



#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek



Hi Producers and welcome to my studio.  
My name is Maarten Vorwerk and I live in Aruba.

I produce Dance Music already since 1996.

Started out with Hardcore music, made my way into Trance, then into Jump/Hardstyle  
and after that I started making Commercial Club Music.  
Which I still do, and mostly for other people (DJ's).

Every week I'm trying to provide you with a studio tip that answers all your questions  
about mixing, producing, creative struggles and business.

I have bundled all tips in one book so you can use it as a reference book while you are  
working in your studio.

It takes a lot of time to put all of this together every week. But I really enjoy reading  
about the things that it taught you already and your positive reactions.

So keep your questions coming and I will try to find your answer from my perspective!

I hope you enjoy it

## Table Of Contents

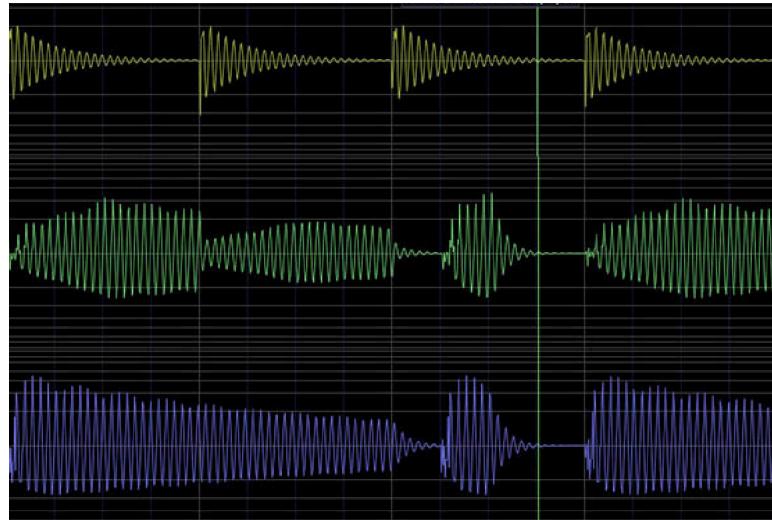
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #1 Sidechain effect	6
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #2 Subboom effect	7
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #3 Reverb & Delays	8
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #4 Loudness	9
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #5 Left and Right EQ	10
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #6 Multiband Compressor	11
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #7 Presence	12
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #8 EQ'ing	13
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #9 Kicks	14
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #10 Special Motivation	15
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #11 Louder = Wider	16
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #12 Hard Disk Clipping	17
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #13 Mixing Vocals	18
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #14 Stereo Imaging	19
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #15 Kick vs Basline	20
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #16 Layering Synths:	21
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #17 Cool FX.	22
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #18 Taking control of your mixdown	23
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #19 Mid-Side EQ - Stereo widening - Mastering.	24
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #20 #Special Business tip	25
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #21 Vocal Mixing	26
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #22 Parallel Compression	27
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #23 Key Of A Track	28
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #24 Kick enhancement	29
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #25 Pitchbend	30
#Vorwerk #tipoftheweek #26 EQ	31
#Vorwerk #tipoftheweek #27 Compression:	32
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #28 Workflow	34
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #29 Mixing / Mastering	36
#Vorwerk #tipoftheweek #special #30 Business	37
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #31 Mixing and leveling	38
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #32 Mixing / Sounddesign	39

#Vorwerk # Tipoftheweek #33 Reverb	40
#Vorwerk # Tipoftheweek #34 Automation	42
#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #35 Mastering	43
#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #36 How to start your mix!	45
#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #37 Mono	46
#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #38 Writers Block and Creativity	47
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #39 Production tip: Making a cool bass	49
#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #40 How to get your record signed!	50
#Vorwerk #tipoftheweek #41 LOUDNESS	52
#vorwerk #tipoftheweek #42 Know when to stop!	54
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #43 Widening up your sound	55
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #44 Ambient noises or background action in a track	57
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #45 Physics / EQ / Acoustics	58
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #46 Subtractive and additive EQ'ing in commercial dance music	59
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #47 Working with a musical (business) partner	61
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #48 Income streams for DJ's and Producers	62
#Vorwerk #tipoftheweek #49 Monitor volumes	65
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #50 Phase Part 1	67
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #51 Phase Part 2	69
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #53 Layering Synths Part 2	71
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #54 Loudness	72
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #55 How to save CPU	73
#Vorwerk #TipoftheWeek #56 Harmonic Exciter	74
#Vorwerk #Soundoftheyear #57 Sylenth Soundbank	75
#Vorwerk #TipoftheWeek #58 Transient Designers	76
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #59 Dynamic EQ-ing	77
#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #60 Export reference	78
#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #61 Problems in the high end	79
#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #62 Mastering	80
#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #63 Demosessions	81
#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #64 Demosessions	82
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #65 Song Tempo	83
#Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #66 Speed	84
#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #67 Mixing	85

<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #68 Mixing Kick &amp; Bass vs Drop Melody</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #69 Folder Tracks</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #70 The Noise Gate:</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #71 Midrange:</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #72 Wide Stereo Lead</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #73 Layering</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #74 Mix assignment</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #75 How to give your Lead sound a little extra spice</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #76 Food for thought</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #77 Vocal Side-Chain</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #78 Rhythmic Gating</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #79 A 'Lively' sound</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #Halloween Special Trick or Treat</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #80 EQ'ing before or after Compression</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #81 Superwide!</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #82 Creating your own sound</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #83 How to Arrange your track?</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #84 Speaker placement</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #85 Panning</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #86 Distortion</b>	<b>105</b>

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #1 (12-3-2014)

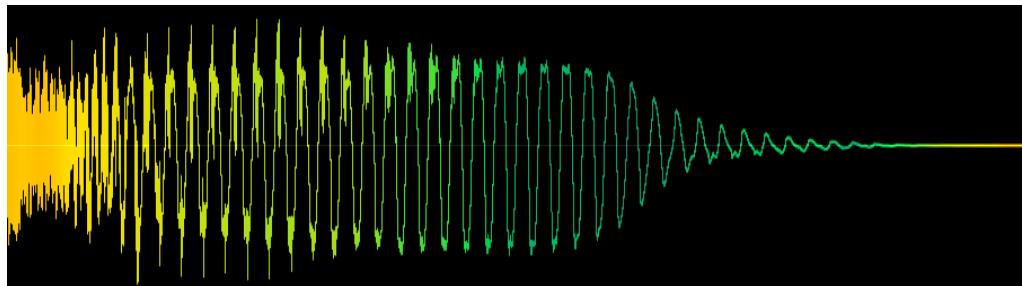
### Sidechain effect



try to sidechain a gate on your lead sound  
to get more control on the tail of your sound.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #2 (19-03-2014)

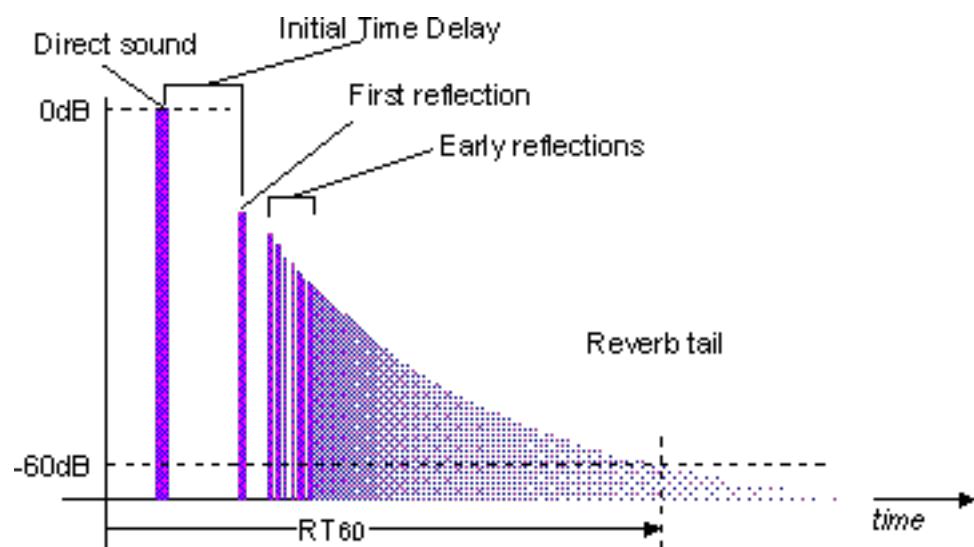
### Subboom effect



take a sub kick. Stretch it by half the tempo, 4 times over.  
Add a down pitchbend. There's your subboom.  
Reverse it to get a low sweep riser type effect. Adjust with  
filters and eq and fade-ins to your liking.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #3 (27-3-2014)

### Reverb & Delays



If you use reverbs & delay.  
Try to make 2 or 3 good ones and only use those in the track.  
So mute the effects from your vst synthesizers.  
This will make the track less blurry.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #4 (02-04-2014)

### Loudness



When mixing a track to a certain loudness. Take a track you like, set your volume knob/fader to a fixed point. Remember how loud that track sounded and try to mix your track towards it. In my case I know how loud a track should sound when my volume knob is at 5 past 12. Mixing towards that is a different story but it is a great guideline.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #5 (09-04-14)

### Left and Right EQ



Many Eq vst's allow you to give the L and R channel seperate eq.  
This done right it widens up your sound.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #6 (16-04-2014)

### Multiband Compressor



try to misuse a multiband compressor as an equalizer on your lead sound and discover what happens!

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #7 (23-04-2014)

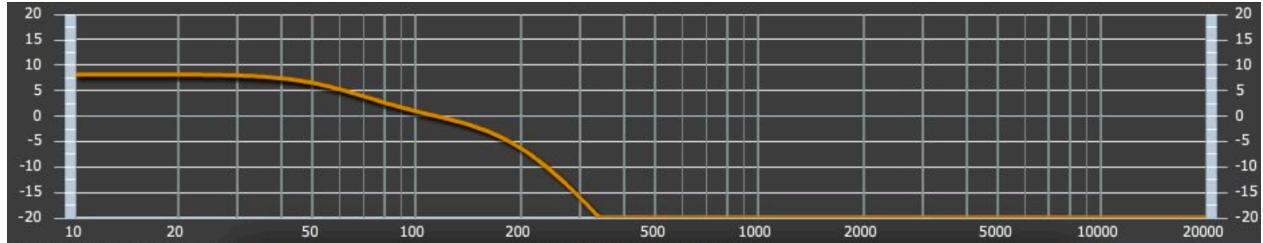
### Presence



If you want to create more presence on a sound. Put a reverb on it with a short pre-delay and short reverb time.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #8 (30-04-2014)

### EQ'ing

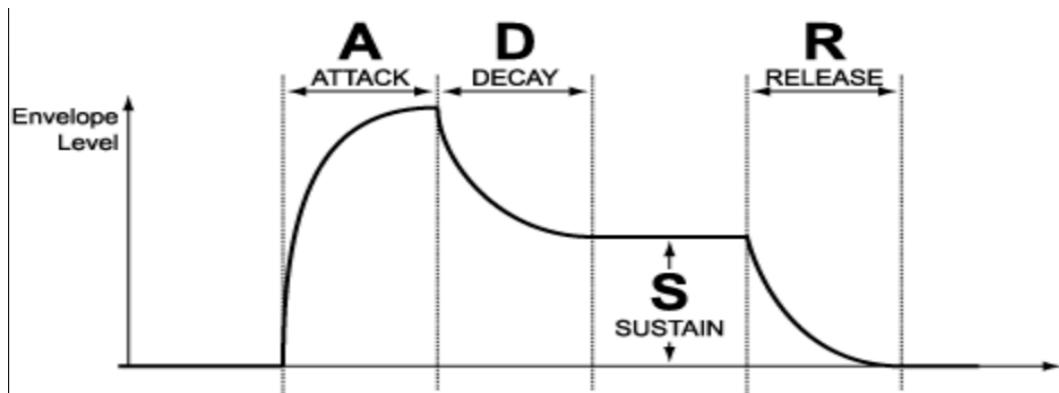


When EQ'ing sounds. It's more important how they sound in the mix then solo'd. Cut out all the freq you don't wanna hear.

Even if you don't hear them

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #9 (07-05-2014)

### Kicks



### Kicks:

Find a basic kick which sounds good. 909, sample it, whatever. Make sure you have it at the right volume. Not to soft, not to loud .

Then

Instead of compressing it try to put on top of your existing kick a part "see below" of another kick or tom or cowbell or bass synth or whatever suits your liking, which you would like to accentuate in your kick mix. Now that super small part you can mix as well. Try distortion, Eq, filter and see what happens.

### Part:

'Attack (gives more tok) / Decay (Gives more presence) / Sustain & Release (gives more lowend and longer tail)'.

