> ❝
> If I could just play it, I'd play it. But I can't, so I draw it.— *deadmau5*
> ❞

NOTES

CHAPTER RECAP

Joel draws all of his melodies, one note at a time, into the piano roll screen of Ableton. If you've never worked this way, you should try it. Even if you're a practiced keyboard player or a formally trained musician familiar with musical notation, drawing notes into a gridded timeline and moving them around by hand can give you a whole new perspective on composing.

When you start drawing notes, don't worry about what synth sound you're using or what groove your track might end up having; just start putting down notes and adjusting them into interesting combinations that sound good to your ears. When you're working this way, your instinctual reactions to the notes are more important than the formal rules of music.

Once you've found a string of notes you like, transpose the whole melody up and down into different keys until you find a range that makes your bass resonate nicely. (If some of the concepts in this chapter–like side-chain compression, synth envelopes or arpeggiation–feel new to you, don't worry. They'll all be covered in more detail in later chapters.)

TAKE IT FURTHER

▸ Joel live-streams a lot of his studio sessions <u>here</u>. Now that you know more about what's going through his head while he's working, watch some of his old streams and pay close attention to what he's doing. Is he following his own rules?

ASSIGNMENT

▸ Joel can get his ideas down and rearrange them quickly by using keyboard shortcuts to navigate in Ableton. Brush up on your command of keyboard shortcuts here. Challenge yourself to start doing as much as you can in your projects without touching the mouse.

NOTES