

How To Mix Toms

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Hello again guys! Today I will show you how to mix toms.

I am going to show you the signal chain that I use and also how I use my EQ and compressors step by step. In the end I'll let you know what kind of effects I use.

I hope you'll like it, so let's get started!



EQ goes first

Start with a **high pass filter** and cut the **low-low end**. You can adjust your filter depending on how the tom was recorded and how “fat” the tom is (the floor tom is the fattest). **50Hz** to **100Hz** is a good start.

Just like the kick drum remove a pretty big portion of the **200Hz** to **400Hz** region. This will **clear mud** and shape the tone of your toms.

500Hz to **900Hz** is the spot you should cut to add a more 3D character to your drums. Sweep the frequencies and cut there.

2Khz to **4Khz** and **6Khz** to **10Khz** are the frequencies you can boost to let the toms cut through and also add presence to them. Mostly, I start with the presence frequencies (6Khz to 10Khz) and then I judge if I need any boosts on the 2Khz to 4Khz frequency range.

Tom should be almost ready now, but if there are any **low end junk frequencies** then use a **narrow Q** and cut around **150Hz**.

Now that you've cut the offending frequencies you can give a **small boost on the “good” low end** frequencies, which can be found around **50** to **130Hz**.

Time To Compress!

Single Track Compression

Ratio around **4:1**.

Slow attack, **medium** release or **fast** release.

Gain Reduction around **5db**.

Group Compression

You can use a **FET compressor** like the [1176ln compressor](#). The group compression can help **glue the toms** together, take away some of the sudden transients and give the feeling that work as a team.

After that you can also use a **limiter** to take out the **remaining peaks** that insist on driving you mad. Taking into consideration that most of the work was done by the compressor above, you should use the limiter gently or you've done something wrong. Go back to your signal chain and listen. Re-mix and then come back to the limiter.



Low Mid Problem?

Depending on how the drums were recorded you might find that there's lots of **annoying low end** that no matter how much you cut it... you can't tame it. **It keeps popping up** wherever you don't want to.

The typical problem is that you either need to **cut so much that your toms will sound weak/thin** or you'll have to **keep the fatness** of the tom but at the cost of the annoying low end resonances, right?

There's a solution for this and is called **Multiband Compression**. If you feel that cutting the low end kills the fatness of your toms then just compress just the low mids to **keep them tamed**. Then use the **Make Up Gain** (so you won't lose any low end volume).

Voila! You've just tamed the low end peaks without killing the fatness of the toms. Well done!

Transient Designer

As a last resort feel free to use a transient designer for some extra punch.

I am pretty sure that by following the guide above your toms should sound punchy already, but if the toms were so poorly recorded then yeah... you might need this.

If you actually use this, use it on the Tom Group as the last VST insert. By using it on the group will make the toms **sound like they work together as one single instrument**.

Reverb As An Effect

Toms are the 2nd in order that love reverbs after the snares.

You can use **plates, rooms or halls** without a problem here. Find one that make the tom sound great, adjust the return fader and you are good to go!

Mini tip: You can use more reverb in some slow song parts – especially in rock ballads – where the longer the **reverb tail** the more “vibe” you can add to the song.



That's all for now!

I will be back really soon for more guides and tutorials. If you like my blog, then feel free to follow me on the Social Networks below.

Take care guys and have fun experimenting!

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