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #10Special (14-05-2014)

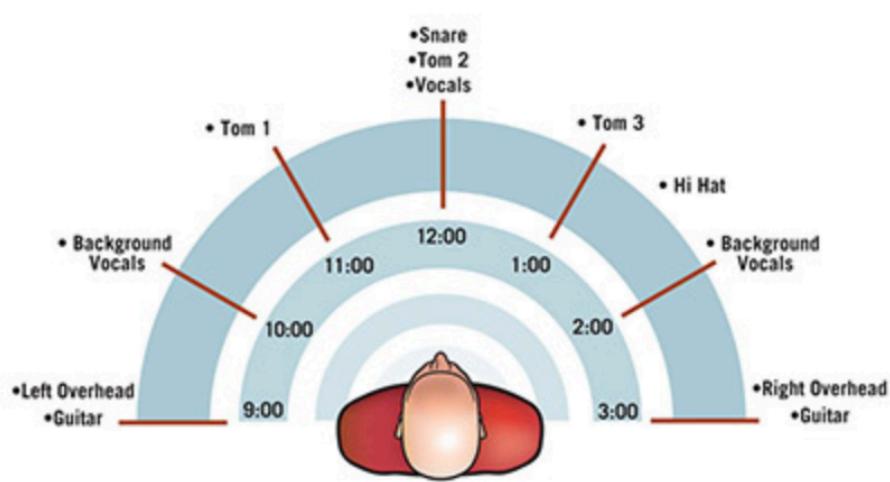
### Motivation

A Good chef needs  
*No Recipe*  
but a glass of *Good Wine*

Making music is like cooking.  
It's all about the chef and not the kitchen.  
No matter where you live or how poor you are.  
It's still possible to make that one hit in your bedroom.  
All you need is a good idea which will define you  
and make you stand out against others.  
The rest will follow automatically!

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #11 (21-05-2014)

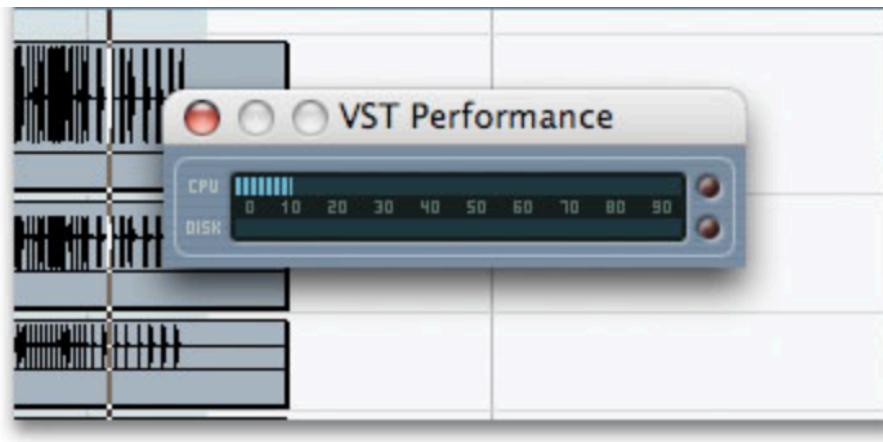
Louder = Wider



If you want a louder mix you have to make your mix sound wider. [#panning](#) [#enhancing](#) [#delays](#) [#reverb](#) This will make sure that there is still room for all elements in the track. It also creates a bit more headroom and more possibilities to increase the sound level.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #12 (28-05-2014)

### Hard Disk Clipping



If you experience hard disk clipping during your production process.

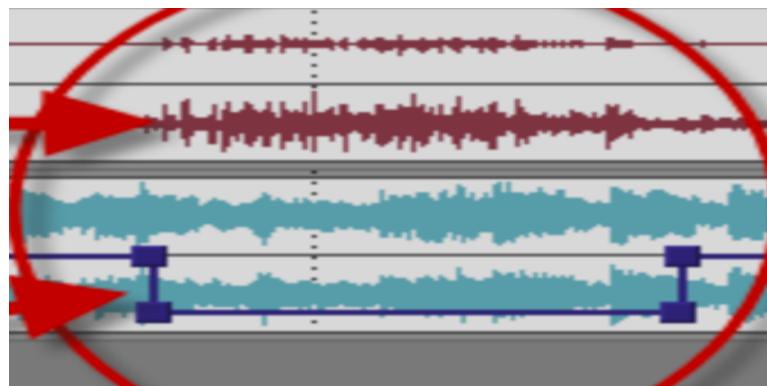
Make an archive of your audio samples in your project folder.

This is an option most DAW's have.

After that it's gone!

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #13 (04-06-2014)

### Mixing Vocals



Mixing: When mixing vocals on top of a drop make sure you duck the volume of the lead synths a couple dB on where the vocal is. This way the vocal will always stand out even in the busiest parts of the track.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #14 (11-06-2014)

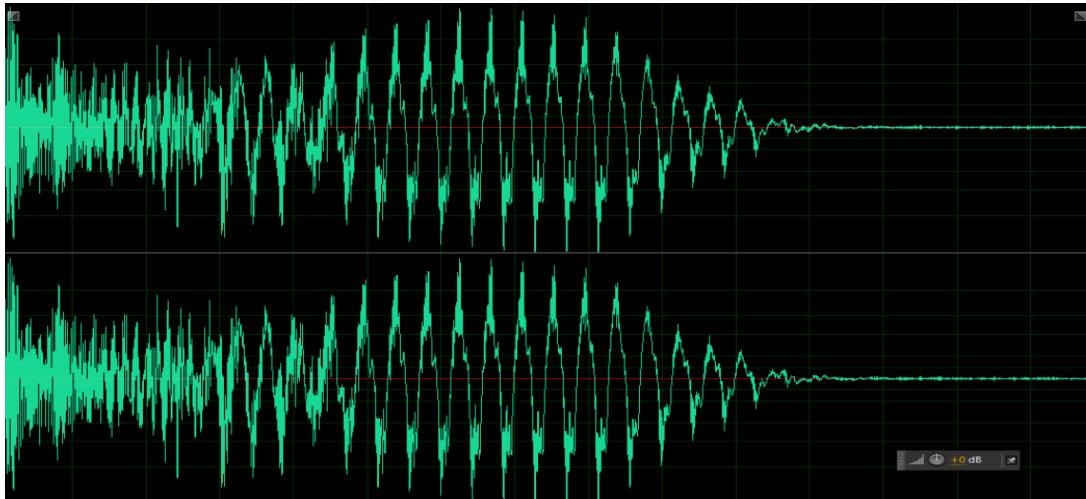
### Stereo Imaging



Stereo Imaging: This is an unconventional tip.  
Bounce your finished lead to audio. Duplicate the track.  
Filter all the low frequencies (at least everything under 500  
Hz) of the duplicated lead.  
Put a stereo enhancer with a touch of hall verb on it. And  
take the volume fader down.  
Now gently mix it back in until you feel you have made a  
wider lead sound.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #15 (18-6-2014)

### Kick vs Basline



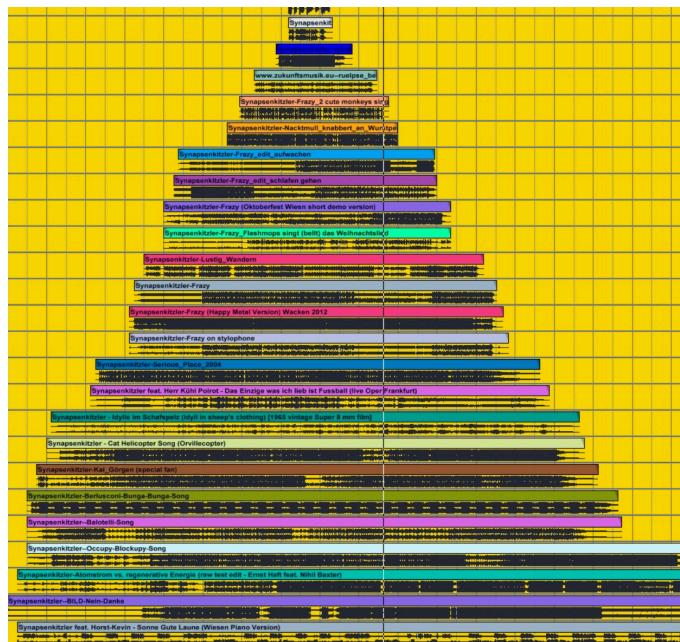
If you make a bassline orientated track you should use a shorter kickdrum. So there is more room for the bass. You don't necessarily need to cut off the low from the kick since it's short anyway. But the kick works better when it has more 'tock' 80-120hz.

Then after you added your bassline and mixed it in with whatever you use (compressors, eq, gate, sidechain etc.) and you are still not happy with the low end. Then you could cut every thing below 50 or 60 hz on that bassline and add a little altered sinewave underneath it with the same midi pattern and put a lowpassfilter on the sinewave to only keep the lowend. This usually sounds a lot tighter and warmer!

Good luck!

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #16 (25-6-2014)

### Layering Synths:



Depending on if it's necessary to layer synths you can use this as a good starting principle.

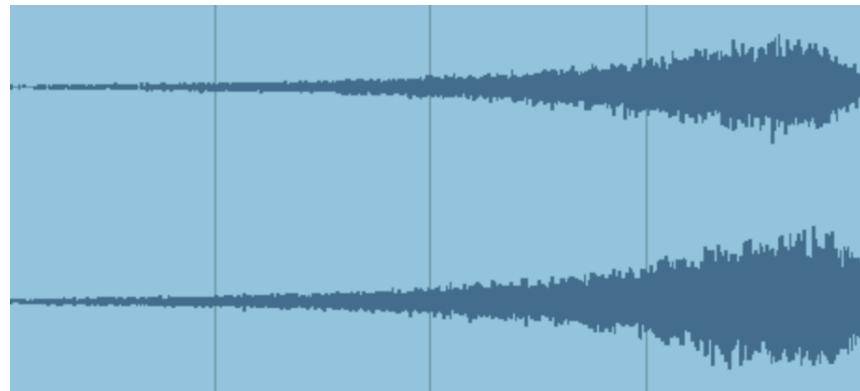
Three layers:

- low frequency bass layer: give those the same Att, Dec, Rel as the main synth. So they are in close sync. frequencies between 50 Hz - 500 Hz
- main synth: the synth which you think gives power to the break or drop. frequencies between 500 Hz - 5kHz.
  - character sound: a sound in the high freq area which will give you lead that bit of extra character. Could be anything from a piano to a church bell 5kHz and higher.

Make sure you have volume control over these three layers and blend them together until you received a warm powerful sound.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #17 (02-07-2014)

Cool FX.



This works best on a vocal but you can use this on everything.

Take a piece of an audio sample. Reverse the sample (so it plays backwards). Then apply some long tail reverb on it.

Render it. And then Reverse it back again.

Great for introducing break melodies or start offs for vocals.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #18 (09-07-2014)

### Taking control of your mixdown



When your mix is getting a bit 'messy(i)' it is a good thing to reroute your tracks to several groups.

Try to keep things organised and divide your mix for instance into; Kick / Beats / Bass / Leads / FX / Vocals. This way you will regain easy control over your volume settings (among other things) before entering the final mixbuss.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #19 (16-07-2014)

Mid-Side EQ - Stereo widening - Mastering.



Some EQ vst's have the function Mid-Side. (Fabfilter Pro-Q, Ozone, Voxengo, etc..). This will split up your soundsignal into Mid (all the mono information) and SIDE (all the stereo info). This way you can Equalize the mono and stereo stuff from the same signal seperately.

You can for instance boost the high freq on the stereo info. This will give a bit wider sound.

It's also easier to cutoff low freq from The SIDE while maintaining the ones from the mid. This way you create more focus on the low end of that signal.

You can use this technique really good while mastering or when creating layered synths.

Try to compare normal EQ with Mid-Side EQ and hear the difference.

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #20 #Special #Business (22-07-2014)

Bussiness tip

# All You Need to Know About the Music Business

EIGHTH EDITION

- Up-to-date information on new business models,  
including music streaming services and cloud lockers
- The latest developments in digital rights
- Updated numbers and statistics for the traditional industry

Donald S. Passman

"Any creative person who's considering working in the music business  
should read this book." —Jimmy Iovine, chairman, Interscope Geffen A&M Records

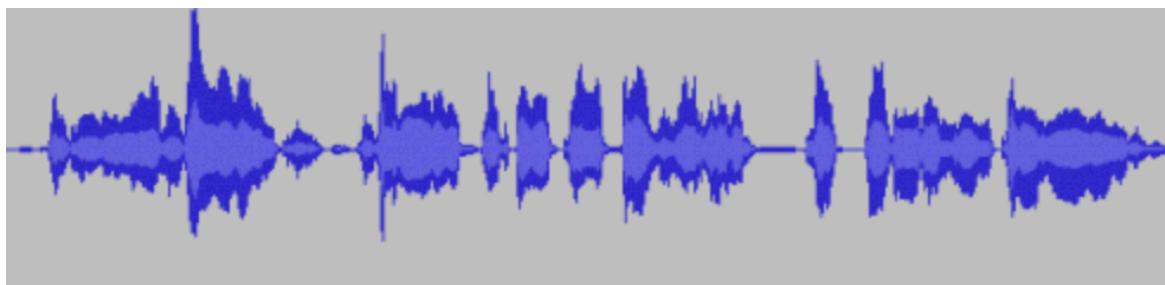
Today a very short message, but one of the most important things you can learn:

Do business with common sense  
And make music with compassion  
Never mix one with the other!

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #21 (30-07-2014)

### Vocal Mixing

Vocal Mixing is something I don't like .  
However there is a basic that I often use.



#### Compression:

Use a bit of compression to even out the volume of the track.  
For instance with the fabfilter Pro C you can see the amount of compression and  
how the peaks are compressed which can be very handy.

#### Reverb:

Use a reverb with a pre-delay which matches the bpm of your track. U use a pre-delay to make sure the vocal doesn't drown in your mix.

