-fi speakers such as Mission or Tannoy with a separate amp instead of studio monitor speakers?
- I am just starting with the training and I would like to know whether it can be followed with Ableton 10 instead of 9?

- What do you recommend for alternating a Drop section the second time it comes around in a song to make it sound different?
- Where's the best place to start when purchasing plugins, any recommended must have plugins?
- I've taken Vespers' advice: I worked on concept, sound design and melody first before proceeding to build an arrangement. Is this approach better?
- Love the Bass Music tutorial. Could you explain more about your process or the general guidelines for making that type of music.
- How to becoming more efficient in techniques while creating melodies?

## [ ] Coaching Seminar 6

- I own the Akai Force and I've been using it for live sets alongside my Push 2. I'm interested in any insights using Akai Force.
- Any motivation tips for when you're stuck in a rut?
- Apart from creating a Song Map is there any other technique which can enhance the song writing process in Ableton?
- What does 'coloured' mean when referring to a processed sound? When I hear it it seems to have a negative connotation?
- I am using Captain Chords. It is a very helpful aid, but it adds a layer of learning that can be complicated. Should I keep using it?
- Any tips for making better melodies?
- What are some the best resources for getting quality new sounds, beats, vocals, accapellas possibly free or low cost?

## [ ] Coaching Seminar 7

- Could Session View help to build patterns first? Or is it unnecessary work?
- You've said in one of the webinars that it's important to set aside a time for creativity. When is your best time to create?
- As regards sampling, is there any links you can point us to that would help us or walk us through how to take a sample to Ableton?
- Do we always need to use a Drum Rack to add kick, hi-hat, snare, etc? I notice some people on YouTube don't and they just add the sounds straight to the audio tracks.
- I don't have a music background and I don't know how to play any musical instrument. Would the Captain Plugins be a good idea?
- What's the best way of organising samples from multiple sound packs for quick easy access in Ableton Live?
- How many bars does a riser need?
- What plugins are essential for intermediate music production?

- What's the best way to get the same loudness and punch found in other dance songs into my mixdowns? I can never match them.
- If you could have only one piece of hardware to compliment Ableton, what would it be?
- What's the best type of Midi controller to buy for new producers?
- Do you think age is a barrier to success in this field?
- What's the best way of recording vocals to use in dance music, and what's a good studio quality mic to use?
- How to find your own style?
- What's the best way to get past "producer's block"?
- Have any personal favourite tips for climbing out of the dreaded "keep rewriting other people's (hit) songs" rut?

### [ ] Coaching Seminar 8

- What is the fastest tool to recreate an existing song. In case you like the song but need to change some of the arrangement.
- I've posted a track on the platform for feedback and haven't received any comments yet, guidance would be much appreciated!
- What plugins are essential for intermediate music production?
- Is it essential to be thorough in chords and chord progressions (and playing the keyboard/piano) to produce decent electronic music?
- How can I create a more "hyped up" energy in my tracks? The atmosphere is good, but I miss the hands in the air kind of feeling.
- With warping samples, do you turn it off or on when making a sample bpm faster (eg 125BPM to 128BPM)? What's the best Warp algorithm to use?
- How long does it take to for one to feel comfortable when using Ableton? One year? Five years?
- How can I relate what I've learned in this course to other genres of music?
- What's the best way of recording vocals to use in dance music, and what's a good studio quality mic to use?
- There's been some discussion about mixing in mono. What's your take on mono v. stereo elements when it comes to good mixing?
- Can I use Ardour to make electronic dance music? How does Ardour compare to Ableton Live?

## [ ] Coaching Seminar 9

- How should I send tracks for mastering? Like what file formats, bit rates, and so on?
- Is it OK to use a cracked version of Ableton Live 10?
- What to start with: a good chord progression, a great percussion rhythm, or a good melody? Does it even matter?
- I cover pop, rock songs with my guitar and sing. What is the fastest tool to make backing tracks in Ableton Live?
- How to find a partner to collaborate with?
- When do you know that your track is "ready"? When should you publish it and move on instead of spending more time perfecting?
- If you have an artist you like, how'd you find a sample pack with a similar vibe?
- What approaches work best for people for finding time to produce when they have busy lives, jobs, families, etc?

