

Prompts for Making Beats

Name: _____

Date: _____

Name of Song/Beat/Track: _____

(→) Soundtrap®



A Pre-Lesson On Counting Beats



Patterns
BeatMaker

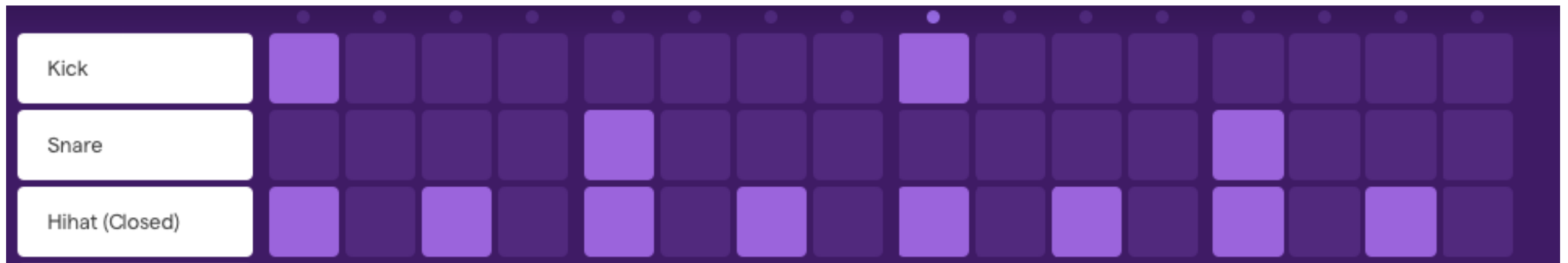
Counting Foundations of a “backbeat”

Think: “Billie Jean”

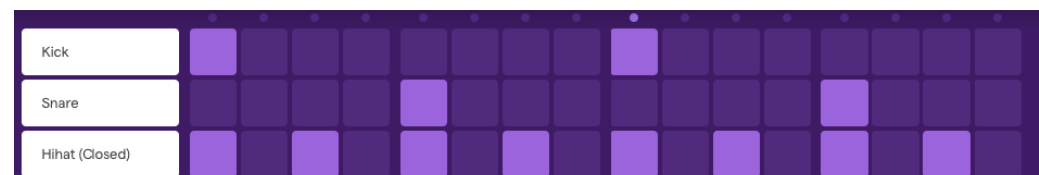
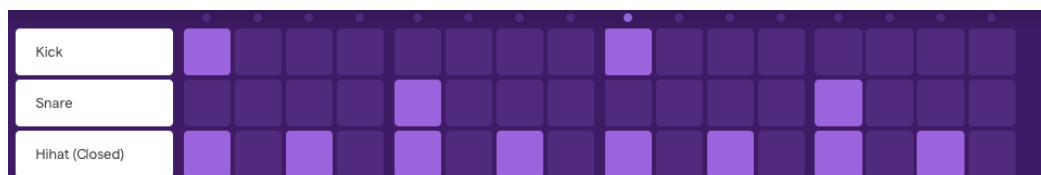
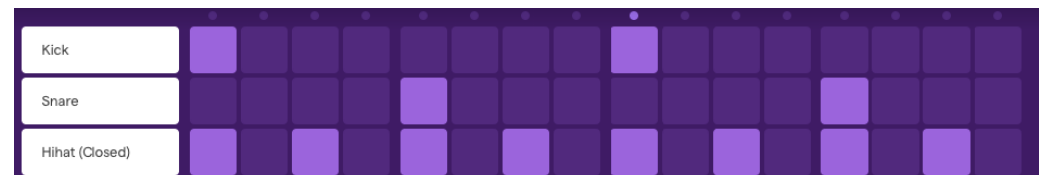
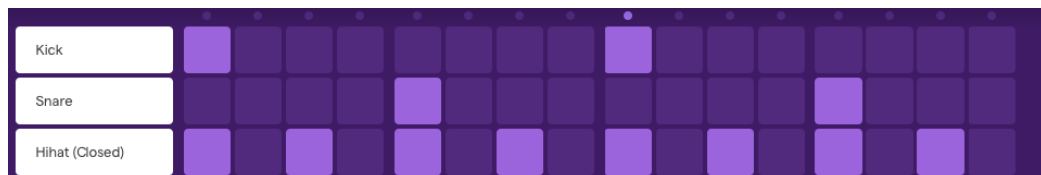
Context Most rhythms from the African diaspora; rock n’ roll, HipHop, blues, funk, etc, are organized into a cycle of 16 beats; or 4 sets of 4 counts each

Step 1: Make a “backbeat” by following this rhythm pattern

1 e + a 2 e + a 3 e + a 4 e + a

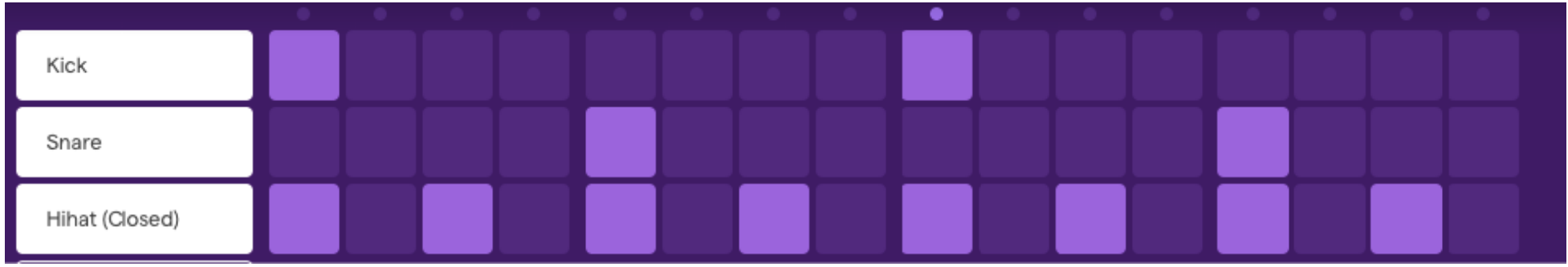
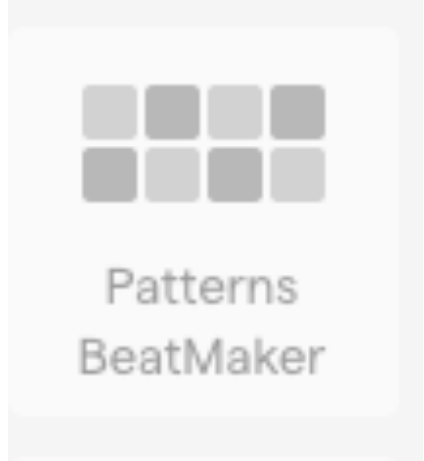


Context Most styles from the African diaspora; rock n’ roll, HipHop, blues, funk, etc, are organized into 4, 8, 12 or 16 bar phrases or verses.