To calculate the right pre-delay you can use this formula:  
60000 divided by the bpm. For a 128 bpm track that would be 469ms for a quarter note. But I prefer the 16th Note (=117ms)

#### Delay settings:

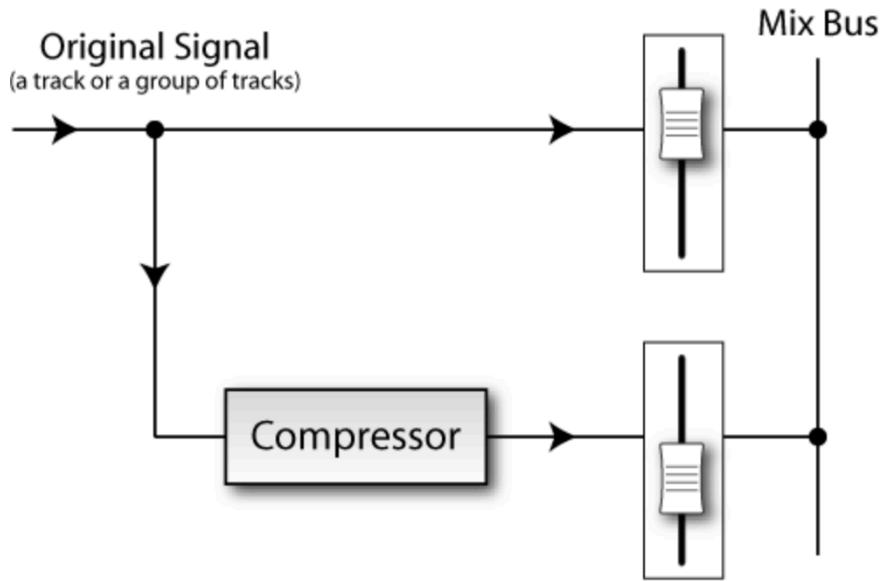
You can use the same formula to calculate the delay time (or use a sync button).  
Usually a bit 1/4 note delay gives a nice flow. Make sure you don't put the feedback to high.

#### Eq:

Eq to taste. Body of a vocal normally lies between 200-500 Hz.  
Everything below 80Hz you can cut away.

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #22 (06-08-2014)

### Parallel Compression



The basics of Parallel compression:

When you want to make a sound/vocal or a group or a whole track sound fatter you can use a trick called parallel compression.

The idea behind it is that you keep the dynamics of the higher volume peaks but you heavily compress the low volumes of the sound.

How to do this. Mix a dry signal and leave it untouched and send that signal to a bus which you heavily compress. Use short attack times and long release times with a deep threshold ( but play around to see what fits best ).

A long release time will make sure that the bus signal will be as 'flat' compressed as possible.

After that you mix some of the compressed signal back into the mixdown until it creates a fatter sound without harming the dynamics to much. If you get phasing issues. Use time delay compensation or put the same compressor on the dry signal without any effective settings.

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #23 (13-08-2014)

### Key Of A Track



I got a interesting question from Scott Tredennick.

He asked me how to pick a key of a track.

Now I don't have any musical knowledge regarding notes and stuff.  
But I normally base the key of the track on what goal you want to achieve  
with the track.

Now this is based on my opinion but this is how I differentiate in general  
sense:

G = I've think that this key carries the most energy for cool/tough tracks

F = Also cool but you can give the low end a bit more low.

E = For really Low kick based tracks

A = For more emotional melodies and stuff.

C,D and B = more for commercial happy stuff.

Edit: The key in minor makes it a bit more sadder and darker. The key in  
major a bit more happy and open .

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #24 (20-08-2014)



### Kick enhancement

Hello everybody! Thanks for joining me again.

Today I have a very special tip which you can use to enhance your Bigroom Kick. It's a very difficult one, so pay close attention and keep on trying until it sounds right for your project/drop.

I realize that there are going to be a lot of people this time that don't understand what the f#\$@ I am talking about. But for the ones who do, this will definitely help improve.

So you have made your bigroom kick which last a full quarternote.

This kick is offcourse in a certain key.

Now find a cool gritty bass sound and put it on top of the kick in the same key. Also for a full quarternote. Make sure the bass sound rolls a bit of using an Ifo-pitch assigning.

Now they probably don't sound very well on top of each other.

Your bigroom kick has allready got enough low-end. So start with cutting off the low end on the gritty basline.

After this put a reversed sidechain on top of your kick. So that it starts hard and then rolls of. This will make your kick a bit tighter and shorter.

Then put a normal Sidechain on the gritty bassline.

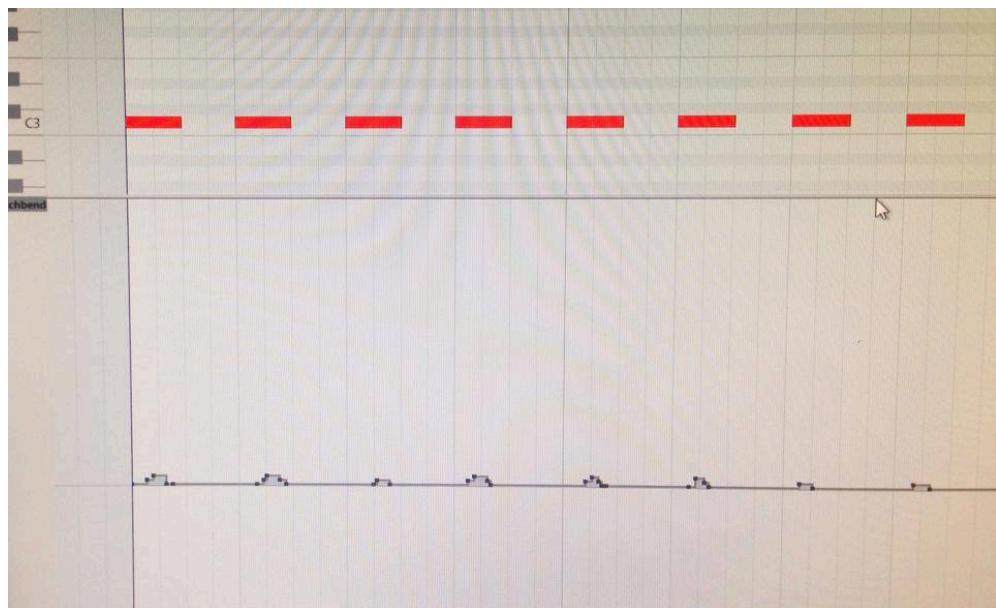
Try to mix the crossover points of the 2 sidechains to each other so that the kick will sound as a whole.

Keep tweaking those crossover points and the low frequencies of the bas sound until it sounds right and they don't conflict with each other.

If this isn't enough of an enhancement then you can also add some "vocal riding" on the afterbeat (Manual, no plugin!) to your gritty basline to give it a bit more dynamic feel and swing. Experiment with this, it's fun!

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #25 (27-08-2014)

### Pitchbend

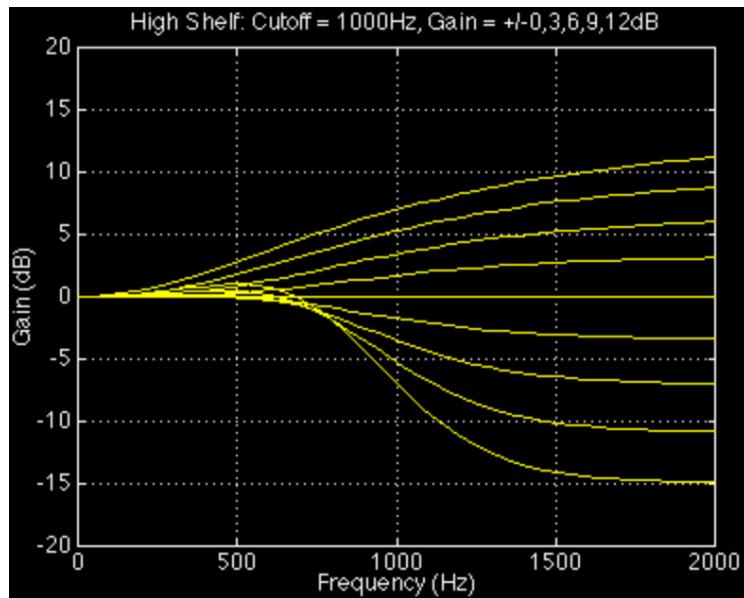


Sometimes adding a tiny bit of pitchbend on each or some notes of your Drop/Groove can make your sound from dull to interesting!

With a 'tiny bit' I mean >> see picture. And this is on a 12 note scale. But try to experiment with this.  
Good luck, see you next week!

## #Vorwerk #tipoftheweek #26 (03-09-2014)

### EQ



A tip on Equalizing.

Creating depth in your track: (very important!!)

While mixing you also need to concern yourself with the depth of your mix rather than only worry about the stereo imaging.  
(Like mixing in 3D)

If you roll off/ cut some of the high frequencies of a sound it will appear further away in your mix.

This used in a proper way you can bring out another element in the same frequency span by boosting those high frequencies.

Like for instance Kick vs Bass.

Or Vocals vs Backing Vocals or mixing guitar parts. Etc...

This way you can emphasize what you want to have in the foreground of your mix or in that particular part of the spectrum.

## #Vorwerk #tipoftheweek #27 (10-09-2014)

Compression:



So a lot of people keep asking me about Compressing. How to and what not to!?

First of some basics in a nutshell.

With Compression you can bring down your peak levels and bring up your low levels.

So you reduce the dynamic range so it sounds a bit more fatter.  
It's like playing a sound in your house while lowering the ceiling and bringing up the floor.

The basic features on a compressor are:

Attack: How fast you want the compressor to start compressing

Release: How long the signal needs to be compressed

Ratio: How skewed your ceiling is. With a ratio of 10:1 meaning a flat roof

Threshold: How low you want the ceiling to be. So every sound that peaks above your threshold will get compressed

Make-up Gain: If you use a compressor your volume signals will go down.

With the make up gain you can bring the level up to what it was before compressing. <This, for me, is the most important thing cause only then you can compare if compression adds anything or not.

Make sure the sound is equally loud when muting or unmuting the compressor.

Beware of the fact that you also boost unwanted signals like low-end noise. So eq this stuff proper and keep it in mind.

Each compressor has its own sound character. You can only learn this by trying them yourselves.

You can find a whole list online with people discussing which one is the best for a typical sound or overall mix.

Compressors (especially analog) create audible sound effects which can sound very pleasing and can do wonders to your overall mix, vocal or sound.

Also cause analog compressors can give you more headroom to start with.

<http://www.attackmagazine.com/features/top-20-best-hardware-compressors-ever-made/20/>

So you can use compression on a sound (drum, bass, synth, guitar, vocal etc.) to make it more present and fatter in your mix.

You can use it to change the envelope of a sound.

You can use it as a limiter

You can use it to create effects. Like compressing sends with reverb or other stuff on it.

You can use it for side-chaining.

You can use it to give your overall mix a bit more loudness/ fatness.

And there are probably other stuff you can do with it, which I don't know of.

I can not give you guys any specific ratio's cause that's different for every sound and every mix you are doing.

However I do advice you to don't overdue it unless you mean to as an effect. And beware of the fact that your ears get used to the compressed sound very fast.

So keep comparing while mixing otherwise your mix could get more blurry.

Good luck!

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #28 (17-09-2014)

### Workflow



I always get a lot of questions about workflow.  
I can only speak from my point of view about this subject.  
And actually I guess it works differently for everybody else.

Anyways,

I don't have a standard way of addressing a new track. They are always different.

Mostly cause of the fact that I have and want to produce in different styles.

Starting a new track:

See what triggers your inspiration. A beat, a melody, a sound, a drop, a vocal.

Take the first thing that inspires you and always work around that and try to make that as finished as possible. Usually the rest will follow automatically.

The track I'm working on now started with the break. I made the layers. Bass, synths and top end. Arranged it properly so that it has a nice start and build up to the drop.

I didn't had any ideas for the drop so I first made some beats which I thought fit the breaks well.

While making the beats you'll form an idea if this is becoming a harder or more progressive type style track. So that narrows the type of drop you are going to make as well.

If you finished the drop then you'll have a whole track in essence. During the making of the sounds and beats you already start to mix a bit cause that gives you a better idea if it will work or not.

As of now the total idea of the track has to be solid and should already be playable in the clubs more or less.

But,

After this the hard part starts. This is like the last 10% of the track but takes up the most skill and time.

First try to set a logical arrangement for the track.

Then try to fit everything altogether sounding like a complete track.

After that It's all about

- Cutting stuff away (less = More). So don't keep adding things!!!
  - Mixing, mixing, mixing
- Make automation for a more natural feel and more control.
  - Making effects to mask poor transitions
  - Making your track Tight.
- Cut off the tails of effects and sounds which blur to much with other stuff.
  - After that Check, Recheck, Check and Recheck again and again.
  - Test it in your car , headphone, club, homestereo etc...

And Finished!

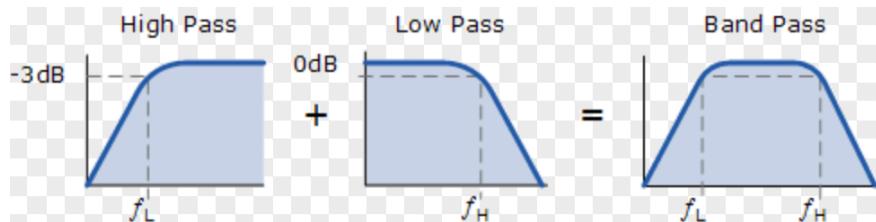
See you next week!