## [ ] Coaching Seminar 10

- Pitching Kicks: I'm working on a Hardstyle project - what's the best way to pitch kick tails?
- Do you think age is a barrier to success in music production?
- How do you know which effects improve the sound of a track, and when do you know you've added too much?
- How do you like to name your project files if you have lots of projects on the go simultaneously?
- Where can I find finished tracks that have been done as a result of taking this course? Would love to hear them!
- I was in last year's class and have used the Song Map technique extensively. What's another way to get started on a new song?
- Does your production course work for any EDM like Melbourne Bounce? Seems like only for house not like big room...
- How to find your own style?
- Is it a no no to use the sound card of a Macbook for producing? How much do I have to invest for a "pro" standard sound card?
- How do I stop me bass sounding muddy? What compression setting should I try?
- Is it best to use the Drum Rack, or should I put drum sounds in individual tracks?
- If you could have only one piece of hardware to compliment Ableton, what would it be?



**[ ] Coaching Seminar 11**

- What's the best type of Midi controller to buy for new producers?
- What's the best way to get past "producer's block"?
- How should I send tracks for mastering? Like what file formats, bit rates, and so on?
- What to start with: a good chord progression, a great percussion rhythm, or a good melody?  
Does it even matter?
- If you have an artist you like, how'd you find a sample pack with a similar vibe?
- What approaches work best for people for finding time to produce when they have busy lives, jobs, families, etc?

**[ ] Coaching Seminar 12**

- Is it OK to use a cracked version of Ableton Live 10?
- When do you know that your track is "ready"? When should you publish it and move on instead of spending more time perfecting?
- If you have an artist you like, how do you find a sample pack with a similar vibe?
- What approaches work best when it comes to finding time to produce for people who have busy lives, jobs, families, etc?
- How does one refuel the creative mind?
- What's the difference between a remix, an edit, a re-drum and a bootleg?

**[ ] Coaching Seminar 13**

- What made you start producing?
- Can this course allow me to make the music you want to make?
- What is the best midi controller for a beginner music producer?
- How can I install the discounted version of Ableton after the 90-day trial?
- Will you do a lesson on keyboard midi controllers?
- Joey, what are your favourite plug-ins?
- Should you use mix templates?
- Is there a module on creating your own sounds?
- Will there be a bonus video on connecting midi controllers and drum machines to Ableton?
- Will we learn how to make remixes and dubs?
- Do the pro's use Ableton stock sounds or plugins and sounds from elsewhere?
- When and where is best to add automation?
- What's the difference between Music Production For DJs and All-New Dance Music Formula?
- Where can you buy loops and samples?
- Where should you add your drum sounds?

## [ ] Introduction To The Producer's Hackbook

In this video, I'll go through the little tweaks and hacks that music producers use in order to craft songs quickly and effectively, time and time again. Now that you've made the two tracks in the course, the videos in this module will teach you techniques and tricks that will further your technical skills, and help you develop your artistry as a producer. (Two things: technical and cerebral)

## [ ] Introduction to the Hands-On Hacks

In the first half of the Producer's Hackbook, I take you through some of my favourite techniques for producing music quickly in Ableton Live. It's my bag of tricks that I use whenever I need to come up with a tune quickly (ie all the time, to be honest), which includes my methods for disassembling a beat (great for figuring out how to integrate a specific type of drum beat into your own production), coming up with your own bank of melodies that you can use for those "dry days" when you're uninspired, and much more.

## [ ] Deconstructing Beats With Drum Tracing

In this video, I'll show you a trick that can speed up your understanding of how drums are made and how you can make yours sound like the pros quickly. I use this all the time when I want to breakdown a complicated drum groove in a song to understand how it's made, the learnings of which I then apply to a tune I'm producing.

## [ ] Write Melodies Faster With Melodic Sketching

Here I introduce you to my Melodic Sketching practice for quickly writing melodies that you can use as starting points for full productions later on. Since you're not composing an entire song from scratch, Melodic Sketching lets you focus on producing a melodic riff or hook first. It's my secret for churning out catchy tunes even on days when I'm not "feeling it", just because I've got a repository of riffs that I can pull from. I'll also show you how to transpose these melodies too so they fit into any musical key you choose.

## [ ] How To Add Your Own Vocal Pitch Shifts

In the course, we used a vocal sample to turn a melody into one that "sang" the notes. That's a form of vocal pitch shifting, and it's a hot production technique right now. Here's how to do it in Ableton Live using another sample found in your Sound Pack, this time we'll draw the notes after you've dropped the vocal sample in.

## [ ] Even More Song Maps

Want to explore other genres? Here are some song maps for you to download and fill in. In this video I talk you through the maps in this Song Map pack and where to get the loops from. Click here to download the Extra Song Maps Pack.