Step 1: Make a "backbeat" by following this rhythm pattern

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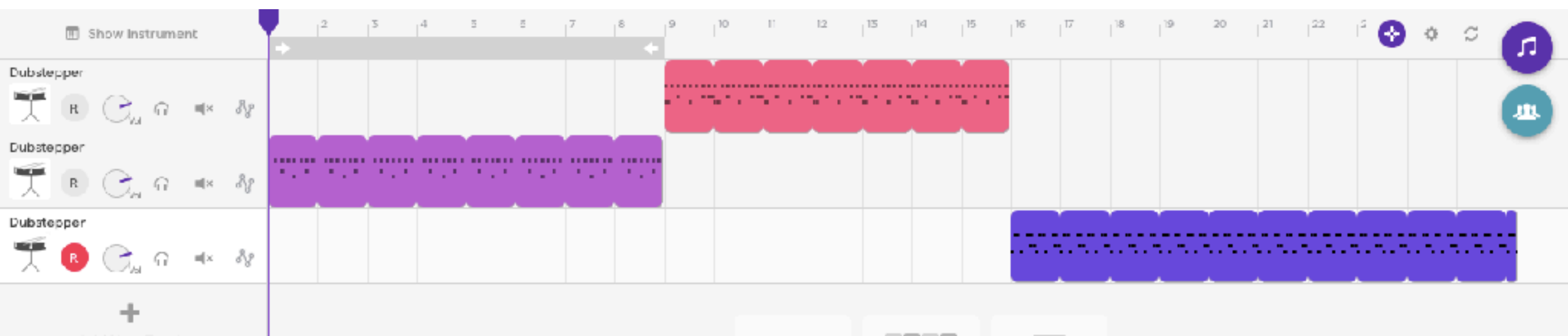
Step 2: Create different sections by adding "kicks" & "snare" to your "backbeat"

Context Drummers vary their drumbeats slightly to give the songs/beats a sense of freshness, and creativity. Different drumbeats can shape the way a song feels, and distinguish different song sections.



Step 3: Loop each section for 8 or 16 "bars" (ie: Verse, Hook, Instrumental)

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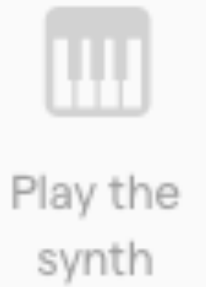
Step 1: Set up a “bass” track

Instrument Presets

My Preset Collection	Acoustic	Bass - Synth (20)
Guitar and Bass >	Bass - Electric	▶ Acid Bass Free
Keyboards	Bass - Synth >	▶ Attack Bass Free
	Jazz	▶ Cubic Bass Free

Context Most songs have a specific harmony; a set of chords that sound “good” when played one after another. The “Bass Line” determines the “chord progression”

Steps: Click on “play the synth”. Then click on “Guitar and Bass”. Then choose the kind of bass.



Step 2: Make a “bass line” for the verses.

Steps: The harmony for our song will be in the key of C major; which uses only the white keys. **Choose 4 notes. Play each “note” for 4 counts.**

N **V** **Z** **B**
 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 1 - 2 - 3 - 4

You can record the bass line by clicking on the notes on the screen, or you can type the characters assigned to each note.

Disclaimer: You don’t have to use 4 bass notes per song section. You can use 1,2,or 3.

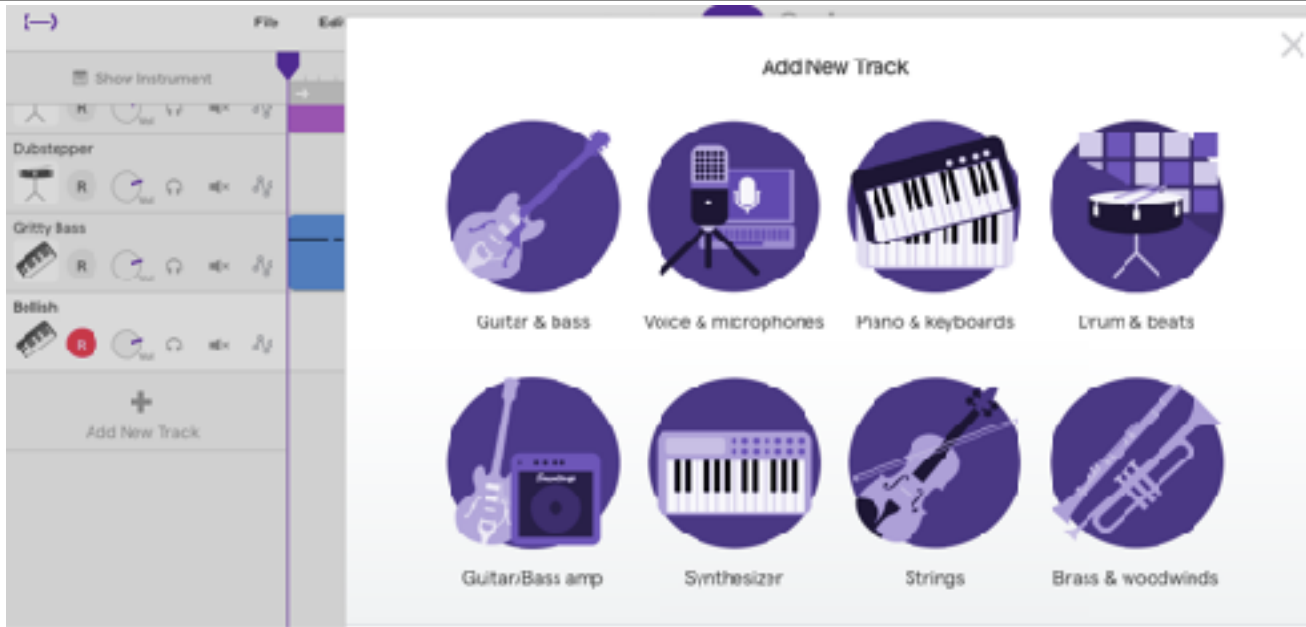
Step 3: Make “bass lines” for the hook, and for a bridge section

Steps: The harmony for your new section can include new notes, or you can re-arrange the order of your verse section. You can also play shorter notes, or quicker notes.

