



FREE CHEAT SHEET

The House Mixdown Cheat Sheet

Frequency maps, level targets and the 25 checks I run on every club mix.
Print it and keep it next to your speakers.

12

frequency zones

25

point mix check

1

page printable

£50 value. Yours free. By Omar Meho, founder of Music Workflow Academy. Taught to 120,000+ students in 170+ countries.

STEP 1

Gain staging **first**

Most bad mixes are just too loud too early. Fix levels before you touch an EQ.

Targets

- Kick channel peaking around -6 dB
- Every other channel set relative to the kick
- Master peaking around -6 dB with nothing on it
- Leave a limiter off until the mix is balanced

Balance in this order

1. Kick
2. Bass, until it sits just under the kick
3. Main hook or vocal
4. Chords
5. Hats and percussion
6. FX, last and quietest

The kick and bass relationship

- **Sidechain:** put a Compressor on the bass, turn on Sidechain, pick the kick. Fast attack, release around 80 to 150 ms. Duck by 3 to 8 dB.
- **Tune the kick:** find the kick's fundamental with a Spectrum and tune it to the key, or to the 5th of the key.
- **Rolling basslines** that sit between kicks may need little or no sidechain. Check with your eyes on the Spectrum and your ears on a sub.
- **Mono the low end:** Utility on the master, Bass Mono on, around 120 Hz.

Headroom for mastering

Export a 24 bit WAV with peaks around -6 dB and no limiter on the master. If you master yourself, do it in a new project with fresh ears.

STEP 2

Where everything lives

Typical ranges for a house mix. Use them as a starting point, then trust your ears and a reference track.

Part	Weight	Presence	Common moves
Kick	50 to 100 Hz	2 to 5 kHz click	Cut mud around 250 to 400 Hz if boxy
Sub bass	40 to 80 Hz	none	Keep it mono, sine or triangle, low pass the top
Mid bass	80 to 250 Hz	700 Hz to 1.5 kHz bite	Saturator adds harmonics so it reads on phones
Chords and keys	200 Hz to 1 kHz	2 to 5 kHz	High pass at 150 to 250 Hz, mild cut at 300 Hz
Pads	300 Hz to 2 kHz	air above 8 kHz	High pass high, pan wide, sit them low
Lead and hooks	500 Hz to 2 kHz	3 to 6 kHz	Cut competing parts here, not the lead
Vocals	200 Hz to 1 kHz	2 to 5 kHz	High pass around 100 Hz, de-ess 5 to 8 kHz
Snare and clap	150 to 250 Hz	2 to 5 kHz snap	Short reverb on a send for space
Closed hats	none	6 to 12 kHz	High pass at 300 to 500 Hz, vary velocity
Open hats and rides	none	5 to 12 kHz	Sidechain lightly so they pump with the kick
Percussion	200 Hz to 1 kHz	2 to 8 kHz	Pan left and right, keep them quiet
FX and risers	varies	varies	High pass everything, automate volume

Ableton stock tools for each job

EQ Eight

High passes, small cuts. Use the Spectrum view to spot clashes.

Saturator

Warmth on bass and drums. Soft Sine mode is a safe start.

Glue Compressor

On a drum bus, 2 to 3 dB of gain reduction.

Utility

Gain, width and Bass Mono.

Auto Filter

Movement and transitions. Automate the cutoff.

Spectrum

Check sub levels you can't hear on small speakers.

STEP 3

Space, width and loudness

Reverb and delay

- Use 2 or 3 send buses: short room, long hall, ping pong delay
- High pass every reverb return around 300 Hz
- Sync delays to 1/8, 3/16 or 1/4 notes
- Sidechain the reverb bus to the kick so it breathes

Stereo width

- Kick, bass, snare and lead vocal stay centre
- Hats slightly off centre, percussion wider
- Pads and FX widest
- Check in mono: Utility on the master, Width 0%

Loudness, without wrecking the mix

- Streaming services turn loud tracks down. Spotify normalises to around -14 LUFS by default, so crushing your master doesn't make it louder there.
- Club masters are usually much louder. Many land somewhere around -9 to -6 LUFS integrated, but match your reference rather than a number.
- Keep the true peak at or below -1 dBTP on the final master to avoid distortion when it's converted to MP3 or AAC.
- If the kick loses punch when you limit, back off the limiter. A clean mix at -9 LUFS beats a squashed one at -5.

Reference like a pro

1. Drop a released track in your genre onto an audio track. Route it straight to your speakers, not through the master chain.
2. Turn it down until it matches your mix's loudness, so you're comparing balance, not volume.
3. Flip between them. Compare kick and bass first, then vocals, then the top end.

The 25 point mix check

Levels

- ☐ Kick peaking around -6 dB
- ☐ Master peaking around -6 dB before limiting
- ☐ Nothing clipping on any channel
- ☐ Bass sits just under the kick
- ☐ FX quieter than the main elements

Low end

- ☐ Kick and bass sidechained or carved
- ☐ Kick tuned to the track
- ☐ Sub is mono below 120 Hz
- ☐ Only kick and bass under 100 Hz
- ☐ Sub checked on headphones or Spectrum

Mids

- ☐ Chords high passed
- ☐ Mud cut around 250 to 400 Hz where needed
- ☐ Lead or vocal clearly audible

Top end

- ☐ Hats high passed
- ☐ No harsh 3 to 5 kHz build up
- ☐ Vocal de-essed

Space

- ☐ Reverb and delay on sends
- ☐ Reverb returns high passed
- ☐ Mix checked in mono

Final

- ☐ Compared to a level matched reference
- ☐ Checked on phone speaker
- ☐ Checked at low volume
- ☐ True peak at or below -1 dBTP after mastering
- ☐ Exported as 24 bit WAV
- ☐ Slept on it, listened again

Want Omar to check your mix?

Track feedback and a 1 to 1 call are included with the MWA courses, along with full mixdown and mastering modules.

[See the courses →](#)

Lifetime access, 30-day money-back guarantee, CPD accredited. Includes every ebook, sample pack, the MWA Plugin Suite and the Track Kit Vault.