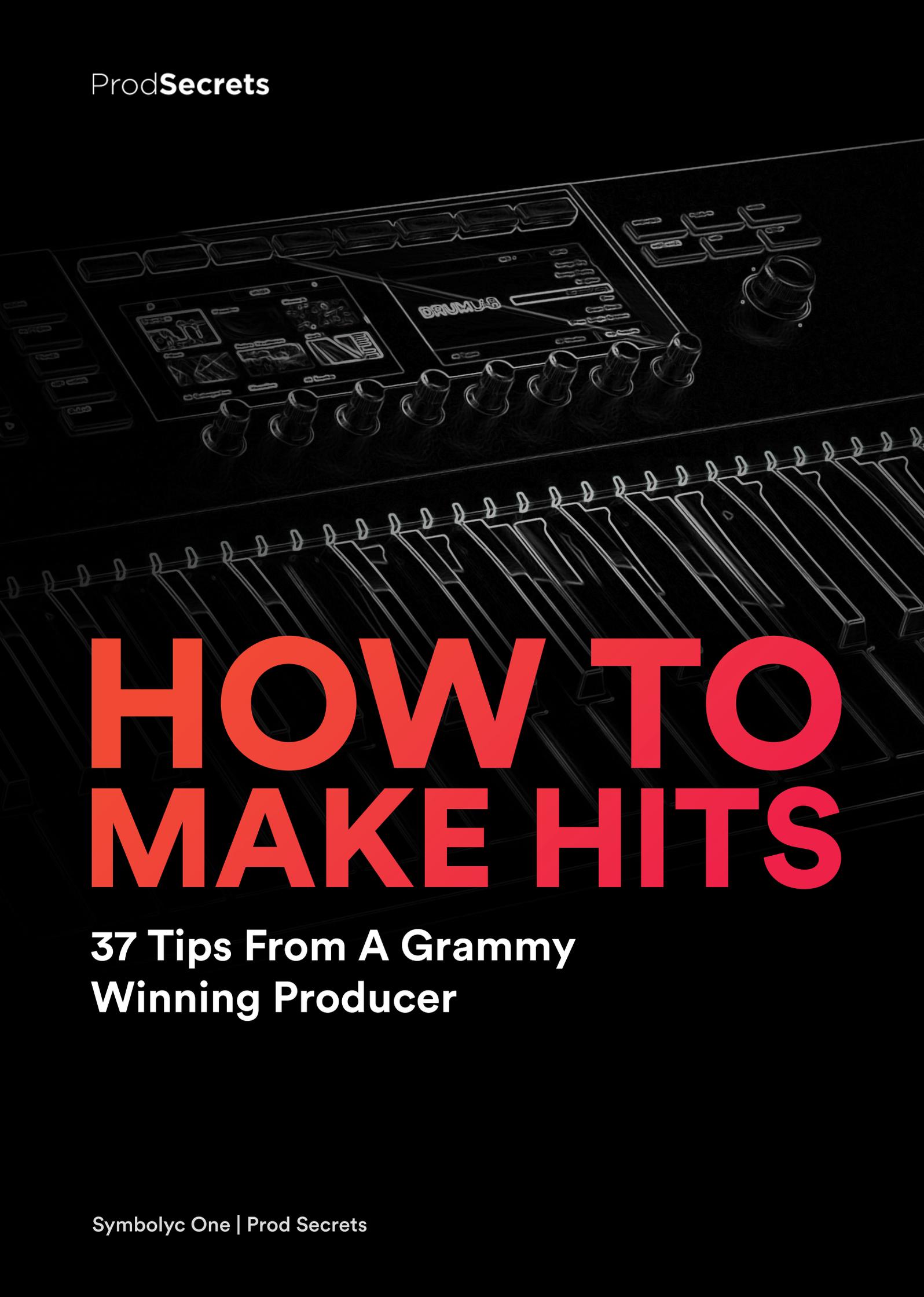


Prod**Secrets**



# HOW TO MAKE HITS

**37 Tips From A Grammy  
Winning Producer**



# Sample Techniques

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Sampling is the core of all production and there are tons of techniques you can use to build a track off of. Whether you are sampling from a record, voice memo, sample pack, or MIDI through a VST... You always want to be sure you are starting with a clean signal so you can do all of the creative tweaking later on.