Be Creative with the rhythms of your chords!

Step 1: Set up a “piano & keyboards” track

Hint: You can also use any “pad” sound from the “synthesizer” tab.



Play the synth

Context Chords are collections of 2 or more notes played together. We are going to use the “triad” formula; by following a “1-3-5” pattern of notes starting where our bass note started the “chord.”

Step 2: Add “chords” for the verses.



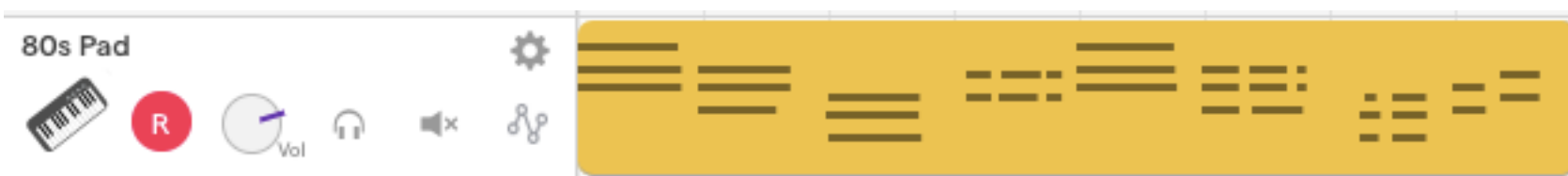
Steps: The harmony for our song will be in the key of C major; which uses only the white keys. The “scale” is arranged as follows:

C= Z D= X E= C F=V G=B
A=N B=M C= , D= . E= Q

N, . V N, Z C B B M .
1 - 2 - 3 - 4 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 1 - 2 - 3 - 4

Disclaimer: You don’t have to use 4 bass notes per song section. You can use 1,2,or 3.

Step 3: Add “chords” for the hook, and for a bridge section



Steps: The harmony for your new section must include the “1-3-5” formula starting on the bass note that you chose previously.

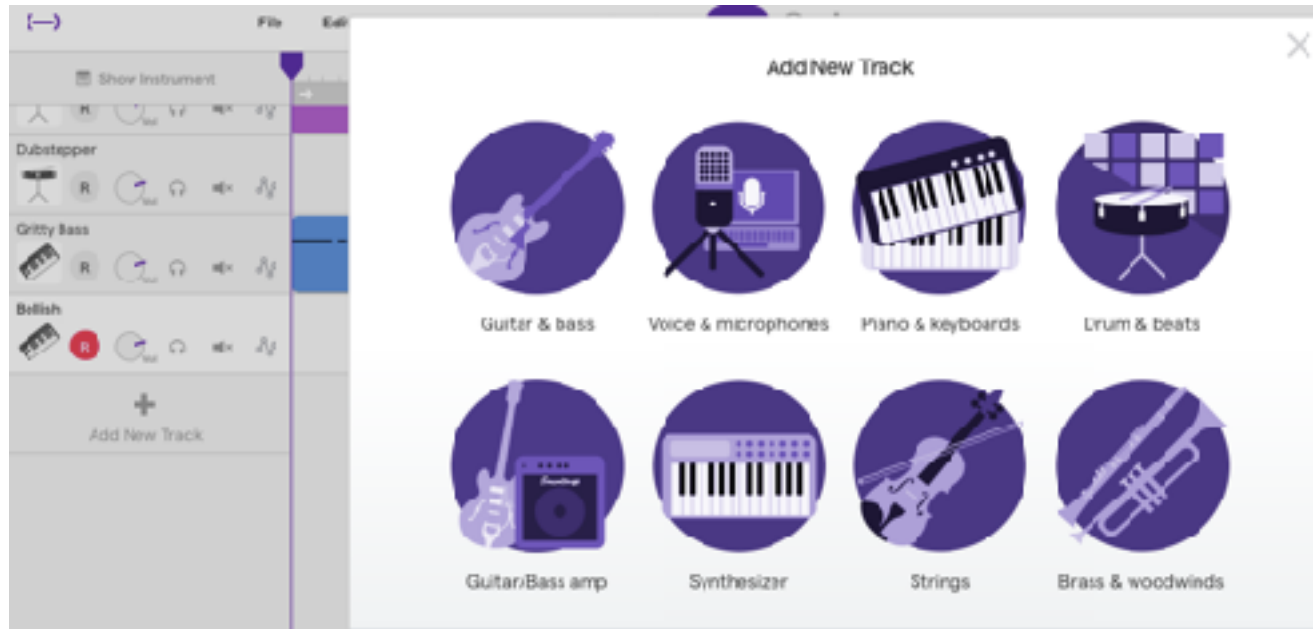
Be Creative with the rhythms of your chords!

Step 1: Set up a “Riff / Melody” track

You can also use any sounds! Try sounds from the “Synthesizer”, “Strings” or Brass & Woodwinds” tabs.



Play the synth



Instrument Presets

My Preset Collection	Fx	▶ Meow Lead Free
	Leads >	▶ Oxigene Lead Free
Guitar and Bass	Pads	▶ Popcorn Free
Keyboards	Rhythmic	▶ Punchy Dana Free
Synths >	Synths	▶ String Lead Free
		▶ Sunshine Lead

Step 2: Add “riffs” for the verses.