The how to speed up your workflow. You can read over here:

<http://turnupthebass.net/2014/04/08/maarten-vorwerk-production-tips/>

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #29 (24-09-2014)

### Mixing / Mastering



Roll off all the frequencies below +- 100 Hz on all your channels except the kick and the bass (string).

By doing this you create more breathing space and headroom in your mix!

So your mix can become a little bit louder in volume as well.

## #Vorwerk #tipoftheweek #special #30

Business



Whenever someone tells you "This is our standard contract" you know you have options!

# #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #31 (08-10-2014)

## Mixing and leveling



Essential part of mixing and leveling;

Take one, or better a few tracks, you like that are in the same subgenre as you are producing in.

Use those as a reference point when mixing and gaining your elements.

Don't put them over the same master out. Otherwise your 'masterchain' will affect those tracks too.

If you use a lot of multiband or harmonic excitement on tracks it is essential you keep comparing cause you get used to that type of sound very fast.

Which makes you think it sounds fat but it could potentially sound like shit when you compare it to those other tracks.

If your track doesn't even come close to the ones you compare it with than try harder and don't send it out until you have it properly fixed. Always try to make it sound even better than the ones you compare it with!

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #32 (15-10-2014)

### Mixing / Sounddesign

In today's tip of the week I wanna point out an interesting plugin which not a lot of people know.

The Blue Cat's MB-7 Mixer.



[http://www.bluecataudio.com/Products/Product\\_MB7Mixer/](http://www.bluecataudio.com/Products/Product_MB7Mixer/)

This plugin allows you to split a single signal into 7 frequency bands. Which you can then treat if it were individual tracks. So you can use eq on all frequency channels, play with the stereo field but also you can use up to 4 of your favorite vst's per channel.

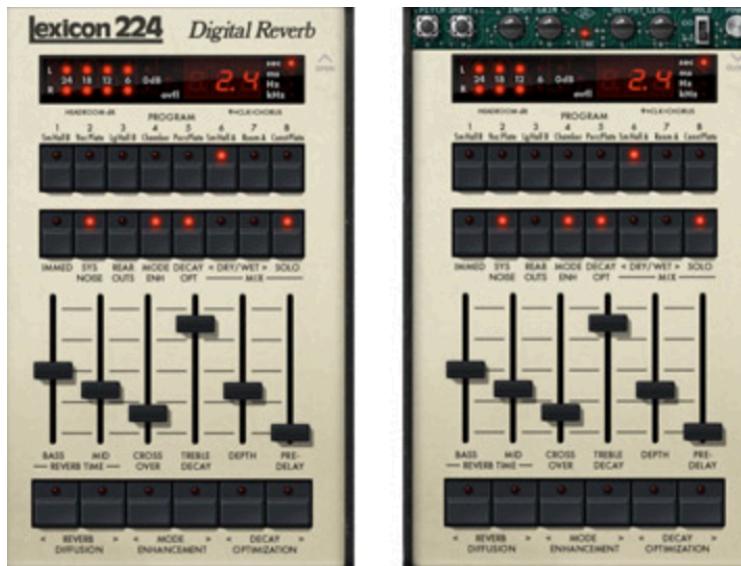
And use complex side-chaining.

Ideal stuff for making presets for a killer lead sound!

Use it to your advantage.

# #Vorwerk # Tipoftheweek #33 (22-10-2014)

Reverb:



A few important things about reverb.  
You can use reverb to make things sound bigger, more upfront or  
more in the background.

The most important parameters for your reverb are:

## Pre-Delay:

The time between the original (Dry) sound and the audible reflection  
and reverb.

So the higher the pre-delay the longer it takes for the reverb signal to  
kick in.

If the pre-delay is short it will immediately play a reverberated sound.  
So in practice when mixing vocals you want to have a higher pre-  
delay, so the Dry sound (vocal) will be better understandable.

For big leads I prefer a short pre-delay.

### Reverb Time:

How long would you want the reverb to be.

For creating more presence and putting things upfront in your mix I suggest smaller reverb times.

For creating that big lead you can use a bigger reverb time.

### Size/ Width / and Diffusion of the reverb:

Speak for themselves.

### Reverb Eq:

This one I find important cause you can use this to create a bit more character in your reverb. No high frequencies will cause to make your reverb sound a bit more darker. And putting in more high will make it sound a bit fresher.

Low frequencies I almost never use in reverb cause they clutter up your mix.

But too much high will also clutter your mix. So don't overdo this

### As a Send or as an Insert?

Nowadays computers have so much CPU that I prefer to use a reverb as an Insert.

Every reverb has a wet/dry or mix button which allows you to mix in the amount.

This gives you way better control on that particular track.

Don't put a different type of reverb on every track. cause that will seriously fuck up your mix.

Just make three good ones and use those.

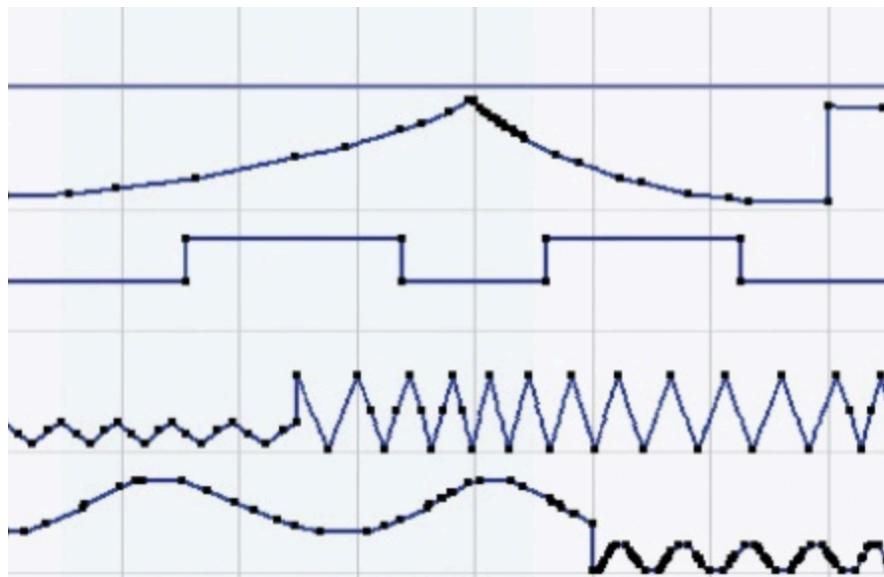
### Pro-Tip: Absolute control on your reverb

Use a (side chain) gate on your reverb. That way you have total control of when to open and close the reverbed sound and will make it sound very big and tight. Compress it and Voila!

See you next week!

## #Vorwerk # Tipoftheweek #34 (29-10-2014)

### Automation:



Automation is VERY! important in your track.

And it's also something what makes the last 10% of your track (to my opinion)

Without it your track will probably sound dull and lifeless.

I use automation on almost anything.

Here are a few examples.

- Cutting off volumes at the end of build-ups to bring more focus on pre-drop vocals or drum fills.
- Sweeping up your eq or filter to make the sound progressively thinner or darker to create more contrast with the next part of the song.
- Opening up reverbs and delays to create more build up.
- Start an effect and bypass it on certain parts of your track.
- Automation for pitch control

The options are limitless!

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #35 (05-11-2014)

### Mastering:



Sooooo.. Mastering! THE solution for a proper mix. At least that is what a lot of you think.

Somebody that is sending a demo and saying that the track isn't mastered and that that is the reason why it doesn't sound good is usually ending up in the A&R garbage instantly.

Don't and I mean Don't ever use that as an excuse when sending out a demo.

In DANCE music mastering is often used more as an creative effect to crush the dynamic range and push everything to its maximum instead of adding a little touch of extra glue or solving some small problems in the final mix. I am also guilty of that cause pushing boundaries is always fun

Anyhow before entering the mastering stage everything should sound good already and properly balanced.

By that I also mean 'ready to test in the club' and to send out as a demo to a record company.

So what do you typically find on a mastering channel for a Dance track.

#### Multiband Compressor:

When mixing a track you tend to focuss a bit to much on the mid frequencies. cause that is one of the most difficult areas to mix.

When applying a multi band compressor you can gain control over certain frequency bands and create what some people call a "Smiley" frequency curve. By adding gain reduction in the mid frequencies the track sounds more glued which listens more pleasant.

#### Regular Compressor:

Just to create a more overall glued effect.

#### Equalizer:

Nowadays with equalizers like for instance Fabfilter 2 you can easily zoom in to little problem areas and fix them.

#### Distortion:

Some people use a bit of distortion on there mastering channel to add a bit of warmth.

By using Exciters, Tape saturators, Tubes, Vintage warmers etcetera..

#### Limiters:

Keeping your output levels under control.

#### A Mono maker / Stereo Widener:

Some plugins have the option to put all the frequencies below a certain point in MONO and with some you can add some stereo width.

For everything goes: Don't overdue it, unless you are using it as a creative effect.

Otherwise if you have to overdue it it's better to adjust your mix.

Good Luck!

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #36 (12-11-2014)

How to start your mix!



A good way to start your Mix is to trim all your levels down by let's say -10dB.

This gives you instant headroom while mixing your track and provides greater flexibility during your mix down. With more headroom your mix will sound more natural and pleasing

In the end you can always gain it up and bring things to proper levels!

EDIT: You can use low cpu GAIN vst's to put on all your channels. Works perfectly!

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #37 (19-11-2014)

Mono



You know that feeling when your track sounds amazing in your studio and in the club it falls totally apart and out of balance? That could be many things but.....

If you are having trouble to mix your stuff in proper balance it definitely helps to mix your volumes and EQ'ing in MONO.

Most (hardware) volume knobs (I use big knob) have a mono button. Press it, mix your volumes right and EQ your stuff like you normally do. Make sure that the frequencies of the different elements don't interfere with each other.

Then when you put the mix back in Stereo you will find that the stereo mix will sound good too. That doesn't work for the other way around.

After that you can adjust some of the placements in the stereo field but also keep checking back in Mono and adjust if necessary.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #38 (26-11-2014)

### Writers Block and Creativity



In the studio it's important to keep your creativity flowing.  
Here are a few pointers which you can take into consideration.

First off. It's always better to get into the studio when you have an idea.

If you don't know where to begin, I usually grab a piano and start playing a theme.

If the writing of a melody doesn't work for you then go make some beats or focus on the drop part.

Things that also can help boost the inspiration is to listen

to some older classics.

I listen a lot to the house music I was growing up with.  
back in the 90's.

Sometimes I go thru stock presets of a synth to see if  
there's anything interesting.

You could go online and find the weirdest vst there is and  
try stuff with that.

You could listen to other songs and try to analyze them. In  
that way you are learning as well and getting inspired.

One of the most important things I learned is that when  
you feel creative is to write as many melodies as you can.

Not just focus on one track at that moment. Cause then  
when you are a bit uninspired you can always fall back on  
something you made earlier. Also when you hear back  
your older melody you remember what you wanted to do  
with that in the first place.

Same goes for making drops.

Creativity always comes and goes and to my opinion it's  
the discipline (and talent) you put into it which gives you  
the studio output you are looking for.

If nothing of this helps it's better to go to the beach and try  
the next day

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #39 (03-12-2014)

Production tip: Making a cool bass



Take a sub bas and play your melody with that one. Cutoff all the high until at least 1.5 kHz.

Compress the sub bas to keep it under control. and cutoff everything beneath 40 Hz.

Make sure it's mono. Put a bit of side-chain on it. So your kick can stand out in comparison to the Sub baseline.

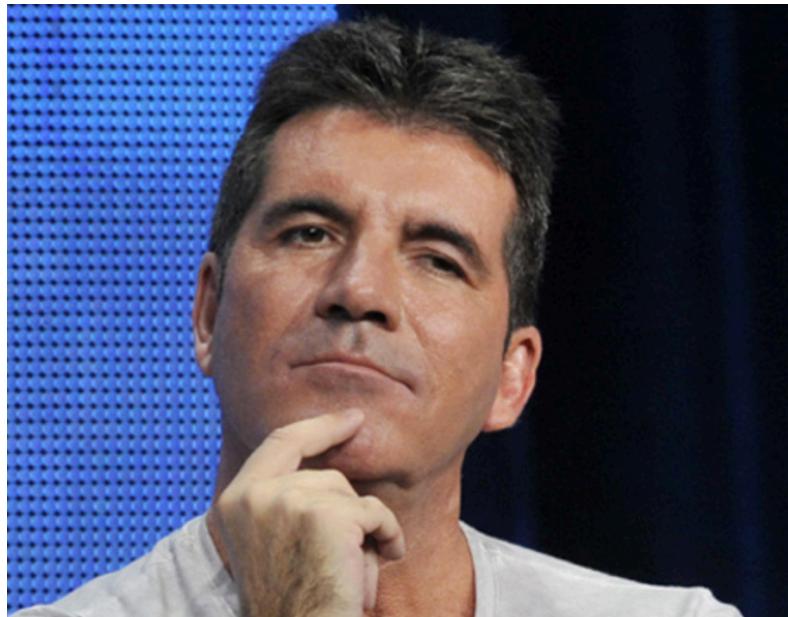
Now Copy that melody to another synth on which you make an 2 voice oscillator saw wave.

Cutoff a bit of the low end. Let's say everything under 100 hZ. Put a stereo expander on it and then distort it big time (but keep it pretty natural sounding).

Blend the two together and you will have a bassline that cuts thru everything.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #40 #Special (10-12-2014)

How to get your record signed!



I get this question a lot. I am not really sure how to answer this one.

However keep the following in mind.

Since it became affordable and possible to make dance music from your attic, everybody loves to give it a shot in becoming famous and be the next gen producer and or DJ.