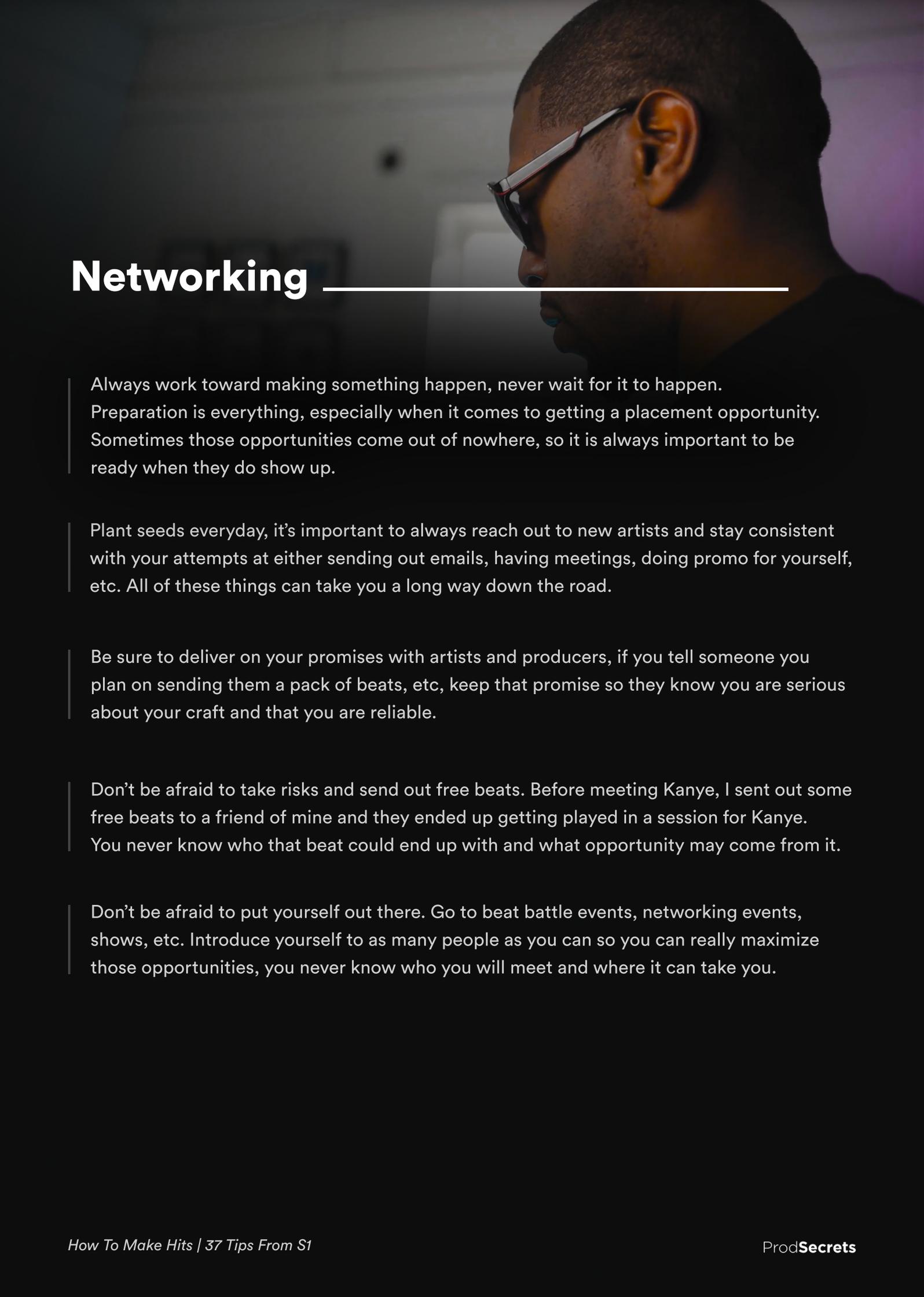
Layering in sampled drum breaks can add a ton of character to your tracks, try chopping them up and filtering out some of the low end so you can stack your own kicks / drum samples on top of them. It can make everything sound much bigger and sonically a lot more full.