Step 3: Add “riffs” for the hook, and for a bridge section

Context: “Melodies” are collections of musical notes that sound “good” when played in sequence.

“Riffs” are melodies that are short, simple, and memorable. You can make a riff with as little as 1 note, or as many as you want. You should be able to “sing” our riff.

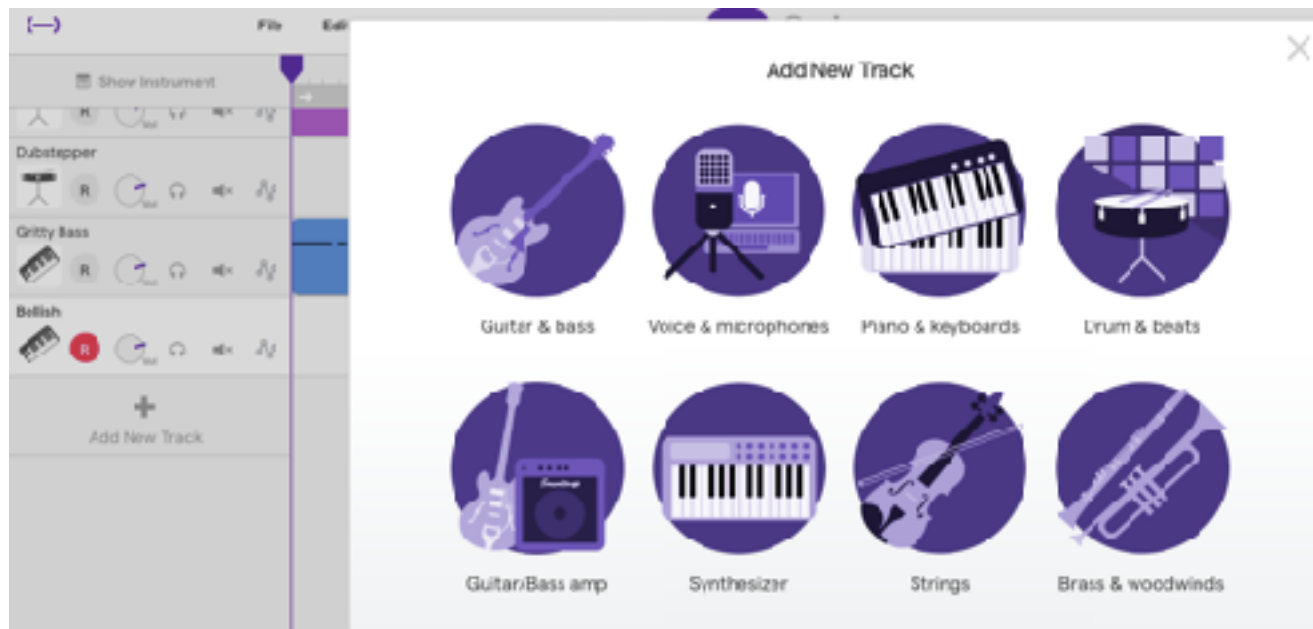


You can record the riffs by clicking on the notes on the screen, or you can type the characters assigned to each note.

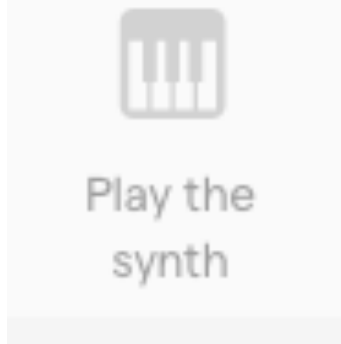
Meow Lead



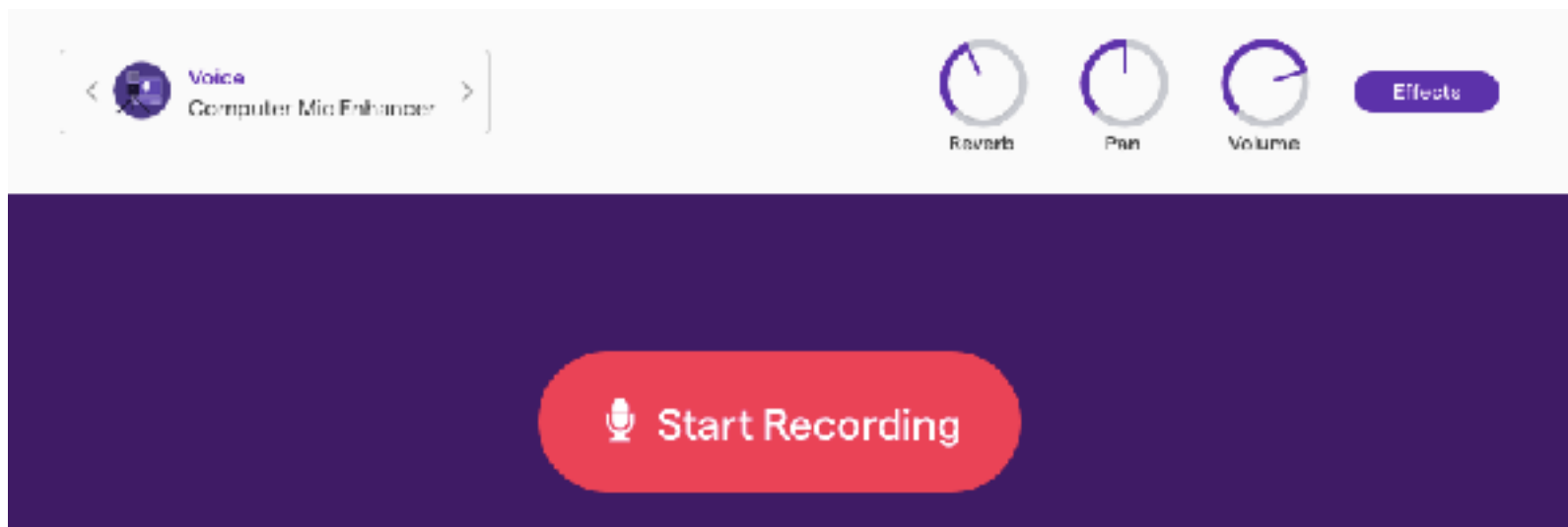
Step 1: Set up a “Voice & Microphone” track



Tips: Explore the different effects that the studio has. Make sure you find a quiet space to record your vocals. You must use earphones to record vocals, otherwise, the sounds from the track will be re-recorded and create distortion.



