

Erica Synths — Graphic VCO

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Creative Modulation Techniques: Erica Synths Graphic VCO

(for Distorted Percussive Sounds, Wild Basslines, and Atmospheric Pads)

As a Eurorack modular synthesizer musician, the Erica Synths Graphic VCO offers a lot of powerful modulation options to sculpt a huge range of intense, characterful sounds—perfect for aggressive percussion, filthy bass, and haunting atmospheric pads. Below, I'll break down patch and modulation ideas using the module's features as described in the manual.

1. Distorted Percussive Sounds

Key Features to Use:

- **Wave Drawing:** Design snappy, asymmetric shapes (spiky, sudden slopes for attack transients)
- **Bitcrush, Wavefold, Ringmod FX:** Add digital/analog-style nastiness
- **CV Modulation:** Use envelopes, gates, or random CV for movement

Patch Suggestion:

- **Draw a Percussive Wave:** Use the wave design menu to sketch a wave with a sharp attack (fast rise, short peak) and rapid decay.
 - **FX Section:**
 - Select **Bitcrush** (CRUSH) or **Wavefolder/Wrap** for extra grit.
 - Modulate the **FX Amount** with a fast-decay envelope from an external envelope generator.
 - For clicky tones, try modulating the **wavefold** at audio rate.
 - **Suboscillator:** Offset it by an odd interval (like a fifth or seventh) for added complexity, and blend it with the main out for weight.
 - **Pitch Envelope/Modulation:** Mult the percussive envelope to 1V/oct for pitch sweeps.
 - **CV Control:** Assign complex CV (Sample & Hold, Random, Stepped LFO) to the **Morph** input to jump through wild transient shapes.
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2. Dubstep/Drum'n'Bass Basslines

Key Features to Use:

- **Morphing Between Two Custom Waves** for wobble/movement
- **FM** (internal/external)
- **Ring Mod** and **Phase Distortion**
- **Wavetable Scanning**

Patch Suggestion:

- **Draw or Load Aggressive Waves (Buzz/Spike/Square)** for A & B; morph between them:
 - Route an LFO or envelope to **Morph CV** for “wub” motion.

- **Apply FX:**
 - Set FX to **FM** (patch internal mod OSC or external LFO/VCO for classic growl).
 - Try **Phase Distortion** with CV (envelope or stepped modulation).
 - Ring Mod with an external VCO for metallic/machine-like timbres.
 - **Bitcrush at High Intensity** can “tear up” the sound (dial in taste, modulate depth with a fast LFO).
 - **Suboscillator as Sub-Bass:** Tune one or two octaves down, blend to taste for added low-end.
 - **VCA/Filter for Movement:** Especially when modulating Morph and FX parameters in rhythm with your groove.
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3. Haunting Atmospheric Pads

Key Features to Use:

- **Wavetable Matrix:** Morph smoothly through 8x8 or larger grids of harmonically evolving waves.
- **Spectral Editing:** Create harmonically rich or hollow waves, tweak harmonics for glassy/airy timbres.
- **Subtle FX Modulation:** Wavewrap, wavefold, gentle FM.

Patch Suggestion:

- **Wavetable Matrix Mode:**
 - Populate with waves of different harmonic content (sine, odd/even, inharmonic).
 - Use very slow LFOs or complex looping envelopes on **Morph X/Y** for constantly shifting textures.
- **Subtle FX:**
 - Set FX to **Wavewrap** or **Phase Distortion**; modulate depth with slow CV for evolving shimmer/detuning.
 - Very low **Drive** settings for subtle saturation.

- **External Modulation:**
 - Patch aftertouch or velocity from MIDI-to-CV interface to **Morph CV**, adding expression.
 - Use envelope followers on ambient field recordings or vocals to modulate FX Amount or Morph.
 - **Detuned Suboscillator** at -15 or -22 semitones for richness.
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General Tips

- Assign random or slow modulation sources to FX parameters, Morph, and Wavetable position for continuous complexity.
 - Stack morphing, wave editing, AND FX—this module allows all of them at once.
 - Try sampling output directly or running into distortion for even more filth.
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For more in-depth patch generation and processing in your modular system, check out [Generated With Eurorack Processor](#)

[Get the full manual PDF here](#)

Explore, experiment, and enjoy!