Try diving into unusual resources like movie soundtracks to find some really unique sounding samples to flip. For example, when I produced “Murder To Excellence” by Kanye, I overheard a musical piece in a movie I was watching. I went and grabbed the OST for the film and chopped up the music from that scene, which made it into the final beat.

Layer on top of your chopped samples with your own melody sounds to add more texture / color to them. Adding in additional melody top lines, basslines, accent vocals, etc can take a basic sample a long way and really make it your own.

Don't overcomplicate things when you're in the creative process by adding too many layers, leave room in your tracks for an artist so they have some space to do their part when the time comes.

Don't be afraid to experiment with your samples, try stuff like transposing the pitch, warping, using effect filters, etc. While it's great to find a sample that is already dope as is, it's important to try and give it your own flair sometimes.

A man with short dark hair and glasses is shown in profile, looking towards the left. He is wearing a dark shirt. The background is blurred, suggesting an office or studio environment. The lighting is soft, highlighting his face and glasses.

# Networking

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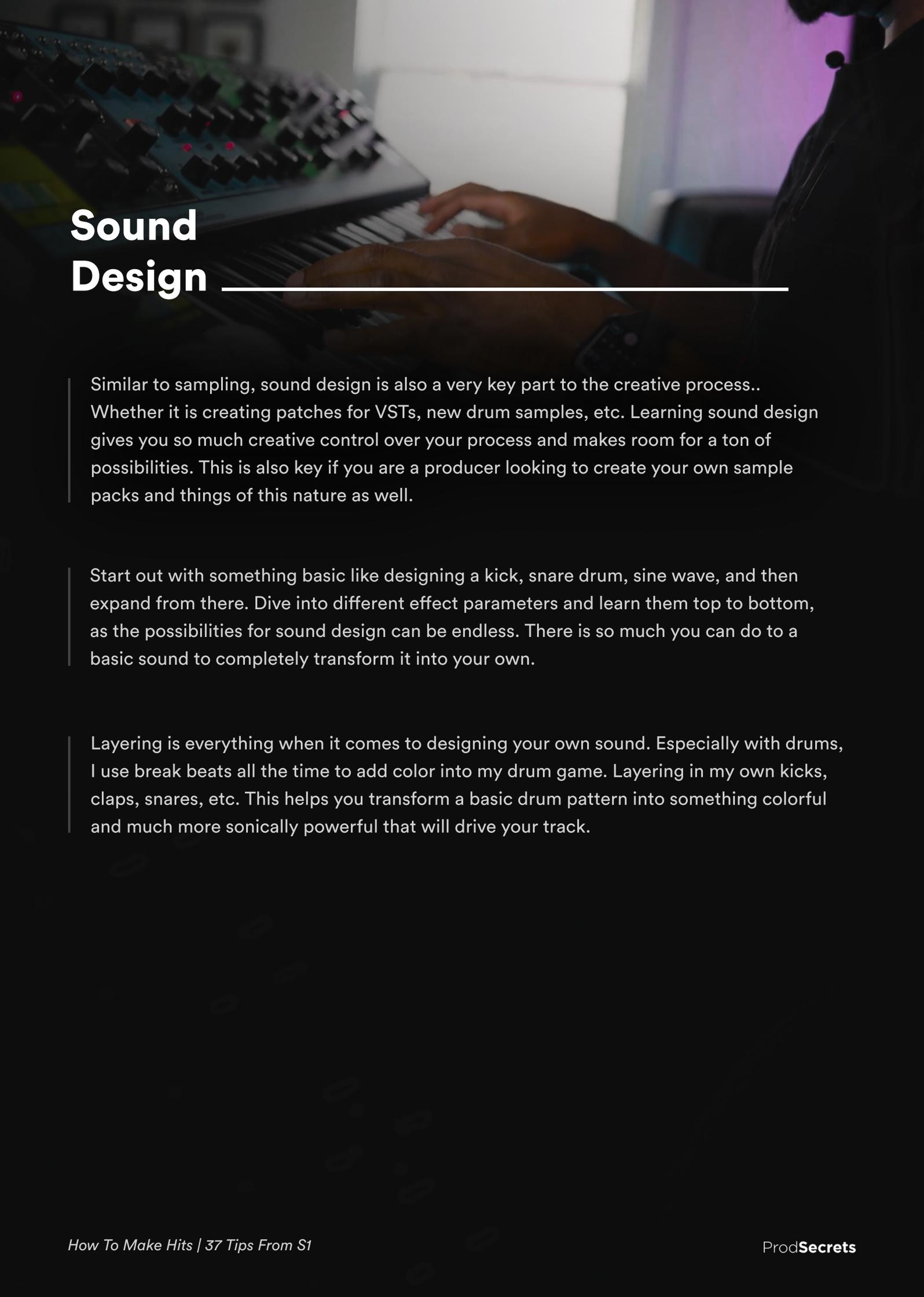
Always work toward making something happen, never wait for it to happen. Preparation is everything, especially when it comes to getting a placement opportunity. Sometimes those opportunities come out of nowhere, so it is always important to be ready when they do show up.