Step 2: Record the “vocals” for the verses and hook by singing or rapping.



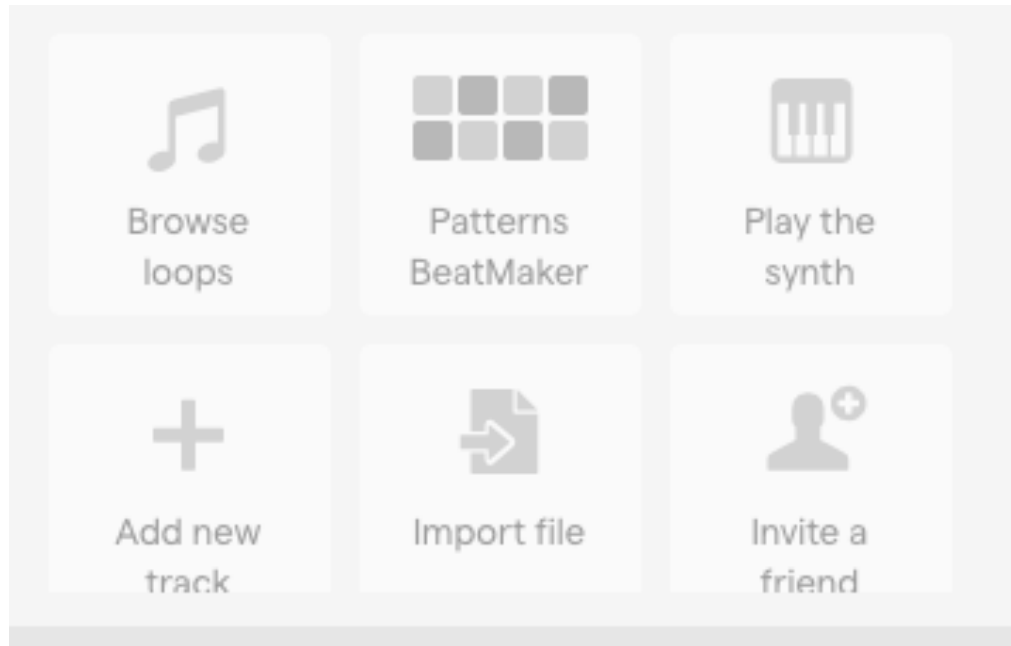
Tips: If you have access to an external USB microphone, do use it! Your track will sound better!



Step 3: Record background vocals on a different track



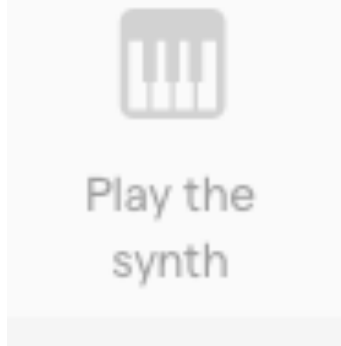
Step 1: Set up a “File” track



Context: “Sampling” is a defining element of HipHop. Sampling means to take/borrow a sound that was previously created it, and including it on your song.

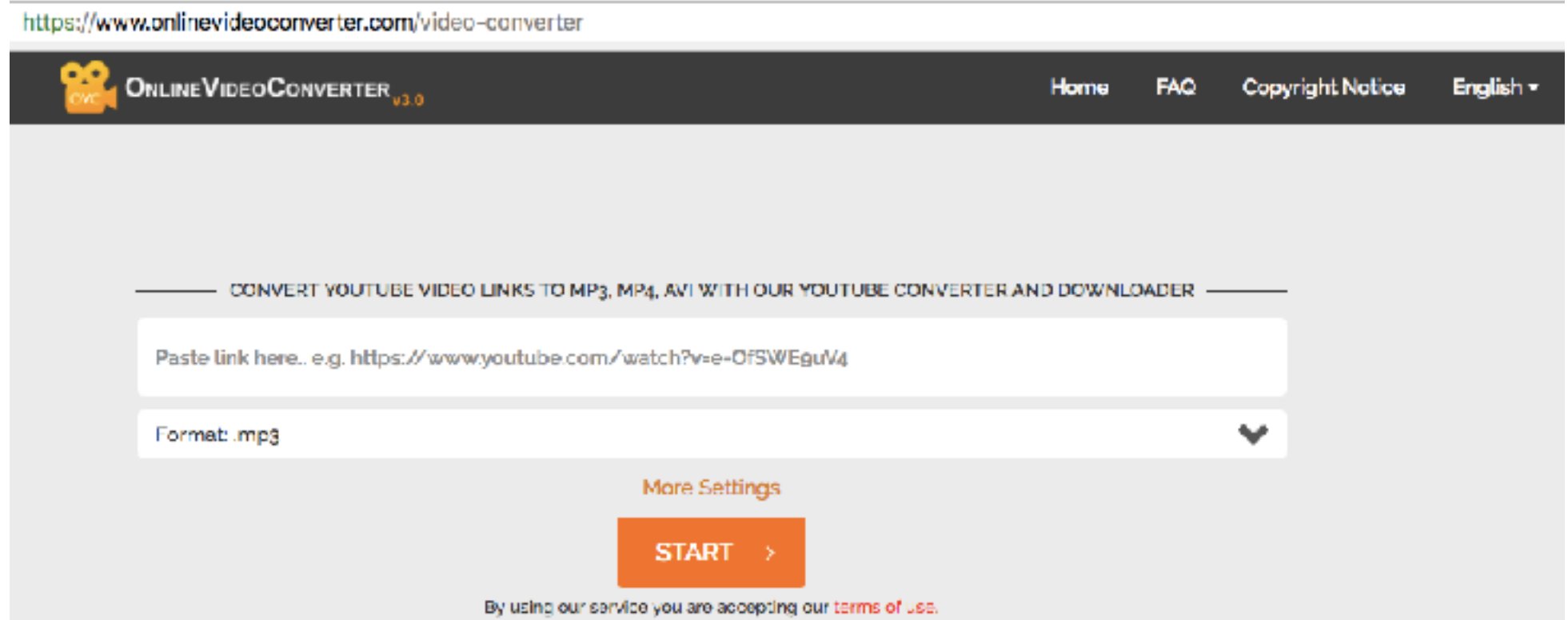
Sampling is traditionally done as a tip of the hat, or a “homage” to the OGs.

