

Tiptop Audio – MIXZ

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Using the Tiptop Audio MIXZ for Full-Length Eurorack Songs

The Tiptop Audio MIXZ module is more than just a utility mixer—it's a tool that enables large-scale set arrangement and structure within a Eurorack system. Crafting a full song on modular not only involves making interesting sounds but also demands transitions, arrangement, and control. Here's how to take advantage of MIXZ in a song-oriented workflow:

Key Features of the MIXZ in Song Building

- **Dual 4-Channel Mixing:** Mixer A and Mixer B allow you to manage separate groups of sounds or signal paths, each with dedicated or summed outputs.
 - **Master Gain & Individual Control:** Mixer A has per-channel gain, Mixer B has a master output control.
 - **Tiptop Bus Mix Integration:** Mix drums or other sources from compatible modules via the bus board, freeing up front-panel patch points and enabling mass muting/enabling via jumpers and the module's BUS toggle.
 - **Low Noise Summing:** Clean mixing of audio, CV, and gates, important for layered arrangements and song clarity.
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Techniques for Creating Full-Length Songs with MIXZ

1. Song Sectioning Through Mixer Grouping

- **Assign Sounds to Mixers:** Send separate voices (like drums, bass, leads, atmospheres) to different mixer sections.
 - **Example:** Drums via BUS Mix + Mixer B, melodic content via Mixer A.
- **Manual Transitions:** Use patch cable insertion/removal to reroute Mixer A out of Mixer B, effectively muting/introducing sections on the fly—a tactile way to handle verse/chorus/bridge changes.

2. Live Arrangement via Bus Mix

- **Selective Drum Muting/Enabling:** With individual modules enabled/disabled on the bus, and the MIXZ BUS switch acting as a global mute, you can bring in or drop out complex percussion sections instantly—ideal for drops, builds, and breakdowns.
- **Performance Switch:** Flip the BUS switch for dramatic silences or re-entries in your song arrangement.

3. Layering and Spatial Movement

- **Stereo/FX Sends:** Route Mixer B's output to effects like delays, reverbs (e.g., Z-DSP in the manual's example), and fade those effects in/out for dynamic intros, outros, and breakdowns.
- **Stacked Mixing:** Have Mixer A process your main harmonic content, route into a filter, then into Mixer B with drums. You can gradually build up your song by bringing in extra tracks via the unused channels in each mixer.

4. Scene Creation and Morphing

- **Patch Automation:** Use voltage-controlled amplifiers (VCAs) or mutes post-MIXZ for automated volume fades or switching sections with external sequencers.

- **External Control:** Use a logic or trigger module to perform “scene” changes by switching which sound groups are routed to the output, or by automating the BUS on/off with external helpers (manual engagement will always be most direct).

5. Dynamic Song Progression

- **Gradual Build-ups:** Slowly raise levels on Mixer A/B, or open the BUS, to create layered introductions.
 - **Breakdowns:** Instantly cut sections by pulling a patch cable from Mixer A’s out (removing its sum from Mixer B), or flipping the BUS off.
 - **Jams and Improvisation:** With 8+ channels + BUS, you can jam and improvise song structure, bringing in or dropping out voices as needed.
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Workflow Example: Building a Modular Song

1. **Intro:** Bus Mix and all channels off. Fade in atmospheric elements on Mixer A.
 2. **Verse:** Bring in drums by flipping BUS switch; add bass via Mixer B.
 3. **Chorus:** Patch in Mixer A to Mixer B, combine all voices and bring up FX sends for heightened energy.
 4. **Breakdown:** Pull Mixer A out, flip BUS switch off—only atmospheric effects remain.
 5. **Build:** Gradually raise levels, re-enable BUS, push signal back into Mixer B for the next section or a final drop.
 6. **Outro:** Fade everything out using master gain on Mixer B, or manual level fades.
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Pairings with Other Modules

- **Drum Modules:** All Tiptop drum modules for easy BUS Mix workflow.

- **Sequencers:** For automating CV/gate changes to dynamics or voice selection.
 - **VCAs & Mute Switches:** Post-MIXZ for more automated section changes.
 - **Envelope Followers/Controllers:** To modulate levels on MIXZ for dynamic builds.
 - **Effects (e.g., Z-DSP, Echo, Reverb):** For spatial transitions and song development.
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General Tips

- Modular “songs” are about performative arrangement—use MIXZ as your central hub to introduce, remove, and blend elements in real time.
 - Plan ahead: assign your song elements to different channels or BUS slots to facilitate quick changes on the fly.
 - Practice transitions! The muscle memory of flipping BUS, patching, and fading will make your live modular songs engaging and cohesive.
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