Plant seeds everyday, it's important to always reach out to new artists and stay consistent with your attempts at either sending out emails, having meetings, doing promo for yourself, etc. All of these things can take you a long way down the road.

Be sure to deliver on your promises with artists and producers, if you tell someone you plan on sending them a pack of beats, etc, keep that promise so they know you are serious about your craft and that you are reliable.

Don't be afraid to take risks and send out free beats. Before meeting Kanye, I sent out some free beats to a friend of mine and they ended up getting played in a session for Kanye. You never know who that beat could end up with and what opportunity may come from it.

Don't be afraid to put yourself out there. Go to beat battle events, networking events, shows, etc. Introduce yourself to as many people as you can so you can really maximize those opportunities, you never know who you will meet and where it can take you.



# Sound Design

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Similar to sampling, sound design is also a very key part to the creative process.. Whether it is creating patches for VSTs, new drum samples, etc. Learning sound design gives you so much creative control over your process and makes room for a ton of possibilities. This is also key if you are a producer looking to create your own sample packs and things of this nature as well.

Start out with something basic like designing a kick, snare drum, sine wave, and then expand from there. Dive into different effect parameters and learn them top to bottom, as the possibilities for sound design can be endless. There is so much you can do to a basic sound to completely transform it into your own.

Layering is everything when it comes to designing your own sound. Especially with drums, I use break beats all the time to add color into my drum game. Layering in my own kicks, claps, snares, etc. This helps you transform a basic drum pattern into something colorful and much more sonically powerful that will drive your track.



# Learning & Expanding Your Skillset

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Learning and growing your skills is just as important as practicing your craft. Whether you're watching youtube videos, reading articles / books, watching interviews, etc, always set aside spare time to learn new aspects that will help you later on.

It's important to always keep that beginner mindset regardless of your skill level, as there is always something new you can learn with production. Always keep an open mind as a student of the game.

Doing too much of the same thing can burn you out, make sure to set aside time to experience life as well, it will benefit your music and creativity in the long run. Take inspiration from all types of different music, cultures as well, never keep yourself stuck in a box when it comes to this type of stuff.

Try to learn more than one DAW so you can stay versatile in your approach, it will also prepare you for collaborations with other producers in sessions. Of course you will have your main DAW that you will master, but keep your options open.

Show up every day and prioritize the things that will get you closer to where you need to be, and eliminate anything that won't help you get there. Recognize the difference between being busy and being productive.

Put in your 10,000 hours towards mastering your craft. Everyday you should be grinding and learning toward your end goal, through trial and error you will see what works and what doesn't.