You can also sample sounds from your environment; like the sounds of your friend’s voices, cars from the street, a TV show playing in the background, the Subway announcements, a door opening, footsteps, etc.



Step 2: “Sample” sounds from your environment.

Steps: Use your smartphone to “sample” sounds, or use this website to save mp3 files from Youtube videos. www.onlinevideoconverter.com



Step 3: Save & Upload your File to your studio session.

Steps: Save your file to the desktop, then click on “Upload File”. Finally, click on “choose file”

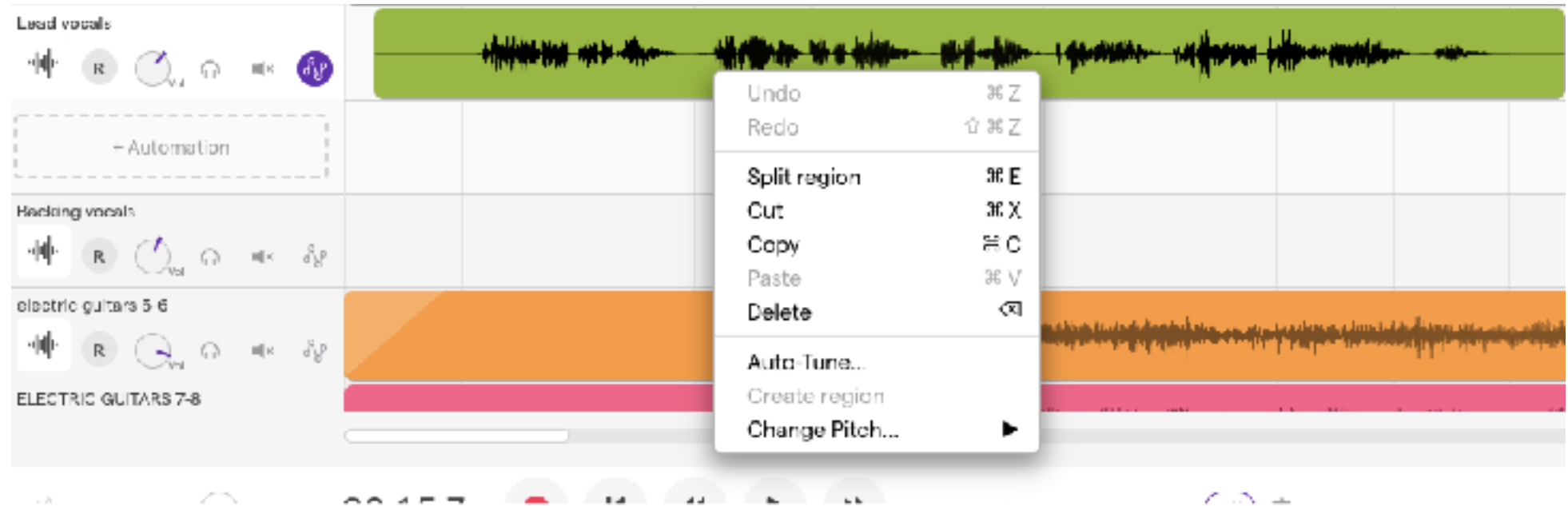
Step 1: "Chop" a sound

Context: "Chopping" is another defining element of HipHop. Chopping means to cut up a pre-existing sound, and using it as a "new sound" in order to give the sound a new life, but also to create a sound that didn't exist before.

Steps:

Right Click on the section of the track that you want to "chop."

Slide the beginning or end of the track back & forth until you only have the section of sound that you want.



