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/SM200

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Welcome to...

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Here we are, 200 full Sample Magic releases strong. Wow. Cliché aside, I never imagined back in 2006 that this day would come.

Genres have been and gone, the business model for sounds completely morphed, yet one thing has thankfully stayed consistent - your continued support of our brand - for which we are eternally grateful - and our will to leave Sample Magic largely unchanged and entirely devoted to quality and inspiration first.

Of course with our variety of sub-labels and different ranges, 200 is symbolic only in that it counts the number of 'full' releases we have brought to market.

What a testament to an incredible team of creative individuals who never fail to surprise and inspire. From sound designers, product managers, graphic designers to QA, formatting and copy writers, I have no doubt this one of the most incredible creative collectives I've ever had the privilege to work alongside.

And while 200 is a symbolic number for us, it also marks business as usual - back to the drawing board, to map the future and our devotion to serve - YOU - our loyal customer. Thank you for all your incredible support - you are what makes us tick. See you at 300.

Sharooz Raofi
Founder / Sample Magic



01 Sample Memory

Back in the day, vintage samplers had limited RAM. As a workaround, producers would record their samples with increased speed, which by proxy added interesting artifacts when downpitched. Try recording your samples at twice the normal speed and playback one octave lower to simulate this effect.

03 Beefier Kicks

Add weight to your favorite kicks with a synthesizer - disable any keyboard tracking and tune the synth to a low 40-60 Hz to taste. Use the inbuilt amplitude and pitch envelopes to create a thuddy bass drop. If you kick is an audio track or recording then use a test oscillator and gate it with the audio signal.

05 Resampling Bass

Grab a bass one-shot or loop of your choosing, add noise and vinyl saturation, then within your sampler down pitch your bass to acquire an 'analogue' feel to your sample. The previous noise and saturation settings will become more prominent, thus sounding like your signal has been passed through vintage hardware.

02 Instant Sidechain Compression

Plugins like LFO tool allow for customized sidechain-like pumping volume automation, but if you don't have this plugin most ordinary tremolos or auto-pans can be reconfigured to do a similar job. In your tremolo or pan tool, set the waveform to a sawtooth and invert the shape so it ramps up. Ensure your tool's tempo is synced to $\frac{1}{4}$ and the phase of the tremolo is set to 0° (so that it's mono). Any amount or depth control will increase the amount of pumping.

04 Hey Mr. Tambourine Man

Ordinary tambourine loops can be turned into instant seventies retro sounds with some simple bit crushing. Reduce the sample rate to half or one quarter the rate you're working at (normally 22.5kHz will be fine) and reduce the bit depth to 12 or even 8 bits. This will add a sharp layer of crust to your loop and make it sound like it's been lifted straight from a classic breakup.

06 MIDI Randomization, Inversion & Creative Tools

Ever get a case of writer's block? Several DAWs such as FL Studio, Cubase and Ableton come built in with several MIDI randomization and editing tools that can spark your creativity. For instance, in FL Studio go to your piano roll and select the wrench icon, then select "Riff Machine." In Ableton, drop in any MIDI file of your choosing (preferably something such as an arpeggio or pad pattern) and play with the Rev and Inv buttons to flip your MIDI both vertically and horizontally. A world of possibility awaits.

08 Start Building Your 'Favorites' Library

In today's day and age it's quite common to have several gigs of samples on your hard drive. Spend a day sometime this week and go through all your samples and categorize the ones you really love into a 'favorites' folder. By setting this practice you not only save up disk space but also mental/creative space, allowing one to make better decisions in a more efficient manner.

10 Compression

Only use compression when necessary. Compression is often responsible for ruining a good mix - reducing dynamics and depth. You don't have to have a compressor on any channel at all if it's making things sound worse! A great way of getting used to using compression is to use parallel compression on your mix bus. This allows you to compress aggressively and then use a wet/dry knob to find just the right amount.

07 Out-Of-The-Box Processing

Got any effect pedals laying around? Step outside of the VST realm and put them to good use. Within your DAW, effects such as delay and reverb can feel a bit rigid at times with everything being on the grid. Run your samples and MIDI through your favorite delay pedal to create unique, real-time echos and automate your reverbs manually for unique and interesting effects. The same technique can be applied with distortions, overdrives, and phasers.

09 Referencing

Get into the habit of referencing. It's very easy to make a bad mix without referencing. Find some music with great production and compare it with your composition throughout the whole writing process.- By the time you've finished composing you'll have a pretty decent balance to add final mix touches to.



Staff Picks

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SM166 - Modular Electro

It's incredibly difficult to pick just one release from the last 100 as a standout - almost unfair in fact - however, Modular Electro not only 'ticks every box' in that the genre is dear to my heart, the overall package - from how the sounds originated and were recorded through to the cover art, stand as a hallmark of all Sample Magic stands for - quality, authenticity and usability.

Sharooz Raofi (Founder)



SM186 - Soulful Beats

This release has everything I look for a sample library – great artwork, catchy demos, and most importantly amazing sounds. What stands out to me the most about this pack is how it has a DIY aesthetic to it. The sound design pushes the boundaries while remaining faithful to both underground and pop styles of music. An absolute gem of a release!

Israel Medina (General Manager)



SM196 - Synth-Pop

Synth-Pop - I'm a sucker for anything 80s, so this pack had to be my favorite on the list. What I love about it is that Synth-Pop doesn't venture into the typical synthwave territory that has dominated current retro genres, but rather it goes straight to the classics like Erasure, Depeche Mode, Tears for Fears, and more. The drums on this release are also some of my favorite to date.

John Kunkel (Senior Product Manager)



Staff Picks

SM200 /8

SM175 - Paranoid Techno

This release really encompasses the sound of modern techno for me. You can hear that the producer has sacrificed a-lot of hours into crafting all of the content. The drum loops in particular really stood out to me in this sample pack because of the quantity of variants offered, perfect track-starters! Finally, I couldn't not mention the acid bass loops in this one, they've been tweaked and processed to perfection!

Enda Harte (Social Media Manager)



SM174 - Chillmatic

A meticulously crafted sample pack that delivers dreamy vibes with mellow Hip Hop beats, jazzy piano elements, synth style chord progressions and raw-sounding analog basslines. When starting a new project, I like to import the Music Kit Loops to help get my ideas flowing, I'll then sketch new ideas/grooves using the Rex bass and percussion loops, and layer drum one shots to help beef up my original loop. The creative options are endless when you have a strong palette of sounds at your disposal and that's why Chillmatic is my stand out product of the year!

Niall Hoban (Head of Formatting)



SM171 - Future Downtempo

A sonic melting pot of esoteric grooves, organic textures & left-field melodies, Future Downtempo is everything I love in the modern downtempo sound. I always start with the synth loops and chord shots to get that deep and hazy vibe going straight away. The foley percussion is a particular standout for me in this release, I use them on nearly every production I work on.

Andrew Pearce (Formatting & Tech Support)



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