Pave your own lane sound wise, take inspiration from other sources of course but at the end of the day always try to make your own lane. Create a sound for yourself, but also be sure you are able to execute on a variety of music styles, so when you find yourself in a challenging spot out of your usual comfort zone you can still deliver.

When you have discouraging moments, bask in those so you can learn from them in the long run. But be sure to pick yourself back up and keep moving. Production is learned through trial and error and if you want to master your craft you will need to work through these moments and learn from them.

# Organization

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Organization is key when it comes to being successful as a producer. You never want to run into the issue of having to deep dive into your hard drive to find a track, stems, recordings, you name it.

Keep everything sectioned in a way that you find is easiest to access. For example, creating subfolders by date created, genres, etc. You always want to be able to easily pull something up when you need it and it is important to know exactly where to look. This also applies to your sample library, lay everything out in the most efficient way possible.

Always remember to name your files in a format that will help you out later. “Producer Name - Track Name (BPM / Key)” is a good format to stick by. This way you will always easily know the BPM and key of everything you make, and whoever you send your beats to will know who produced it and where to go with their part of the process.

In addition to file organization, it’s also extremely important to plan and map out your goals in production. Map out your plans for everything so you can visualize exactly what you want to achieve, this helps prepare you for when those big moments finally come around so you can execute on them.



# Mixing

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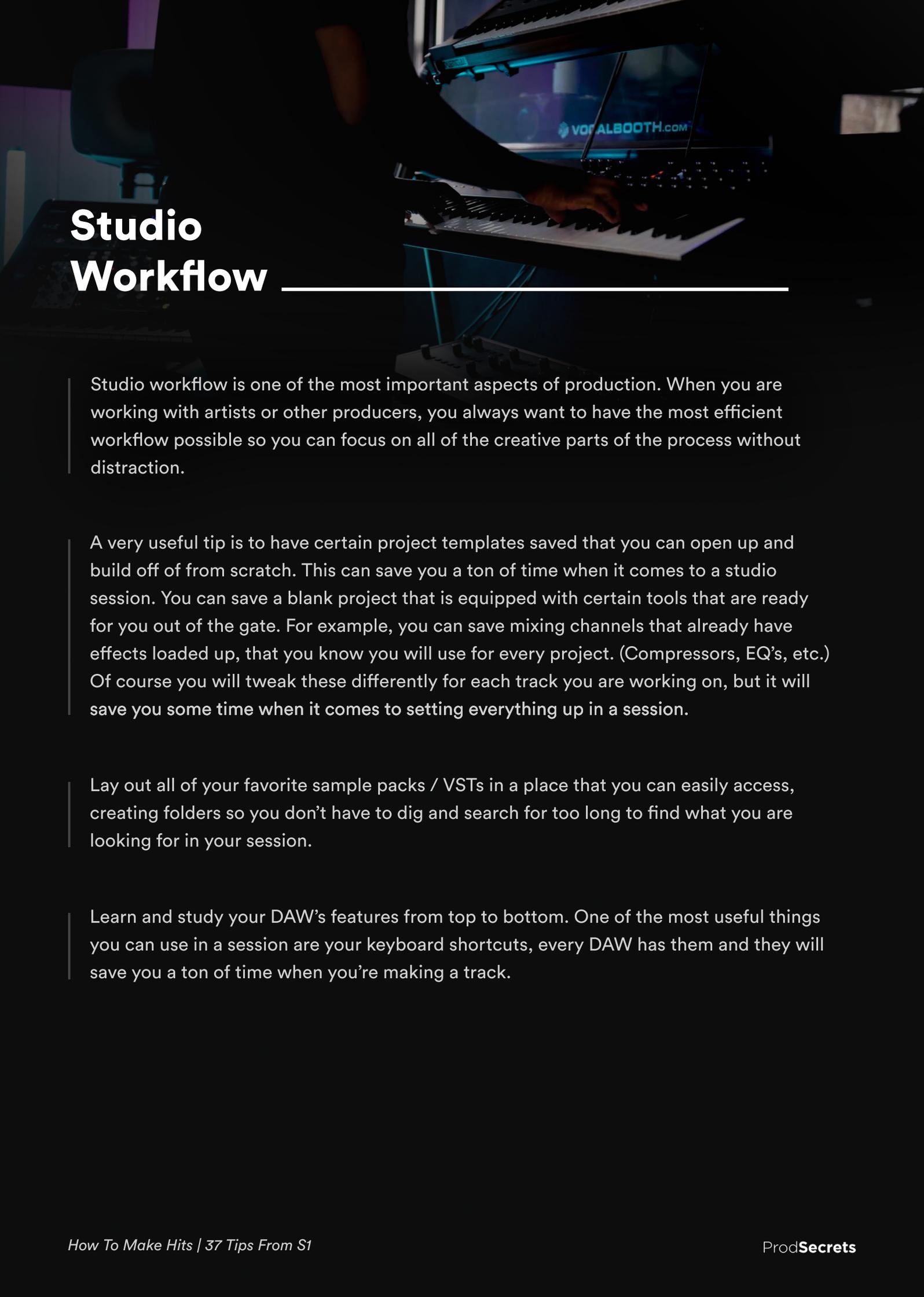
The concept of mixing can be over complicated sometimes in your head, but overall it really is a simple process, you just need to trust your ears. Do what sounds right to your ears, and sometimes it can be good to drag in a finished mix from another song so you can sort of compare your mix to it to see where you're at or where you want to go with it.