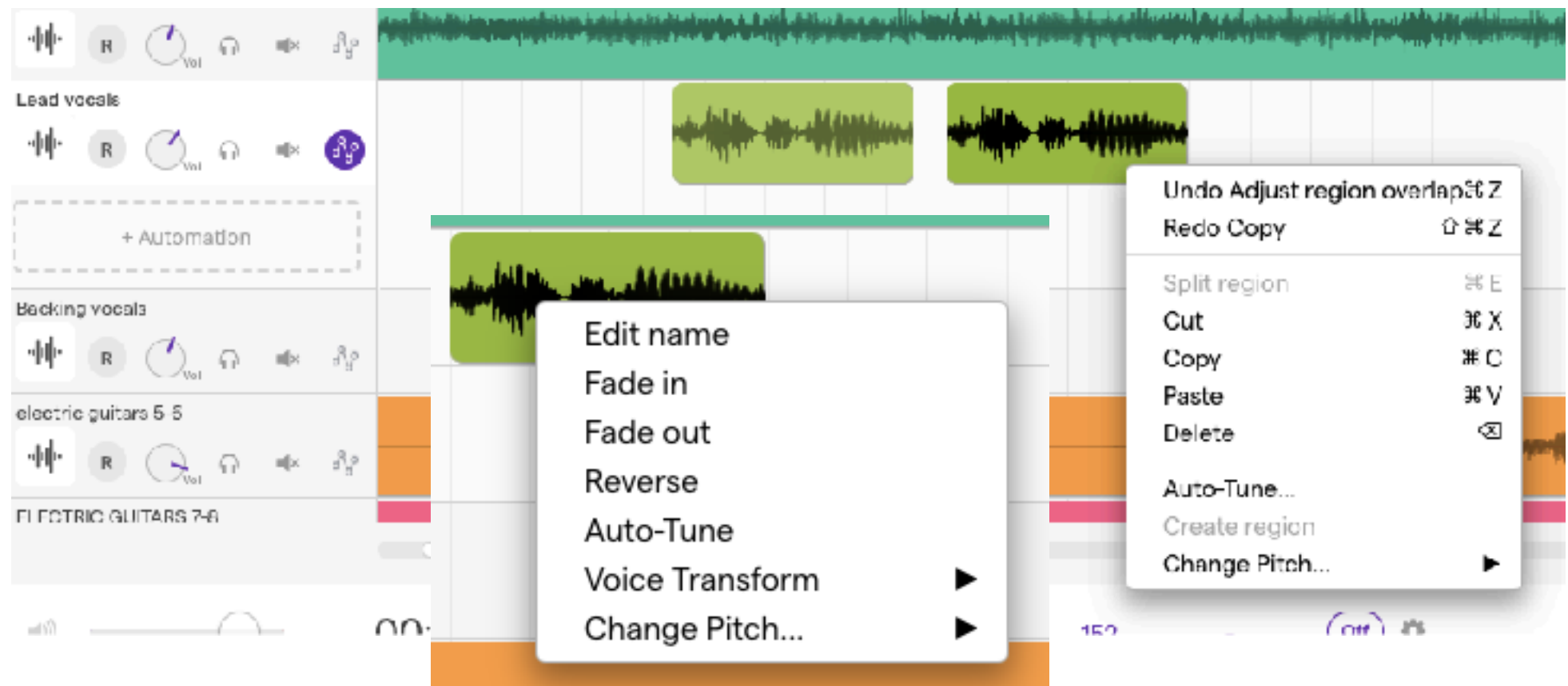
Step 2: Repeat/FX a sound

Steps:

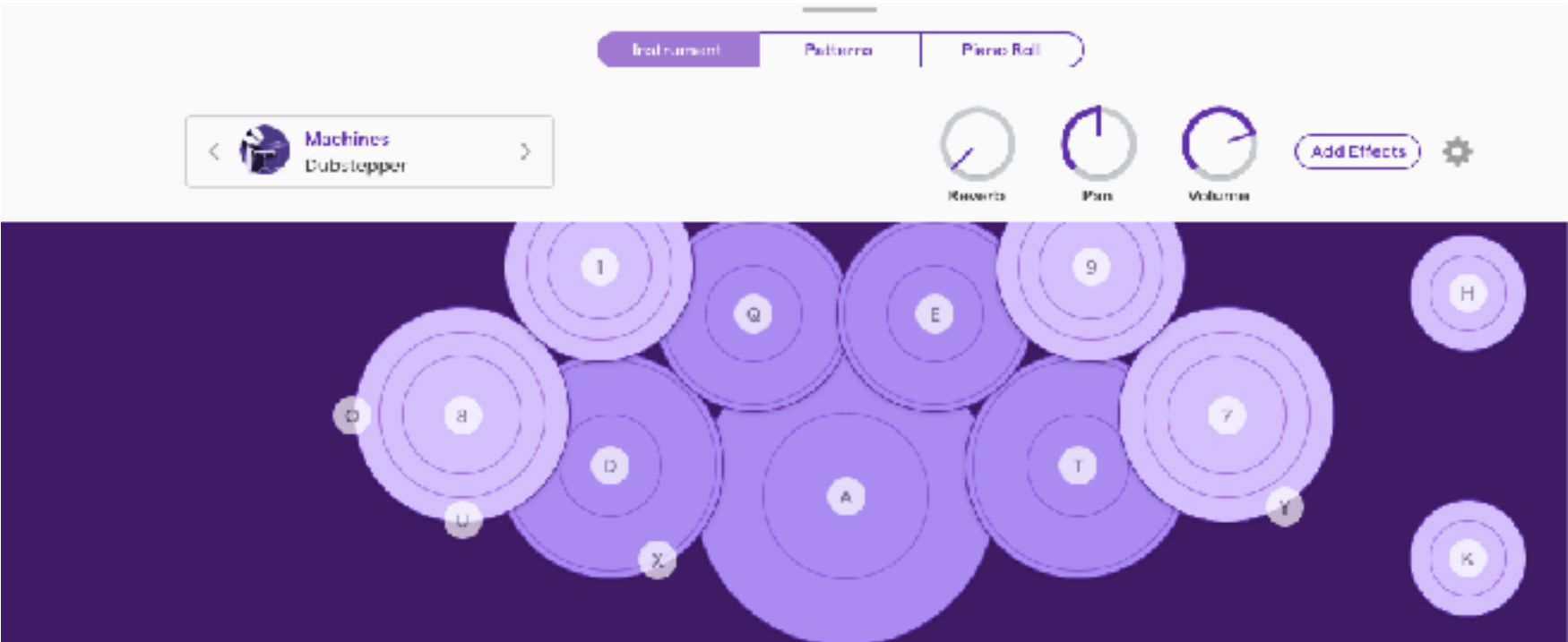
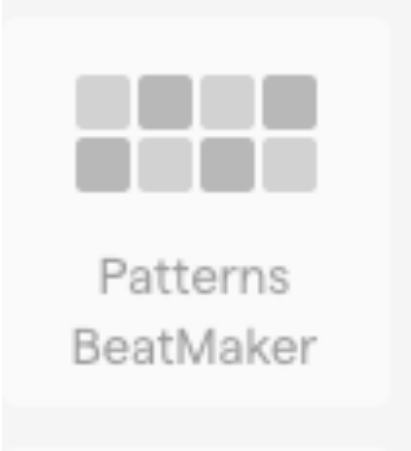
Right Click on the section of the track that you want to "chop." and copy/paste it to repeat it.

You can also "auto-tune" it, or change the pitch of it.

Click on "edit" on top of the sound-wave, and experiment with all these different effects.



Step 1: Add a “percussion” track



Steps: Set up a new percussion track. Click on “Instrument” as opposed to “Patterns”
 Now that you have an almost full track, add some “extra” percussion hits by improvising; making them up as you go. These will make your song feel more organic, fun and exciting.

Hint: Your “percussion Hits” can accent your riffs or hooks.

