

Mutable Instruments – Ripples

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Creative Modulation Techniques for Mutable Instruments Ripples (2020)

Mutable Instruments **Ripples** is a flexible, multimode analog filter capable of subtle warmth, wild distortion, and everything in between! Here's how you can exploit its features to design three distinct sound palettes:

1. Distorted Percussive Sounds

Objective: Aggressive, clipped, rhythmically contoured filter hits suitable for techno, IDM, and more.

Patch Tips:

- **Drive the Input:** Crank **Input 1 level (D)** to 4 or 5 to push the audio into soft-clipping for overdriven, punchy transients.
- **Modulate Cutoff with Fast Envelopes:** Patch a fast, snappy envelope (short attack/decay) into the **Frequency CV input**. Use the **FM attenuverter (E)** to dial in sharp cutoff sweeps that mimic percussive attacks.
- **Switchable Slope:** Set the **filter slope (B)** to 24dB for tighter, sharper filtering or 12dB for more body in the tail.

- **Voltage-Controlled Output VCA:** Patch another envelope to the **VCA CV input (3)** for dynamic amplitude shaping; this is your built-in "final stage VCA" to create percussive envelopes.
 - **Resonance:** Carefully advance the **Resonance (C)** to bring ringing/boing to your hits, or max it out for filter pinging.
 - **Patch Suggestions:**
 - Use the **band-pass output** for clap/snare-like snaps.
 - Patch audio-rate noise or short bursts to simulate drum attacks.
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2. Dubstep/Drum & Bass Basslines

Objective: Growling, modulated, and distorted bass tones that cut through the mix.

Patch Tips:

- **Aggressive Input Gain:** Push **Input 1** to near maximum to get that overdriven "dirty" low end.
- **Combining CVs:** Simultaneously patch an LFO and an envelope (using a CV mixer or mult) into the **cutoff CV input** for movement that wobbles and bounces. Fine-tune the blend/balance for both rhythmic sync and evolving timbre.
- **V/Oct Tracking:** Connect your sequencer or MIDI-CV pitch output to **V/OCT** input for accurate, musical pitch tracking.
- **Accent/Envelope-Driven Resonance:** If you want screaming peaks, send a second envelope (e.g., accent trigger) to the **resonance CV input** for aggressive, rhythmic resonance surges.
- **Filter Slope:** Experiment flipping between 2-pole for classic wobs and 4-pole for laser-like zaps.
- **Stack Outputs:** Layer the **band-pass and low-pass outputs** to thicken your bass.
- **Voltage Controlled Amplifier:** Patch a sidechain envelope or gate to the **VCA CV input** for ducking/pumping effects.
- **Patch Suggestions:**
 - Audio-rate modulation: Run an oscillator into a cutoff CV for FM filter growls.

- Insert distortion post-filter (external module) for extreme grit.
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3. Haunting Atmospheric Pads

Objective: Subtle, moving textures perfect for ambient, cinematic, or horror-inspired music.

Patch Tips:

- **Clean Input:** Use **Input 2** for the cleanest tone (bypasses the soft-clip circuit).
 - **Gentle Modulation:** Slowly cycle an LFO or random CV into the **cutoff CV input**, keeping the modulation **FM attenuverter (E)** subtle.
 - **Manual Performance:** Sweep **Cutoff (A)** by hand or record automation for expressive pads.
 - **High Resonance for Ethereal Tone:** Find the edge before self-oscillation for a liquid, 'singing' filter effect; or gently ping at self-oscillation to add eerie overtones.
 - **Output Blends:** Combine the **high-pass** and **low-pass** outputs using a mixer for wide, spectral movement.
 - **Variable Slope:** Flip between 2-pole and 4-pole slopes for gentler-to-stronger color shifts.
 - **VCA for Drone Fades:** Modulate the **VCA CV input** with evolving, slow envelopes to create undulating dynamics.
 - **Patch Suggestions:**
 - Modulate both cutoff and resonance with different, desynchronized LFOs.
 - Feed effects (reverb, delay) after the filter for maximum spaciousness.
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Bonus: General Tips

- **Interactive Modulation:** Use joystick modules or touch controllers patched to FM/Resonance/VCAs for hands-on expressive play.

- **Self-oscillation if Needed:** At high resonance, the filter self-oscillates—use this as a VCO for filter-FM tricks by sending audio to cutoff CV.
 - **Don't Forget Band-Pass:** The **BP out** at 4-pole mode makes fierce snares and sharp FX with high resonance.
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Manual Reference:

<https://mutable-instruments.net/modules/ripples/manual.pdf>

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