## [ ] Choosing Sounds i: Musical

In this video, I explain the basics of how sounds are chosen for different roles in a production. Think of each musical instrument as a stage actor: there's a lead, a co-star, a supporting cast, and so on. Sounds in a production are quite similar, and as such certain instruments or sounds play certain roles better than others - this is important because a good mix of "actors" leads to a fuller sounding dance music production.

## [ ] Choosing Sounds ii: Drums

In this second video we focus on the drums. Like the musical video before this, it's best to think of the drums as a group of individual instruments - kind of like a "beat orchestra", if you like! Each drum sound fills a particular section in the audio spectrum, and plays specific roles in the drum beat too.

## [ ] Introduction to the Hands-Off Hacks

In this second half of the Producer's Hackbook, I offer guidance on developing your artistry as a DJ/producer. I give you tips on how to sharpen your listening skills to make it easier for you to identify song sections, how to draw inspiration from other styles of music in your own productions, and how to break the "rules" of production.

## [ ] Sharpening Your Ears: Listening For Song Sections

The ability to hear a track with all the elements separate can be developed, and is a skill that lets you understand even complicated arrangements in much simpler terms. I'll give you some telltale signs of how to spot an intro, verse, breakdown and buildup. I'll also quickly show you what to do when a song or genre you've picked doesn't seem to have these chunks.

## [ ] Borrowing Ideas From Other Styles Of Music

A great way to develop your own sound is to analyse other styles of music, and bringing ideas across into your own production. In this video, we'll take some elements from hip-hop and apply them to a house track so you can understand what it means to "borrow" ideas and fuse them into your project. (refer to the house track in the course)

## [ ] How To Break The Production Rules

In this video, I go through some of the most common music production techniques that are particular to house and bass music, and then we'll use them as examples for how to break them. To keep things fresh in your career as a producer, breaking the rules is something you'll do time and time again - find out how in this video.



## [ ] **Installing The Bass Music Sound Pack**

In this video we'll download and install the Bass Music add-on sound pack so you'll have everything you need to get started putting together a future bass track. Click on 2 - Bass Music.ZIP below to grab it, and also listen to the song you'll be putting together called "Plus Forty Four".

## [ ] **Adding The Loops**

In this video we'll flesh out your tune by adding the loops found in the Bass Music sound pack. By the end of this video, you'll have covered most of song sections of the track.

## [ ] **Adding Drums & Bass**

Here we'll add some drum sounds and bass elements to round out your tune.

## [ ] **Adding Sidechain Compression**

Sidechain compression is an important element of future bass productions, so in this video I'll show you how to add it to the tracks that you've already got in your project.

## [ ] **Removing Unnecessary Low End**

Time for a little bit of housekeeping once again - we're going to be removing low end in tracks that don't need it, just like what we did in the main course. This will give our bass-heavy elements room to shine.

## [ ] **Levelling & Adding EQ**

In this video we'll tweak the volume of the tracks in your production and add EQ to make elements pop.

## [ ] **Adding Automation & Mixing Down**

This is the last video of the Bass Music module, and in it we'll add little automation tweaks and flourishes to add dynamics to your production and then we'll create the final mixdown file that you can send to LANDR for mastering.



## [ ] Introduction To Promoting & Distributing

In this first bonus, I take you through the process of creating a promotion schedule for your track, which is key if you want your tune to be heard by as many people as possible in a systematic way. I also show you how to distribute your songs online and get it heard on sites like Spotify and Apple Music, and how to get it on sale on iTunes, Amazon, Beatport, and other shopping sites.

## [ ] Creating A Promotion & Distribution Plan

In this video, I show you what a promotion and distribution plan is and why it's important to have one if you want to have a release that's effective and gets the most number of listens possible. I tell you how to craft a plan by first identifying who your target audience is, which will inform where it would be best to reach them. I then rundown a list of services and formats for distributing your music both online and offline.

## [ ] Developing Your Promotion Schedule

Proper scheduling of the release and promotion of your track is essential in order to give it the best chance of being heard by as many people as possible. In this video we'll work on your track's promotion calendar, which consists of four weeks leading up to a date that your track is set to be released. Doing this lets you build as much buzz as possible before the song actually drops.

## [ ] Song Release i: Get It On SoundCloud

Here, I show you why it's a good idea to use SoundCloud when you've got an original track. I give you best practices on uploading and formatting your track on the platform, and I show you how to optimise your profile page to get it looking professional and informative.

