

Tiptop Audio – RS808

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[RS808 Manual PDF – Tiptop Audio](#)

Using the Tiptop Audio RS808 (Rimshot/Clavs) to Create Full Length Eurorack Songs

Quick Overview

The **Tiptop Audio RS808** is a compact Eurorack adaptation of the Roland TR-808's iconic Rimshot and Clavs percussion. Beyond just providing those classic sounds, it adds **Pitch** and **Snap** controls, and four sound variations via two switches, together with **Level** and **Accent** knobs. These parameters are designed for real-time manipulation and dynamic expression. ([Product Page & Manual](#))

Challenges in Song Arrangement

- **Beats and grooves** often come easily, but **developing sections, dynamics, and movement** is harder.
- Classic grooveboxes and DAWs offer tools like mutes, fills, and automation, which Eurorack can lack unless you build similar structures.

Strategies for Song Structure with RS808

1. Sound Variation for Song Sections

- **Use the switches** to swap between the four sound types (Rimshot, Clavs, Click, or Mixed) for different song sections (intro, verse, chorus, bridge).
- **Automate** these switches with voltage-controlled switches or robot fingers (modules like Doepfer A-150 or Erica Synths Sequential Switch) to programmatically change RS808's timbre during your song.

2. Dynamic Accent Programming

- **Accent input** allows you to send selective gate signals, accentuating specific beats or notes.
- Use a **sequencer** (e.g., Metropolis, Eloquencer, Pam's New Workout, or a trigger sequencer) with accent outputs to create dynamic grooves.
- **Accent knob** provides very fine volume changes. Automate it with CV (using a VC-attenuator in line, for example) for evolving song dynamics.

3. Modulating Pitch and Snap

- **Pitch and Snap** are not on the original 808, so play these to your advantage!
- Send slow LFOs, envelopes, or sequenced CV to Pitch or Snap to create movement (e.g., raising Snap for breakdowns, or modulating Pitch for fills and transitions).

4. Rhythmic Arrangement and Switching

- Use sequential switches or switch/mute modules to **bring the RS808 in and out of the mix**. This is perfect for builds, drops, or changing up song sections.

- Use a **trigger/gate delay** module for offsetting RS808 patterns across your track, creating variation and fills.

5. Layering and Panning

- Mix the RS808 with other percussive modules (e.g., Tiptop's other 808/909 or analog drum voices) and **pan** or **EQ** rimshots/clavs for stereo width and interest.
- For longer tracks, automate the mixing of the RS808 via CV-controllable mixers for dynamic song energy.

6. Song Progression with Sequencers

- Program distinct sequences for Intro, Verse, Chorus, Bridge, etc., and use a **pattern chaining or song mode** (if your sequencer has it) to progress through sections.
- Sync pattern changes to timbral changes on the RS808 for cohesive song arrangement.

7. Performance: Manual Controls

- Use your hands! The RS808's physical knobs make it ideal for **real-time manipulation** – build energy by increasing Accent, raising Snap or Pitch on breakdowns, and muting notes on the fly.

Example Song Arrangement Flow

1. **Intro:** Sparse rimshot (RS808, both switches down), low Snap and Level.
2. **Verse:** Add Clavs (switches up) with moderate Snap, subtle Accent automation.
3. **Chorus/Drop:** Max Accent, modulate Snap and Pitch, mixed switches for unique timbre.
4. **Breakdown:** Strip back to only RS808 "Click" (Left down, Right up), automate Snap for effect.
5. **Build:** Bring in layered rimshots, increase Snap and Pitch steadily, then back to full groove.

Example Patch Suggestions

- **Trigger Sequencer** (for Gate In and Accent In)
 - **Voltage-controlled Switch** (to automate RS808 mode)
 - **CV Source** (LFO/Envelope for Pitch/Snap)
 - **Mixer & Panning Modules** (for song dynamics)
 - **Beat clock divider/multiplier** (change patterns for song sections)
 - **Mute or gate/trigger shuffling modules** (for fills/transitions)
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Final Thoughts

The **RS808** becomes powerful in songs when **sequenced creatively and modulated** in real time or by automation. Combine it with muting, CV, switching, and sequencing modules to transcend simple loops, bringing dynamic, evolving song structure to your modular live set or recordings.

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