As a result recordcompanies are overthrown with demo's.

And with there experience they can probably tell within seconds if the track has potential or that its crap.

Believe me when I say that they get a lot of bad music.

I think we can safely say there is a ratio of 1 to a 100 tracks that sound ok.

Out of a 1000 tracks they find ten good ones which might get signed.

So for starters the competition is fierce.

Here are a few absolute DONT'S:

Don't send partial demo's

Don't send unfinished demo's

NEVER I repeat NEVER!!!! say that your demo is not mixed or mastered yet.

Don't write full length letters with your whole life story.

If A&R's never reply to your email and If DJ's never respond to your demo's that's, and I'm sorry to say it, cause they don't like it.

Here's a few DO's:

Send finished demo's. Or at least present them as finished.

Introduce yourself shortly. Name, maybe a small discography, email address and telephone number and maybe a small support list from big DJ's.

If you want to stand out from all those other people make sure your demo sounds perfect and even better then your favorite tracks.

Try to make it original sounding.

Create a good online profile for yourself. Get a few head shots and create some good looking social media pages.

If you have made a good track in which A&R's believe they will sign your track!!! They will probably even embrace you and try to hear more stuff and sign you exclusive

Quality will "Always float to the top".

Even if A&R's pass on your track but it's still a killer track, there will always be a DJ which hears your demo on for instance Soundcloud and gets in contact with you.

Here's a tip for what I sometimes do.

I put a small 'tease' MP3 of the demo with only the break and the drop. And add the download link to the full version in the email.

btw: email addresses from labels and A&R's can be found online.

## #Vorwerk #tipoftheweek #41 (17-12-2014)

### LOUDNESS



is all about perception.

It's a subject that is pretty complicated and on which we can write books about.

But that's just boring so I will try and keep this as short and essential for you as possible. So a very clever guideline which you can use.

Maybe in the future I will expand a bit more on the subject.

When you make a track, your own taste will determine how your song will sound.

Do you want a compressed type of sound or do like a more open sound?

Do you want to keep a bigger loudness range in your track or do you want to sound equally hard during the whole track.

If you strive for a certain loudness from a reference track it can help to do the following things.

Play the track with for instance the meterbridge from ozone 5 on it. This will show you the loudness range of your favorite track.

It shows it in 3 steps. Peak, short term & integrated. Then you can compare those numbers with the ones from your track.

Now how to get that same loudness as your reference track?

There is a handy tool for that. Called the 'perception controller' from for instance "meterplugs".

<http://www.meterplugs.com/perception>

This plugin let's you set the 'LUFS' (loudness units full scale) the same for all your tracks.

The great thing about that is that you can truly hear how a track is mixed!

Which makes it easier for you to adjust your own mix to your reference mix.

So with the perception controller you will have an audible guide and with the ozone 5 meter you will have a visual guide.

Good luck!

## #vorwerk #tipoftheweek #42 (24-12-2014)

Know when to stop!



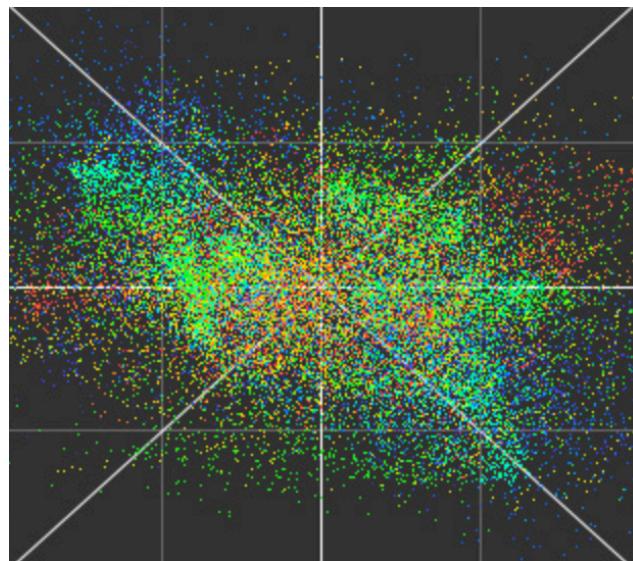
Know when to stop and to get out of the studio!

It's important to know when enough is enough studiotime. For instance, now it's Christmas! So get out of your studio and spend some time with family and friends .

Merry Christmas!

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #43 (31-12-2014)

### Widening up your sound



On great request....

10 Ways to widen up your sound:

Some of them were already discussed but it's still a nice overview.

- 1: Stereo Delay: Use a stereo delay with a very short delay time. between 2-10 ms.
2. Split Equalizing: Use an equalizer in which you can equalize the left and right channel separately. This will slightly widen up your sound.
3. Stereo Enhancers: There are a lot of stereo enhancement plugins. I personally play around a lot with the ones from Waves, Brainworx and Izotope.
4. M/S Equalizing. see tip #19 for explanation.
5. Split your stereo channel into two separate channels and pan hard left & right.

6. Put two delays on your channel, pan one hard left and the other hard right.
7. Put two reverbs in two different aux busses. Pan one hard left the other hard right. Cut off all the lows from the reverb. Experiment with the reverb settings. From there on you can also put a compressor behind the reverb or a side chain effect to give it a bit more edge. Some say this works great with smaller convolution reverbs.
8. Formant Shifting: Split the signal into two separate tracks. Then apply formant shifting (Shifting of a frequency range) in an opposite direction to either one or both tracks. You can do this for instance in Melodyne.
9. Put some distortion in a send buss with some stereo enhancers on top and mix that in with the original sound.
10. Be sure that you check your mono compatibility regularly since these effects will most likely mess with that when you apply to much.  
That's why it can be very helpful to do a lot of these stereo enhancements via busses (Auxes). So you will be sure that your mix will hold in Mono.

Have a great New Years! See you all in 2015!

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #44 (07-01-2015)

Ambient noises or background action in a track



When creating an intro/ outro of a track it sometimes help to make use of ambient sounds for a couple of reasons

to fill up the frequency spectrum, to give the track some character and build up excitement, or to create a minimum sound reference level.

To do this you can use anything actually. Common things like white noise, stabs with lots of reverb on it, sample pack fx's or your actual theme sound but then put in a filter with some cool effects on it etc.

Endless opportunities. You can use all your effects and creativity for this kind of stuff.

My personal preference always goes to "airy" type sounds cause those tend to open up your mix in a good way.

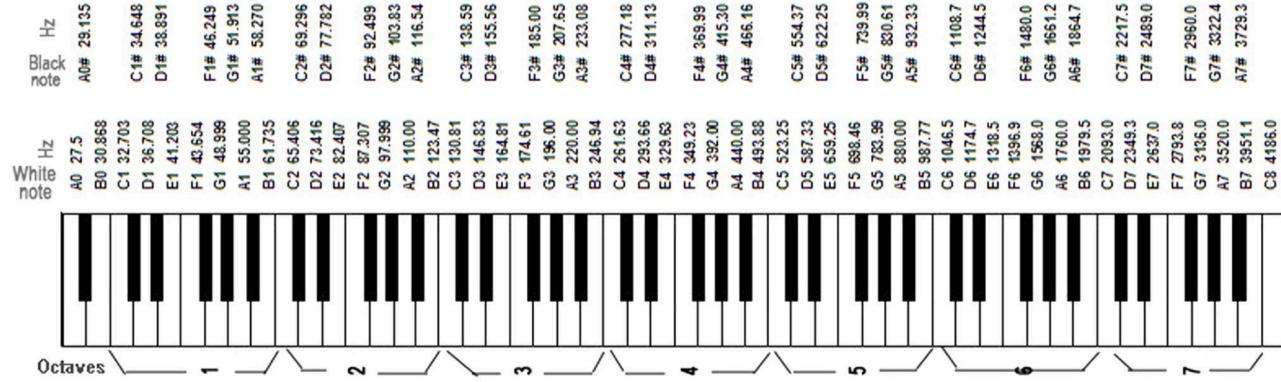
Airy type sounds are sounds like: Choirs, nature sounds, campfire sounds etc..

I even once used a sample of a bunch of crickets in the forrest with some endless reverb and side chaining to get the job done

Always mix in these sounds at a soft volume. You barely need to hear them in your mix but if you take them away you are missing something...

# #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #45 (14-01-2015)

## Physics / EQ / Acoustics



Each note on your keyboard corresponds with a frequency and therefore a wavelength.

For instance the key C3 corresponds with the frequency 130,81.

(source: <http://www.phy.mtu.edu/~suits/notefreqs.html>)

You can use this to your advantage when mixing certain sounds.

As many of you have learned EQ sweeping to find the right frequencies to cut or to add you can also use this scheme as a reference point.

Let's say you are working with a guitar sound in the key of A and you want to give it more natural warmth and body you can for instance boost a bit at 110 & 220 & 440 Hertz with a higher Q.

Or if you want to give it a bit more presence you can add a bit of 7kHz.

This can also help you to prioritize sounds which are in the same frequency range

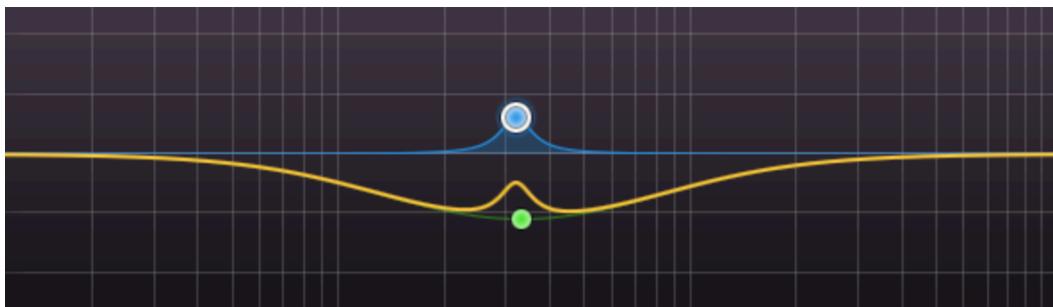
in a mix. To bring them more forward or backward into your mix.

Also

When knowing all these key vs frequencies you can find out which frequency in your studio is causing problems while mixing.

Èksito

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #46 (21-01-2015)



Subtractive and additive EQ'ing in commercial dance music.

I don't want to start the discussion on which is better. Just want to give you my personal opinion on this matter.

In the creative phase of making sounds I use everything necessary to achieve the sound I want for in a drop, break, whatever.

So I usually end up Boosting a lot of frequencies with equalizers distortion etcetera. Once I have my sounds made I usually bounce them and start the mix down process fresh or put them into a group bus.

Normally in the mix down process I use a lot of Subtractive EQ'ing. The advantages of Subtractive EQ'ing are numerous.

- You create more headroom
- Mix will sound more natural
- You keep your master buss under control
- And it's easier to lift out a particular synth when cutting out the others.

- Also when mixing vocals into your track it's better and easier to cut a bit of the instrument frequencies which clash with the vocal. Instead of boosting the vocal to make it sound more unnatural.

Ofcourse I also boost frequencies in the mix down. But more to create air or a more warm feel in the mix.

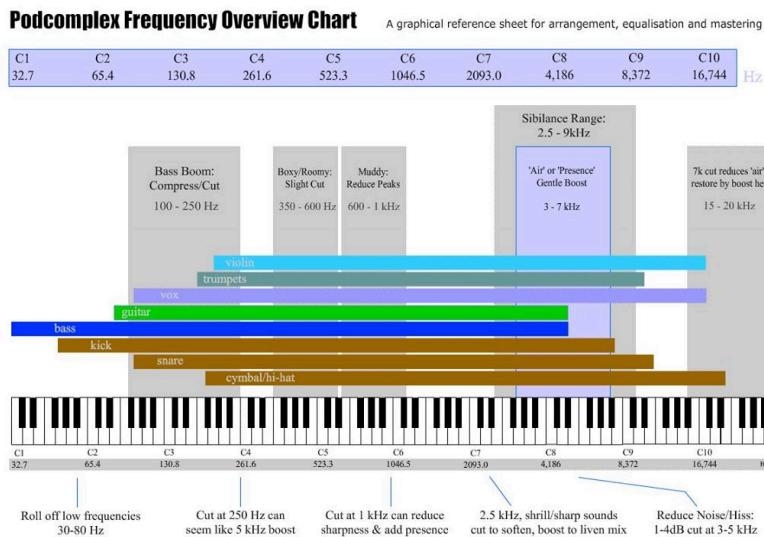
I know plenty of producers who do otherwise, but this is just how I do it.

The moment you know in which frequency span a certain instrument/ synth has its sweetspot you also know which frequencies you can cut. Always cut away frequencies by listening to the whole mix. Not just solo'd.

A lot of instruments have the tendency that when you cut away some frequencies in the low/low-mid it naturally boosts in the mid-high/high.

Check out this frequency chart I found online. Gives you a bit of a picture of where everything belongs in a mix.

Good Luck!



## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #47 (28-01-2015)

Working with a musical (business) partner



Everything seems easier when you do it with more people.

Making tracks becomes easier when you have a sparring partner.

Even DJ'ing can be easier when you always travel together and you can share thoughts and experiences.

Especially at the start of your career you don't think about any future consequences.

Are you both equally ambitious?

Are you both equally talented?

Can you both execute as much as needed?

Is one person always thinking about getting home while the other one wants to travel more?

If you don't make business agreements at the start of your career, chances are that when money and fame come in, the relationship between you becomes skew and things can go wrong.