Some of the most important things to keep in mind when mixing a track, is first to start with good quality sounds. If you begin with sounds that are low in quality, your mix in turn will follow suit.

Your number 1 focus when mixing a track should always start with leveling. By leveling, I mean your volumes for each sound in your track. Leveling your beat out by individual volumes is half of the battle, always be sure that your sounds are meshing together well volume wise, you don't want anything fighting to pop out in the mix.

From here you will want to focus on your basic EQ. Make sure to cut any frequencies out that each sound isn't using. For example, the low end of your melody could be filtered with a high pass filter to make room for your bassline / 808. The same applies for the rest of your drums and other melodic sounds in the mix, always be aware of the frequency range for each sound so you can make room for everything to sit together nicely.

Once you have achieved your EQ and leveling, you can move on to more in depth mixing techniques such as compression and effects, add these to your own taste for the sound you are looking to go for.



# Studio Workflow

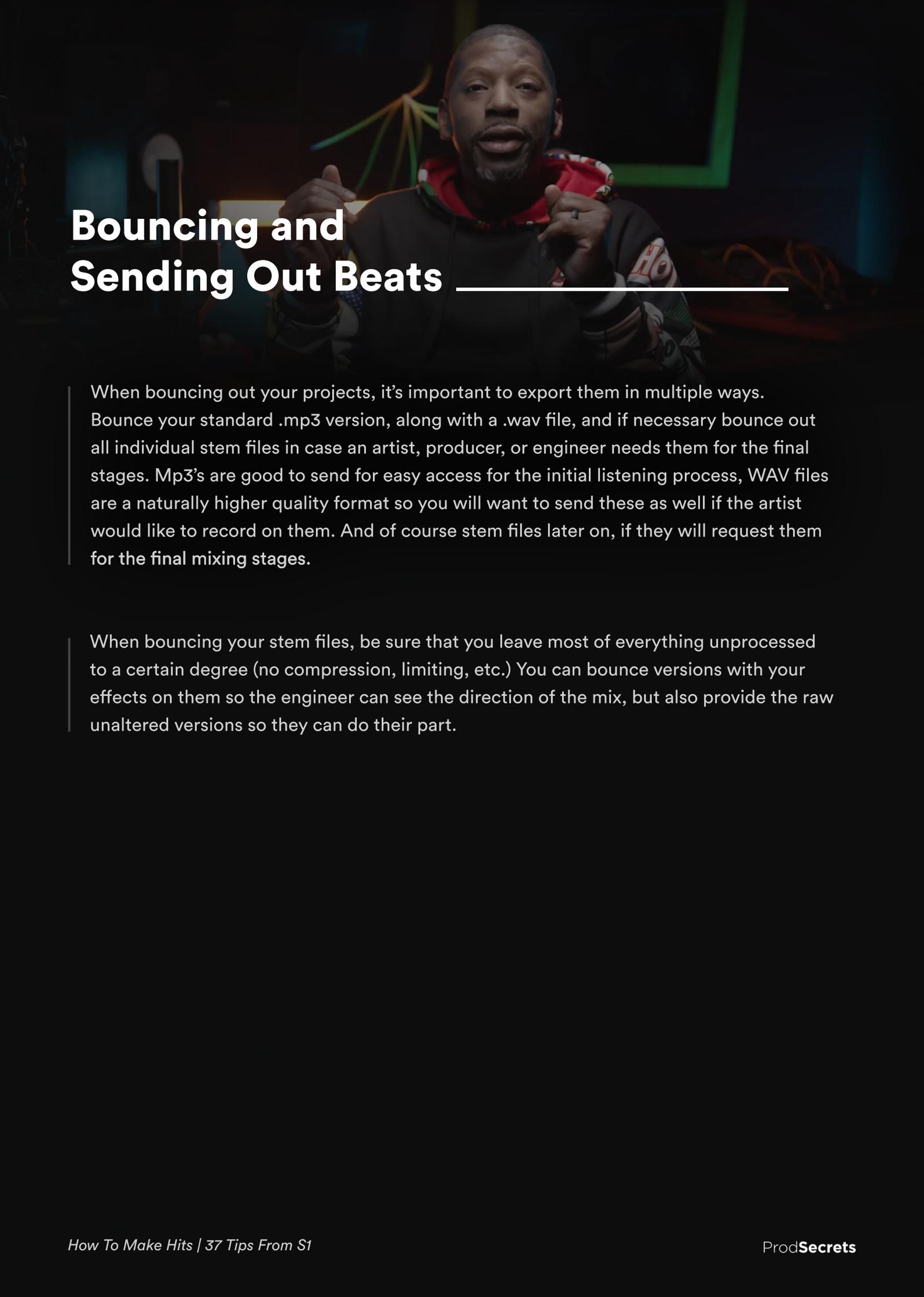
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Studio workflow is one of the most important aspects of production. When you are working with artists or other producers, you always want to have the most efficient workflow possible so you can focus on all of the creative parts of the process without distraction.

