

How To Remove Muddiness From Your Mix

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One of the most frequent problems that I find in other people's mixes is that the mix sounds **muddy**, so in this tutorial I will show you some steps on how to remove muddiness from your mix.

Muddiness means that the mix is **not "crystal clear"** stuffed up with **junk frequencies** (Low Mids mostly) without being able to distinguish one instrument from another.

This unclear mix tires the listener's ears and it doesn't allow him to concentrate on a specific instrument if he wishes to... cause there's a mess!



The Solution

I always tell you to spend most of the time recording the instruments/vocals with the best way possible because the **80% of a great sound** – or even more – **can be found at the recording stage**.

But if you can't re-record and your only solution is to fix things during the mixing stage then open your favorite EQ. Focus on the frequencies between **120Hz to 500Hz (and a bit higher than 120Hz depending on the instrument)**.

These frequencies are the ones that almost each instrument has, but sure thing is that not all of the instruments need them.

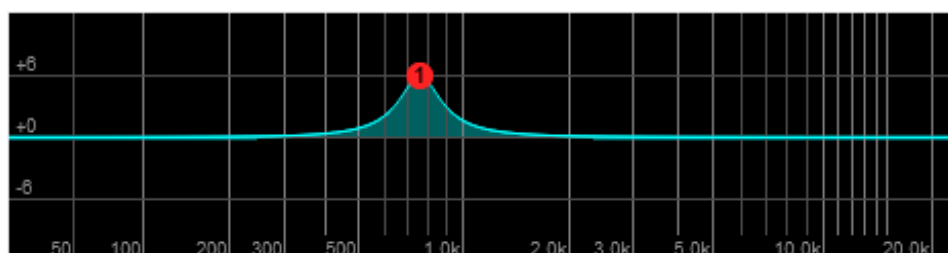
For this reason, when you are "building your mix" from the "base" instruments (drums, bass...) make sure to cut as many frequencies as possible from instruments that don't really need them.

And no, I **don't mean to cut -20db**. I've found out that even only 2-3db can do the trick (sometimes you can go up to 4-5 or even 8 depending on the mix – don't be afraid to experiment as long as it sounds good).

The main target of the Equalizer is to use it to **correct** things and **not to build the sound from scratch**. That's why we have recording for.

Also, 3db may not seem much of a difference – especially in Solo Mode – but while all instruments are active and playing together, you'll hear your mix less "cluttered" and "muddy" and also with more clarity and brightness.

For this reason create a bell with a narrow Q like in the image below:



Look for the frequencies that I mentioned above and follow my guidelines step by step.

Now, each track/instrument you are going to add will be more noticeable because you **will create room for them by cutting junk frequencies**.

Doing the above, the instruments will be also heard in the mix, **without having to drive the volume faders to the max.**

So if you ever wondered why you can't find a proper volume balance between the tracks... This article is your answer! Happy mixing!