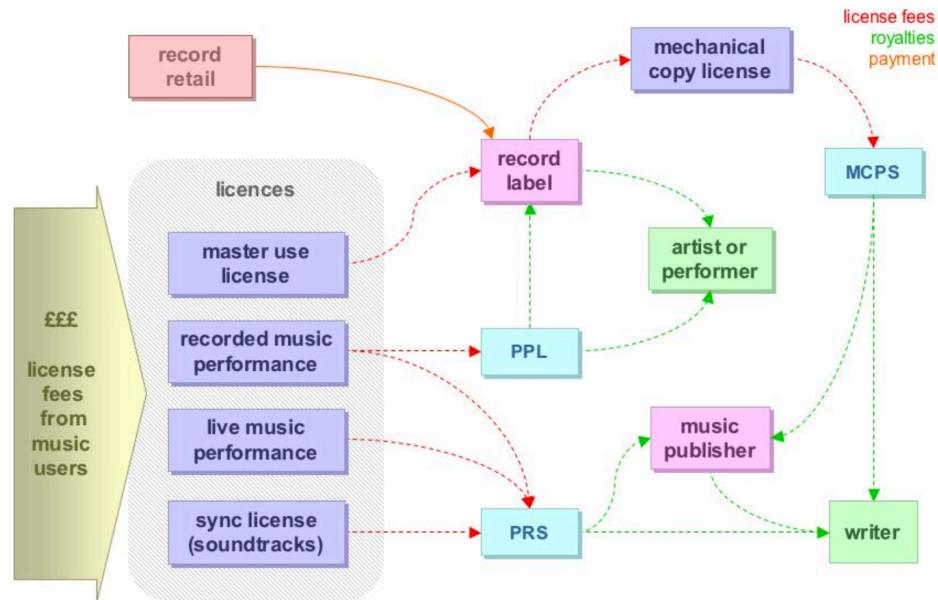
So if you start out with two or more be sure to discuss your future 'dream' plans and be sure to put them on paper concurrently with the obligations and splits you both promise.

Don't forget that the "Music Industry" is a business and your business partner shouldn't be your best friend. People need time apart and their own friends.

It's a hard lesson, but a valuable one.

# #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #48 (04-01-2015)

## Income streams for DJ's and Producers



As a starting producer/ DJ it's important to know in which ways you can make some money in this industry. The better you know this, the sooner you can start to make your hobby into your profession.

All these terms are based on Dutch/ European law.  
In the states or elsewhere they sometimes use different terms. But you'll get the point.

### 1. Sale Royalties:

Getting a percentage on the sales of your music.

Usually split into

Real product: Vinyl, cd's, albums and

Digital: Downloads, Streams, Youtube plays etc.

Sub/ Thirdparty licensing: Meaning, when a different country or record company license the right from the record company or directly from the artist to release and exploit the music.

## 2. Copyright

Copyright is there to prevent that somebody uses a piece of work created by someone else without there permission.

The rights to make your work public are also called exploitation rights. Most music authors choose to assign these to a publisher. Sometimes in return for an advance. Depending on how big of an artist you are.

Copyrights are paid for when your music is being played on the radio. When your music is being used in movies and series and games. When your music is performed during big events etceteras.

Since the digital era these incomes are getting even bigger then sale royalties.

Terms often used here are sync rights, sync licenses, performing rights, composer/lyricist and publisher.

## 3. Neighbouring rights / Performer's right

only applies to european law or those who apply the convention of Rome.

Let's say you were hired to play the keyboard during a recording session. The song becomes a hit. But you didn't produced the track and you didn't write it.

You can still see some money in the form of neighboring rights. In that case you will receive revenue when played on the radio/tv or when being performed on stage.

## 4. Bookings fees

This is probably the biggest revenue to earn these days. Receive money to perform as a DJ or as a performing Artist.

## 5. Flat fees

These are fees that a music or vocal producer could get paid for producing music.

Let's say you want Dr. Luke to produce your next pop-single he's gonna charge you.

## 6. Sponsor and merchandise deals

In the States already a big business for years. In the EU it's still upcoming.

Connect your profile to a brand and receive revenue for that.

Examples these days are clothing, headphones, software plugins etc.

But all this is actually nothing compared to the thing that got started in 2008.

In 2008 record companies were looking into the future predicting that sales would fall thanks to the up come of digital and illegal downloading.

Streaming service Spotify made his attendance. But for Spotify to succeed it needed content of course. So Spotify got his content from SONY BMG / Warner Music / Universal Music and EMI among others.

Now let's fast forward to 2015.

Spotify has plans to go public and is valued at a price of 5,7 Billion Dollars. The thing that got my attention is that those content suppliers I was talking about all got a stake in the company.

These percentages are rumors but still likely to be true according to the financial times.

Sony BMG 5,8%

Universal Music 4,8%

Warner Music 3,8%

EMI 1,9%

I'll let you do the math and figure out who's the real MVP in the Music Industry!

See you next week.

## #Vorwerk #tipoftheweek #49 (11-01-2015)

### Monitor volumes



This is a very important tip which sets the base for everything! If you want to mix your leads or whatever in a Fat way. You first need to know what Fat is, and sounds in your studio/room.

When you are mixing your track you need to find a monitor volume for you that works.

The best is to put your volumes not to hard to prevent ear fatigue or even damage.

When experiencing ear fatigue your perception of sound will change. So beware of that.

When mixing down a clubtrack it's often tempting to put the

volume up of your speakers to get that real clubfeel.

The best thing you can do is to mix every track in your studio at a constant volume.

It will help you to know and better learn the loudness of your own and other tracks.

I've marked a certain point on my bigknob controller.

This way you can get used to the soundpressure levels.

In general you could say that the bigger the speakers the more soundpressure you have, the lower you can keep the volume .

The more tracks you will mix this way the better they will sound.

Cause you will learn very fast how a mix should sound at that volume.

This way you can also rely on your ears during the mixdown instead of metering.

I put the volumes way up to listen if the drop makes the impact I am aiming for.

Or just to mix the kickdrum.

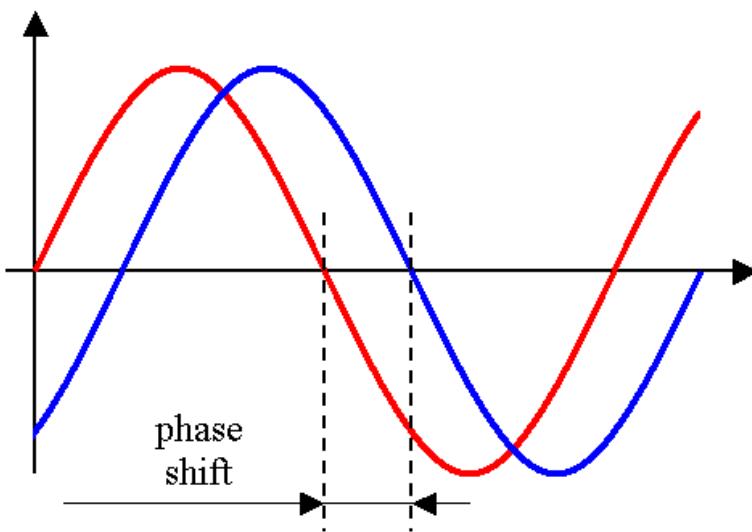
Also near the end of the mixdown I put the volume superlow to hear if I can filter out and hear all the different elements in the track like the kick, bas, clap, hihats, leads, strings, vox etc.. If you can hear them all in a clean way then you have made a proper mix balance between all elements. Of course be sure to reference with different monitors or headphones.

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #50 (18-02-2015)

### Phase Part 1

So we are doing this #Vorwerk #tip thing for about a year now and I hope that everybody's mixing skills have improved. Now before we reach tip 52 and close the year with a surprise I want to discuss one of the most important things in the next two tips about Phase problems and Mono compatibility:

Phase.



First some theory:

Phase is a term for where a waveform is in its cycle. If you put 2 sine waves on top of each other you gonna double the amplitude.

However if you shift 1 of those 2 sine waves they will get out of phase. And if you put it 180 degrees out of phase, the waveforms will cancel each other out.

Phase will sound like a hollow or comb-filtered sound.  
See photo.

Phase problems usually exist when recording (drums) with  
multiple microphones.

In dance music it's more likely to happen when you stack  
multiple low sounds, like basses on top of each other.

The best ways to avoid this if you want to use multiple  
layers is to mix in frequency ranges.

Sub - Low - Mid - High. This way you prevent clashing.

Best way still is to use only one sound for the lower bass  
and one for the high bas to cut through a mix.

And then you can use parallel compression for instance  
(tip #22) to fatten things up without any phase problems.  
Of course there are also 'Phase Alignment Tools vst's'  
available who can do the trick for you. Google and find!

Also if you would use the meter bridge in Ozone for  
instance and you open up the Phase scope/ Phase Meter  
you can also visually see if there are any problems. If the  
scope is to scattered on material that should be more in  
mono then you can see that.

If you look at a phase meter you need to know that  
0 value is perfect stereo  
+1 value is perfect mono  
-1 value is perfect out of phase.  
It's best to score in the upper 1's.

Next week some more on this subject.

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #51 (25-02-2015)

### Phase Part 2



Mono compatibility:

Stereo means that there are time arrival differences between the Left and the Right channel.

This way it creates a sense of dimension for the human ear which enhances your listening experience bla bla bla... So here's a stereo image of a left and right channel that are in phase.

And here's one that's out of phase

Now the one that's out of phase will only become noticeable when you press your mono button. Then it will either disappear or loses a lot of power and will sound hollow.

That's why it is so important to constantly check your mixes for mono compatibility.

Why would we even wanna have mono? Don't know.  
But the sound systems in clubs still have a mono setup.  
Because of the fact that the music needs to sound equal in  
all areas of the club.

If it would be in stereo then you would only perceive it  
when you are standing in just the right place.

Also some radio stations that are in an area of lower  
reception will switch to Mono to give a better signal.

And if you want to play your new track for your  
grandmother on her old radio it's probably also a mono  
device.

Then why we just don't mix everything in Mono?  
Cause you also want to listen to music in your car, on your  
stereo on your computer etc..  
And these are all stereo.

### Troubleshooting:

If your mix sounds really bad in mono you can try to use  
Mid/Side Eq on your problem channels or master out and  
use the 'Mid' function to see if you can improve the mono  
mix. This will usually do the trick!

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #53 (11-03-2015)

### Layering Synths Part 2

(Read part 1 first at the bottom)

Creating the stereo image for a layered synth.

Try to create some sort of 'hand fan' of sound.

So the lower sounds in the middle.

The main synth a bit wider or even fully panned L and R.

And the character sound really wide with some effects.

In that case it would be like a wall of sound coming your way.

When you mix these three layers, always solo them as a group and compress them as a group as well for better results.

If the sounds are well made and chosen they should blend easy together with just some volume, eq and a group compress.

How to widen up your sound next to the obvious panning you can check at Tip 43.

### This was part 1 >> (tip 16)

Depending on if it's necessary to layer synths you can use this as a good starting principle.

Three layers:

- low frequency bass layer: give those the same Att, Dec, Rel as the main synth. So they are in close sync. frequencies between 50 Hz - 500 Hz
- main synth: the synth which you think gives power to the break or drop. frequencies between 500 Hz - 5kHz.
- character sound: a sound in the high freq area which will give you lead that bit of extra character. Could be anything from a piano to a church bell 5kHz and higher.

Make sure you have volume control over these three layers and blend them together until you received a warm powerful sound.

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #54

### Loudness:

Sure let's talk some more about loudness since recent events.

First off, in dance music there is a difference between using loudness plugins to maximize your mix or using loudness plugins to create a certain sound which some artist can claim as a signature sound.

The trick is to get a loud mix without creating too much distortion or any harsh sounds and keeping it dynamic.

Sometimes when I listen to Sirius XM for instance and you hear those loud mastered tracks 'Digital full Scale' mixed after each other over the radio compressor. It starts to sound really boring and monotonous cause the difference between the loudness in the breaks and drops are gone and you hear so much more audible effects due to the radio compressor and the lack of good mixing.

So the greater the difference between loud and quiet the greater the impression of the loudness is.

So again some tips for creating louder tracks.

If the drop sounds really loud that doesn't necessarily have to be a bad thing.

But a good tip would be to create a volume drop in the build up. So the impact of the drop will be bigger.

Also it's nice to create a bit more volume differences in the break compared to the drop.  
Just put the fader down a bit.

Don't over-use the multiband compressor/ Soundgoodizer. This will make your sound louder, but also more harsh.

Also make sure to cut all frequencies which aren't necessary for that instrument/sound.  
This will create so much more headroom which will give you a louder perception.

Also mixing wider can create the illusion of louder mix. So panning and stereo enhancing without effecting the mono field is important as well.

And one of the most important things is actually to choose a good sound from the start which is already loud and full so you don't have to enhance it all that much.

So yes a loud track will make a bigger impact in the club but even more when it has also a dynamic range.

And yes the tracks that are super loudly mastered could sound more shitty on youtube now.

Maybe it's best to make two mixes.

One loud mix but unmastered for radio, youtube, spotify, I-tunes and one for the club on which you can apply a bit more mastering. Food for thought!