Step 2: Add an “FX” track

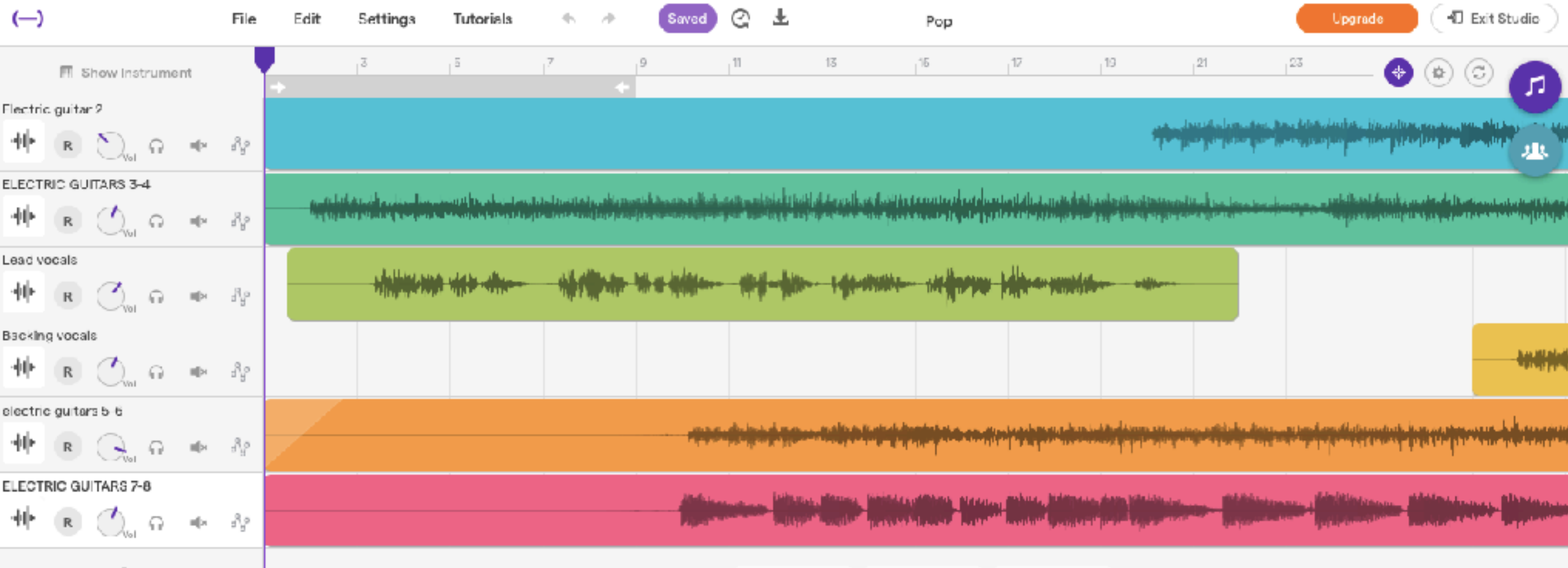
My Preset Collection	Fx >	Fx (8)
Guitar and Bass	Leads	▶ Alarm Free
Keyboards	Pads	▶ Alarmed Free
Synths >	Rhythmic	▶ Fading Alarm Free
	Synths	▶ Hold Key 1 Bar Sweep Free
		▶ Hold Key 8 Bars Sweep

Steps: Set up a new synth track. Click on “Instrument”
 Play around with improvisation; making things up as you go. These will make your song feel more organic, fun and exciting.

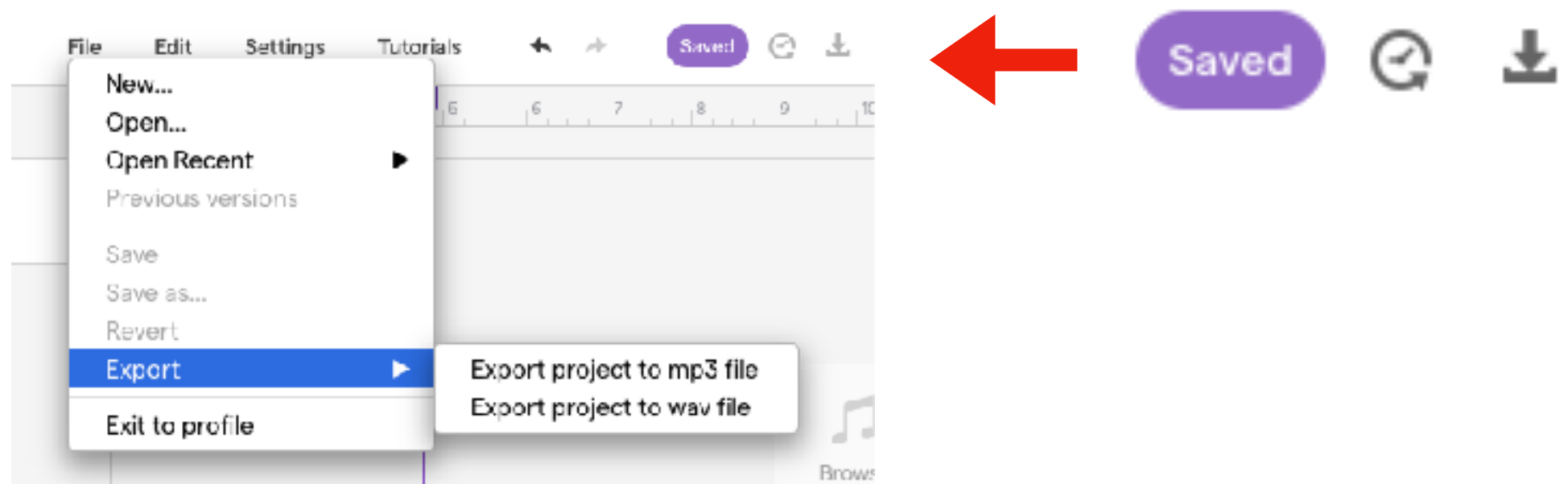
Hint: keep these notes very sparse. Think of them like a condiment!

Step 1: Mix your track/beat/song

Steps: Now that you have a full song, it is time to mix all sound/volume levels. Here you can also change the “panning” (whether the sounds go to the right or left speakers, or both).



Step 2: Download your track/beat/song



Track Name

Yes

No

Incomplete

Notes

Drums

Bass

Chords

Riff/Melody

Vocals

Samples/Chops