## [ ] Song Release ii: Getting It On Stores & On Streaming Services

In this video, I show you how to get your music from your hard drive to the world's biggest music streaming sites and stores. Here, we cover using online services known as aggregators that let you upload your song for a fee, and at the end of this stage your track will be professionally released on the likes of iTunes, Spotify, Apple Music and so on.

## [ ] Facebook Promotion: Creating A Facebook Page

In this video, I show you how to promote your track on Facebook by creating a Facebook Page. I show you how to get it looking its best by adding in properly-formatted photos and relevant information, and then I show you how to share it. By the end of this video, you'll have your very own DJ/producer Facebook Page. If you have one already, it's worth checking this video out for tips on optimising your page.

## [ ] **How To Promote Your Track On Instagram**

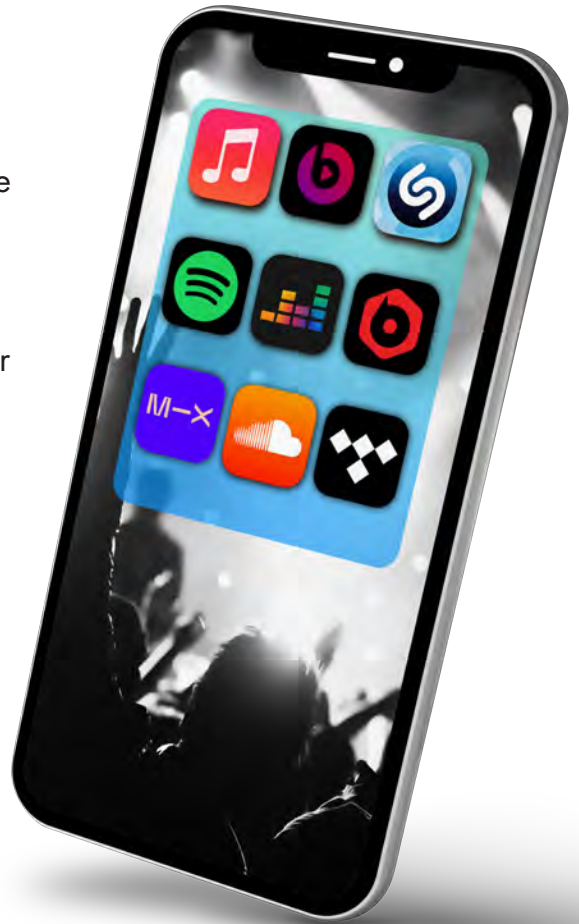
In this video, we tackle Instagram, the photo and video sharing platform. I show you how you can use it to promote your track before and after it gets released. I also take you through the Instagram Stories feature, and show you how you can post your Instagram photos and videos straight to your Facebook Page for your audience to see.

## [ ] **How To Promote Your Track On Blogs**

Online music blogs, internet radio station jocks, and podcasters are your friend in helping you get the word out about your tune. Here's how to do it, including how to shortlist ones that will likely feature your track (hint: skip Pitchfork and Brooklyn Vegan for now). Persistence pays off in the promotions game, and I show you how to follow up on your blog e-mails without being \*that\* annoying DJ/producer that goes straight to spam. Click here to download a swipe file that you can modify.

## [ ] **Next steps i: Getting Signed To A Label**

We've just gone through how to promote and distribute your song on your own, which gets your tune out online. Later on, you may want to consider signing up to a record label. A record label is an entity that, generally, has a greater network of connections and resources (ie money) than you, allowing your songs to land in the laps of people who are harder to reach, such as radio DJs, TV / film producers, and music supervisors, leading to more listens and streams. They also have influence and contacts with bigger music blogs, so signing up with one could give your track more press and attention.



## [ ] How I Made The Musical Elements For The Sound Pack

In this lesson I talk you through my creative thought process in coming up with the different elements we used to create Fall Through, which is the tune you built in this course. I'll be going through each of the groups, talking a little bit about why I decided to make them that way and also a bit of how I made them. It's a peek into my mind in other words.

Topics I'll be covering include:

- My musical inspiration for certain elements in the track such as the drums and bassline
- Why I like programming drums and hi-hats with lots of different velocities
- A peek at third-party plugins and samplers I used, such as Native Instrument's Kontakt player
- My two most important criteria for choosing a vocalist to collaborate with
- Why I decided to leave some elements out including an electric guitar and string stabs

If you were wondering how I came up with certain aspects of the production, you're going to want to watch this video :)