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #55 (25-03-2015)

### How to save CPU

Nothing more annoying when working on a project and your computer starts hitching. When you zoom in & out your screen slows down and your sound card starts hanging. So here's a few tips to keep your DAW fast at all times. If you know more, please post them in the comment section:

- Work with effects on your send busses instead of your insert busses. This way you only have to use two reverbs and 2 delays for the whole project.
- Freeze your instrument: This is a function most vst synths have. This way you can not alter the sound anymore but it saves a lot of cpu.
- Bounce your sound into an audio track. If you made a cool sound in a vst synth. Bounce it to audio and delete the synth.
- Work with group editing. Route your sounds to a bus and process from there instead of dealing with all channels separately.
  - Make an archive of your audio samples. ( see tip 12)
- Increase your buffer size. If your buffer size is low your cpu will start spiking soon. But in the beginning of the project you will have no latency. By increasing the buffer size to 256 or 512mb you will have some latency but you can work on bigger projects.
- If you use native instrument sound banks or banks from East-West or something similar it can help to put your sound banks on a SSD disk and load from there.
  - Use only low cpu plugins. You can find reviews on everything and there are always plugins who can do an evenly well job but by using less CPU.

Good luck, see you next week or in Miami!

## #Vorwerk #TipoftheWeek #56 (01-04-2015)

### Harmonic Exciter

Harmonic excitors can add subtle harmonic distortion in your high frequency signals.

This effect can significantly brighten up your mix if well used. You can also use this effect on the lower frequencies to make sure your bass will sound as a bass on smaller speakers as well. There are a lot of good harmonic excitors but my favorites are the ones from Aphex & Ozone.

## #Vorwerk #Soundoftheyear #57 (08-04-2015)

### Sylenth Soundbank

Super excited and proud to announce the release of my first ever soundset for Sylenth. This is the bank for all Beginners and Pro's who love to produce music and want to take things to the next level.

I really hope you will support me on this one by buying it.

Let me know what you made with it!

<http://alonso-sound.com/.../alonso-maarten-vorwerk-sylenth1-.../>

## #Vorwerk #TipoftheWeek #58 (15-04-2015)

### Transient Designers

This is a plugin that is easily forgotten by most producers but comes in very handy in a lot of occasions. With a transient designer you can shape the transients of a sound. Usually the Attack and the Sustain.

Let's say your kick is not punching thru your mix the right way. If you boost the attack on the transient designer you will immediately hear a difference.

you can also use it the other way around. Lets say there is a hard spike in the attack of a sound you just sampled. You can easily make that disappear by turning down the Attack on the transient designer.

It also comes in handy when you want to cut away some room verb. In that case you can shorten the sustain of the sound so it sounds a lot tighter.

I often use it when layering synths and when I want to make sure they all have kind of the same Attack and Sustain. So it sounds more like one sound.

Yes, this all can also be achieved by using compressors and gates. But this is much easier.

See you next week!

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #59 (22-04-2015)

### Dynamic EQ-ing

Dynamic EQ-ing is a handy tool for fixing certain frequency problems. It's a very precise tool which can be hard to master and certainly isn't used in most occasions. You can control the Gain of an EQ band instead of a frequency range like in a multi band compressor.

It is mostly used when De-essing vocals. So when there is too much sibilance, the high frequencies are compressed and this way turned down a bit. If you cut a frequency in a dynamic EQ, it won't apply that cut until the frequency crosses a threshold.

So use it to flatten out any annoying frequency which occurs non-randomly.

Like vocals, drumloops, samples.  
You can also use it to spice up a kick.

For instance when the kick punches over a certain threshold it automatically gaines a bit in the high-mid but only at the point of the kicks attack.

So it then won't clash with your other elements.  
You can also use it to create a sort of dynamic side chaining effect on your kick bass. Which makes them blend even better.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #60

[Export reference](#)

For this weeks tip I have a very simple but super important one. You can mix in the highest resolution possible for best results but the consumer will most likely play your track in an 'MP3 320 Kbps' format. So make sure you also make a 320kbps Bounce and test that one on all your speakers, headphones, earplugs, car stereo etc.. If that one sounds good you are done

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #61 (06-05-2015)

### Problems in the high end

Sometimes when you are using too much high Eq or an exciter to spark things up it could sound nasty.

An alternative way to fix this problem is to put a Soundreducer / Bitcrusher on the sound / instrument which is causing the 'nasty high' sound. This will reduce the harshness of the high but without affecting the finished feel of the overall mix.

See you next week!

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #62 (13-05-2015)

### Mastering

So a cool tip on mastering.

In tip 45 we discussed the EQ-ing i.c.w. the key of a track vs the frequency chart.

You can apply this to your mastering as well.

Say you have made a track in G, but the overall sound isn't totally in the right spectrum you wish it would be in. you can mold it a bit by using that frequency chart and cutting and / or boosting the specific frequencies which are in the key of G.

Play with it and see what it does with your final master!

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #63 (20-05-2015)

### Demosessions

Visit my soundcloud for the demotrack.

Thanks everybody for sending all the demo's.

For today I have chosen a demo from:@Sunrocmusic - ocean-drive

<https://soundcloud.com/sunroc/ocean-drive>

I want to focus on the drop part. That already sounds pretty good but there is still room for improvement.

If I make any time references behind it, you can hear what I mean at my sound cloud example here:

<https://soundcloud.com/.../sunroc-ocean-drive-vorwerk-tipoth...>

So here are just a few tips which you can apply to make it sound a bit better.

- The first thing I notice is the vowel kinda sound which comes in the tail of the basline. You can make the mix instantly sound tighter if you would delete that or lower that in volume.
  - Also if you make the kick a tiny bit shorter and put a bit more side chain on the basline you will create more dynamic feel. I've tried to do this on the whole file as you can hear at 0 sec (original) & 6 sec (shorter & side chained) but you have to do this in the separate tracks of course.
  - The basline is not fully in Mono. Now that doesn't have to matter always. But when I listened to the track in Mono it sounded much tighter & punchier.  
Example Without mono at 11 sec & with Mono at 17 sec.
  - After you have done that you can open up the mid-high & high section a bit more by using for instance an exciter and Imager. I used the ones for Izotope on this one.  
Example: Without at 23 sec, with at 29 sec.
    - If you put a Low cut EQ on your master for everything below 45 hZ in this case. Your mix will pop out even more.
- To top things off I used a tiny bit of end compressing and gaining with The Glue.  
The full example from before and after.  
Before at 39 sec. After at 1 min.
- Keep in mind that this was done on a mastering level as it should be done on the

individual tracks for much better mixing results.  
Like if you enjoyed this session.  
See you next week.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #64 (27-05-2015)

### Demosessions

Thanks again everybody for putting in all your demo's.  
So this week I picked out a demo coming from @DorianIsaacCorrea  
It's a bootleg from Axwell & Ingrosso's – Something New.  
You can listen at my soundcloud what I have done.  
<https://soundcloud.com/.../vorwerk-tipoftheweek-demosessions-...>

Check the time references in this message.  
I want to focus on the drop part. (8 seconds)  
When the drop hits the mix becomes a bit muddy and loses some power in  
the low and higher frequencies.  
A good tip to fix this is by adding a small "Kick Tok" (24 seconds).  
If you add this you will hear that the mix immediately lifts off. (32 seconds)

After this I would suggest the same thing as last week. Open the mix up a  
bit with a stereo imager and adding a tiny bit of mid freq around 3,5 KhZ.

Just to give it a bit more extra power (55 seconds)  
Now you can really here the difference between before and after:

After at : 1.20  
Before at: 1.29.  
See you next week!

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #65 #Demosessions

### Song Tempo

So this week I want to discuss something which is more or less a taste issue. But very funny to demonstrate.

For this weeks demo I picked out a really cool track from @BenTaylor called "BeTa – Untamed".

Now this is a baltimore / Philly / Jersey type of track like he describes it.

And therefore it also has a pretty fast Bpm of 137.

I am not familiar with this type of music so I listen to it with a different view I guess.

Original at 0 seconds. = 137 BPM.

Sometimes it's fun to play around with the tempo of a track to see what it does to the overall feel. When doing this you sometimes create whole new genres like ,

Lento Violento: (<https://youtu.be/Rt7YKDMneAQ?t=2m48s> )

Speedy Bubbling: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t38hZ4MfCWY>)

or maybe the best example of them all : the slowing down of Afrojacks remix of DJ Chuckie's - moombah. Which also set a base for the moombahton genre. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N535RekE4c8>)

Now when I put this track at 128 bpm to me it immediately sounds like something that could easily be played at a club by the big DJ's.

Example: 128 Bpm at 0.29 seconds.

However, if we are here in the Caribbean where I live I'm pretty sure that a Moombahton version would work even better:

Example: 108 Bpm + Some beats at 1.14 minute.

And if we are having a retro zero's party in Holland then 'Hardwell just might play the Speedy Bubbling version.

Example: 140 bpm + some beats at 2.07 minute.

My point to this is to always target your track to the audience you want to reach but also play (test) it out a different tempo. It just might even sound better.

I think the most recent example of this is Kygo which produces tracks in around 100 bpm to 114 bpm.

Think about it.

See you next week.  
PS: My personal favorite is the Moombahton version.

<https://soundcloud.com/.../vorwerk-tipoftheweek-65-demo-sessi...>

## #Vorwerk #Tipoftheweek #66 (29-07-2015)

### Speed

Sometimes it's important to create the feel of speed in a track.

A good tip to help create that is as follows:

If you have a Kick in your mix already. Place a "tok" on a different track on top of the kick. A "tok" would be like a kick or a tom or a short hihat. But then extremely shortened, so that you only hear the attack.

Remember I told you about the formula to calculate delay and decay times?

60000 divided by the BPM of the track.

In case of a 128 bpm track that would be 468,75 ms for a quarter delay.

Now divide that again thru 4 to get the 16th delay. (=117,18 ms).

Now put a delay of 117 ms on the "Tok" and listen what happens to your mix.

Play around to see what other results you can get.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #67 (05-08-2015)

### Mixing

A great trick to give your drop some more impact is by using the Mid-Side EQ.

Group your drop synths to one channel and use the mid-side eq on that channel

to cut off the low with the MID Eq.

The advantage with this trick is that you create more space for the kick and bass to punch thru without making your leads sound too thin.

Good luck!

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #68 (12-08-2015) #Protips

### Mixing Kick & Bass vs Drop Melody

#### Kick & Bass vs Drop Melody

This mixing tip comes particularly in handy while mixing a progressive style drop.

And it's an alternative or an addition to the previous mixing tip (nr.67)  
Normally you would put a side chain on the melody to give it more energy  
and to let it sit better in the mix.

But if you then still having some trouble to get the kick & bass punch thru  
you could add a Multiband Sidechain on the lead sound.

In which you only side chain the lower end of the spectrum. Let's say a split  
frequency between 500 & 1000 Hz.

This creates even more space for the low-end (Kick & Bass) and makes  
your mix sound better.

Good luck.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #69 (19-08-2015)

### Folder Tracks



After finishing your track it is important to clean up your track. Delete everything you didn't use. Put all your files in a separate 'backup' folder. It could take a while before signing and releasing that track. And sometimes weeks after you finished the track you are also asked to make some final adjustments. If you open your old projects and it's a complete mess it could take you forever to make adjustments since you are already busy creating

your next hit. But when you open up an old track and you left it totally organized you can start right away. If you teach yourself a standard way of cleaning up your track your workflow will improve drastically. If you look at my picture. I always use color coding for the arrangement. For me it's easy to see in an instant where the drop or the beginning of a segment is. After that I put my tracks together in folders. In this case: Beats/ FX/ Break/

DropWhen you open up the ‘Beats’ folder you will see all your beat stems. (loops, claps, hihats, kick, toms etc..)It’s also easy then to Solo or mute a complete folder. This gives you a fast flexibility while mixing certain parts of your track.Meaning you can focus on all the ‘Drop’ stems in one instance.

Try It!

See you next week.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #70 (26-08-2015)

### The Noise Gate:

A noise gate attenuates a signal below a set threshold.

It's an insert effect you probably don't use that much.

Normally used to filter out the spill sound from a Drum set recording for example.

However it's a nice effect to use in Dance music as well.

In one of my first tips I told you that you can control the tail of your sound with it. Especially when you use a lot of reverb that can come in handy to keep everything tight. Meaning, you can create a Big sound without drowning your mix in a continuous reverb.

But you can also use it to clean up your sampled material. To mask noise and crackle you sometimes get when compressing old samples.

And lately I'm also using it on arpeggio's. To make them sound even tighter. Which in the end gives you a clearer mix.

Play around with it and see what it can add to your mix.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #71 (02-09-2015)

### Midrange:

The 250 Hz till 4kHz area also known as the midrange is a very important for your mixing. If mixed right you create the most energy in your track possible which translates well to every system.

A few tips to prevent muddy midrange mixes.

- Cut all the high of the low. Your bass operates somewhere in the area of 40 to 400 Hz. Meaning you can cut everything above 400 Hz without affecting the overall feel of the bass. But this way you create more space for the Mid frequencies.
- Use a good reference system. You ever wondered why every High-end studio has those old Yamaha NS-10 Speakers? Not cause they sound amazing. But cause they exaggerate the mid spectrum. Making it easier to mix the Mids. If it sounds great on Yamaha NS-10's it sounds great everywhere.

I don't have NS-10's. I use the Sennheiser HD 650 (or 800) for this. They pretty much do the same although you cannot define the stereo field that well on headphones.

- And last, put your volume way down in a way that you can barely hear your mix. And then try to listen if you can distinguish every sound in your mix. Or in this case the mid spectrum.

## **#Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #72 (09-09-2015)**

### **Wide Stereo Lead**

A nice way to widen up your lead sound is to open up two synths with the same preset.

Pan one hard left and the other one hard right.

And then create a small difference to one (synth) side by adding some chorus or for instance an LFO.

See you next week!

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #73 (16-09-2015)

### Layering

So this week I have an Intern over from Italy.  
His name is [Mazare](#) and he is already a very talented producer.  
This week we are focussing on upgrading his mixing and  
producing skills.

One thing we discussed is how to keep your mix feeling more  
lively and adding more body to a sound.

A good tip for this is to double your synth with a live instrument.  
For example:

Complement your synthesizer string with for instance a long horn  
sound.

This will add much more live feel to the track. And makes it stand  
out even more.

See you next week!

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #74 (23-09-2015)

### Mix assignment

Here's a little assignment for you today.

Take your latest mix you have been working on.

Put an Eq on the master buss.

Set a Bell EQ with a semi-narrow Q and boost it a lot. Sweep it between 250Hz & 500Hz until it sounds really bad. Then flip the

EQ and cut that portion with a dB or 2 / 3.

Is your overall mix sounding better now?

See you next week.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #75 (30-09-2015)

### How to give your Lead sound a little extra spice

Try to put a short hihat on every note of your main melody. This short tick sound will let your melody pop out even more.

Instead of a short hihat you can also use white noise. This creates also some extra harmonics on top of your lead.

Mix them in very gently. Just hard enough that you miss them when muted.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #76 07-10-2015

### Food for thought

During your career as a DJ/Producer it is very important to surround yourself with people who you can really trust and from who you know they serve your best interest.

Your 'team' is the addition to your career.

Don't be fooled by all the people who suck up to you or promise you everything, despite it being very tempting. Cause they usually can't.

Be sure to put promises in writing so you can fall back if things go bad.

In the end this is a music industry which evolves around one thing, which is money.

And money (and fame) causes a lot of trust and backstabbing issues.

So enjoy what you do and treat your trustworthy team as family with mutual respect.

That is THE way to become succesfull in every aspect of the word and have a lot of fun as well. Which is also equally important.

But!!! Don't forget it is YOU in the first place that has to deliver a good show and good music. Your 'team' can not do that for you.

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However if all might fail we can always do like the famous French general Napoleon once said: 'If you wish to be a success in the world, promise everything, deliver nothing'

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #77 (14-10-2015)

### Vocal Side-Chain

So today I needed to mix in a vocal into an instrumental.

The vocal seemed to disappear a bit in the mix.

So I took a compressor and put it on the Instrumental. (Track 1)  
Then I made a ghosttrack (track 2) ,output routed to sidechain, and placed the vocal on  
that track.

I've put the sidechain on of the compressor and set a small threshold, midsize attack  
and longer release.

And I've placed the vocal track (track 3) in the mix also.

Now everytime the vocal is playing the instrumental gets a little ducked which makes the  
vocal stand out more.

Problem solved.

See you next week!



## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #78

### Rhythmic Gating

You probably all know how to create that famous stutter effect. But you almost always use that as a 1/8th note or 1/16th note effect.

But have you ever tried "Rhythmic Gating"?

Let's say you have a string on track 1.

And a drumloop on track 2.

If you put a Noise-Gate with the sidechain on, on track 1 and route the input of the sidechain to the drumloop You would then make a rhythmic string that follows the transients of the drumloop. You can play around with the threshold/ attack/ release of the gate to make it fit to your liking.

You can use any rhythmic groove/ sound you want.  
So be creative with this. You can get some cool results.

Good Luck!



## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #79 #Halloweenweek (28-10-2015)

### A 'Lively' sound

That is quite a vague term. But still important to my opinion.  
I think its meaning is adding a certain richness to a sound. Or to make  
your mix sound less static.

A good way of doing this is by detuning the Cents (1/100 of a Semi-tone) of the layers of a sound.

An easy example would be for instance;  
Take a sound from the Nexus Vst. (press 'Mix' and the tab 'Lay')

Now sometimes you will see that sounds are built from separate layers which you can also detune. If you detune the sounds a couple of Cents each, you will notice a difference in the liveliness of the sound.

Play around with it and see what it does to your sound.

For the experts out here. This effect is kinda similar to a chorus effect but it ain't a chorus. I think the technical term would be "off-key" or "Floating".

Don't forget to share and like!

Watch out for Saturday for a Special Halloween production tip!  
Ooh and don't forget to check out the contest as well!

# #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #Halloween Special (31-10-2015)

## Trick or Treat

### TRICK:

To keep everything in Halloween spirit I thought it might be fun to make a scary soundeffect. Something which you could definitely hear in a horror score.

Now effects can be made in a million ways. So this is just one example and I will only cover the basics from this one.

After that you can start adding whatever you like to it.

So first of i would like to start with a Nexus Piano. (I've used the XP Dance Orchestra> PN Piano Soft).

You can use whatever sound for this of course.

Now play a few scary notes and put them in your daw.

Put the release to almost max, and put on some arena Reverb.

Now to make the piano sound really scary you can use Tip 79 of last wednesday and exaggerate it. This will create the famous horror piano ☺.

So that's it for the sound.

Now let's put a reverb on an insert channel and look for the "Hold" or "Infinite Sustain" switch. This switch will hold your reverb sound until infinity.

Now automate that so it will activate on the last note of your scary melody.

After this we put in a pitchshifter. (I've used the one from Waves). Now slowly pitch up the reverb signal for as long as you like. Maybe 4 bars or so?

Now you already get that build up/ scary sustain kinda vibe.

To make it a bit more grittier we gonna add the H-Delay from waves on the insert as well.

Put the delay on MS and set a high feedback (over 100).

Now automate the dry/wet signal of the delay in a similar curve as you did with the pitchbend.

So now when the sound reaches a higher pitch it gets grittier. Which creates more suspense as well.

Check out my example > I've added a crappy vocal and two additional effects and some mixing.

<https://soundcloud.com/.../vorwerk-halloween-effect-trick-or-...>

Of course when it's not halloween you can use these type of effects as buildups in your productions.

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### TREAT:

It would not be Halloween if there wasn't a treat also.

Together with [Alonso Sound](#) we have made a free Halloween soundbank for the Sylenth which you can download here:

[projectprim.us/MV-SY1HS](http://projectprim.us/MV-SY1HS)

There are some scary sounds in it as well as some really cool leads.

I hope you like them.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #80 (04-11-2015)

### EQ'ing before or after Compression

Before we start I want to congratulate @ElvisAmaral with winning the Halloween Photo Contest. It's absolutely a scary photo!

[Alonso Sound](#) and [LennarDigital - Official](#) will be in touch with you to claim your copy of Sylenth1 and a copy of my Sylenth1 Soundset.

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So a lot of things have been written on this subject.

And It's definitely a matter of taste

In general you could say that an EQ before Compression would give you the chance to get away of all the mud so that the compressor only triggers on what you feed into it. That gives a more natural processed sound.

Also if you want to exaggerate stuff in your mix it's also better to do that before the compressor so that it still cuts through your mix without sounding to harsh.

However if you want your EQ not to interact with your compressor then you should place it after.



## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #81

### Superwide! #ProTip

A wider mix can be important to create space for all the elements that make up your mix.

With some key ingredients in the middle, like the Kick, Bass & Vocal.

And some ingredients that should be wider to not interfere with those key elements in the middle.

So back at Tip 43 we talked about how to make your mix sound wider.

But here's another great tip which you should definitely try.

It's kinda similar to Tip 72 but with a Twist.

Take for instance the lead sound that you are using.

Copy the vst so you have two identical synths.

Now make both sounds Mono. You can use the BX\_Control V2 for instance to make this happen.  
Now pan one channel hard left and one channel hard right. Now you have a real stereo feel, which will also sound amazing on your headphones

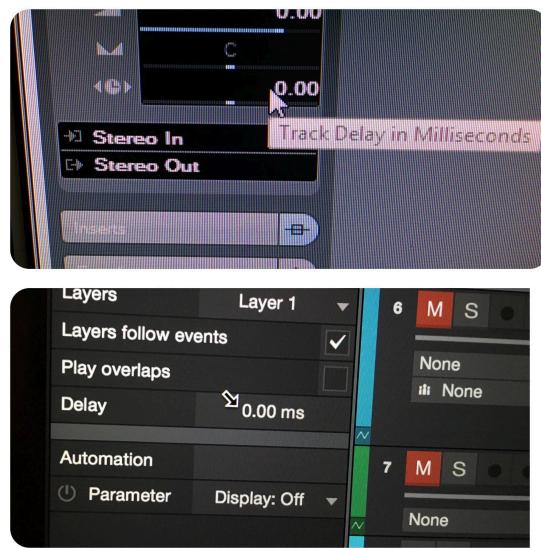
Now you can mix it as you like.

Now to make it even wider you can adjust the delay of the channel.

I think every DAW has this function where you can adjust the timing of the channel a bit. (So it starts later or sooner in comparison to the other channels). See photo.

Now put the left channel on -8 milliseconds and the right channel to +8 milliseconds. This is enough to make it sound wider without causing any problems in your mix.

Try it and compare it with the original lead you had.



## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #82

### Creating your own sound

Every artist wants to distinct themselves from others (in most cases ☺).

A good way of doing that is to create your own customized presets for your mix busses.

A lot of people always scroll thru there eq, reverb, compressor or whatever mixplugin standardpresets to find there best setting. But if you put a good amount of time in it to create your own you are also creating a signature sound for yourself.

Which eventually will be the best starting point for all your mixes.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #83 (25-11-2015)

### How to Arrange your track?

So you have made a great melody and a good idea for a drop. But how do you put all those together and make a full track out of it?

Here are some tips you can apply to make things a bit easier.

First and most important. Find a track from which you like the arrangement and you know that that will work in a club or festival.

Try to analyze that arrangement and try to understand why that works. Maybe even create a current top 5 of tracks that work and have a cool arrangement and see what fits your idea.

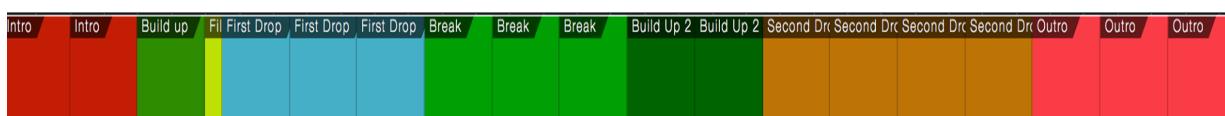
You can then place the track in your DAW and use colorcoding for the BARS to set out an arrangement which you could follow along.

You can use terms like INTRO / BREAK / BUILDUP / DROP / BRIDGE to make an easy guidance for yourself. See example.

Make sure every part of a track sounds equally interesting. And keep clear distinctions between the different parts. But still keep it cohesive. How to keep it cohesive? That's where the creativity comes in. Fills, Effects, Hints, Intertwining Melodies etc..

If the transitions between parts are to abrupt. Then it has to be for a reason. Otherwise try to make it more smooth.

In the end the track should flow natural.



## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #84 (02-12-2015)

### Speaker placement

A helpfull first guideline of speakerplacement.

Now every room is different so you always need to experiment.

But here are three simple guidelines to start with!

1. Speakers need to be as far apart from each other as you are from them.
2. Speakers need to be at least 60 cm away from your backwall.
3. Make sure that the distance between the side and the backwall are unequal.

This way you ensure the most accurate response. After this you can decide in what way you can improve the acoustics of the room.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #85 (09-12-2015)

### Panning

Got a question about which type of panning is better.

Symmetrical or Asymmetrical:

I think the key thing here is that your mix sounds well balanced.  
I personally only use Asymmetrical panning on character type sounds in  
breaks.

If I put a reverby type piano and pan that one 80% to the left then I still want  
to have something compensating on the right side. Pref something in the same  
freq range. Maybe a violin type sound or so. Make sure your amplitude of  
both sounds are around the same.

If you do that right you create a more wide spacious atmosphere for in the  
break.

For the drop I would not recommend it. Just try and keep things Symmetrical  
for max impact on the dance floor.

BUT! If you make music pure for listening purposes you can absolutely be  
more creative in this. (like for instance U2 – Vertigo).

For the rest if you are (symmetrical) panning your mix be aware that you not  
only pan straight in the middle and hard left and hard right. Cause that way  
you can create holes in mixing image.

Use everything in your mixing image to create that wall of sound:

- UpFront and in the Middle
- Hard Left , Hard Right
- Behind your speakers. (by using spacious effects like for instance reverb)
- And between the left speaker and the middle and the right speaker and the  
middle.

## #Vorwerk #TipOfTheWeek #86 (16-12-2015)

### Distortion

Distortion is the alteration of the original shape of something. In our case the waveform.

By altering the original shape of a waveform you create musical effects.

If you want full background info visit wikipedia.

I personally use a lot of distortion type effects in my tracks.

A Few examples of how I use distortion:

I place them on inserts just to make sounds come more forward in the mix.

I use distortion to control my levels even more. U can kill the dynamic range for your sound which in some cases is a desirable effect. Like in a comparable way as a compressor.

I use distortion to create completely different sounds. Like making a saw wave lead from a simple bass guitar sample.

I use band distortion to accentuate some frequencie bands of a sound a bit more.

I also use distortion as an FX send. If you like the original sound, don't want to alter it, but you want to add some grittyness you can try it via this way.

I use distortion to create filter sweeps for fills and stuff.

I use bitcrushers to create more presence on your sound

I DON'T use distortion on my masterchannel!

My fav distortion plugin is Quadrafuzz (cubase), Easy, versatile, great sounding.