A very useful tip is to have certain project templates saved that you can open up and build off of from scratch. This can save you a ton of time when it comes to a studio session. You can save a blank project that is equipped with certain tools that are ready for you out of the gate. For example, you can save mixing channels that already have effects loaded up, that you know you will use for every project. (Compressors, EQ's, etc.) Of course you will tweak these differently for each track you are working on, but it will save you some time when it comes to setting everything up in a session.

Lay out all of your favorite sample packs / VSTs in a place that you can easily access, creating folders so you don't have to dig and search for too long to find what you are looking for in your session.

Learn and study your DAW's features from top to bottom. One of the most useful things you can use in a session are your keyboard shortcuts, every DAW has them and they will save you a ton of time when you're making a track.

A man with a goatee, wearing a dark hoodie with a red interior, is pointing towards the camera with both hands. He is in a studio setting with colorful lights and equipment in the background.

# Bouncing and Sending Out Beats

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When bouncing out your projects, it's important to export them in multiple ways. Bounce your standard .mp3 version, along with a .wav file, and if necessary bounce out all individual stem files in case an artist, producer, or engineer needs them for the final stages. Mp3's are good to send for easy access for the initial listening process, WAV files are a naturally higher quality format so you will want to send these as well if the artist would like to record on them. And of course stem files later on, if they will request them for the final mixing stages.

When bouncing your stem files, be sure that you leave most of everything unprocessed to a certain degree (no compression, limiting, etc.) You can bounce versions with your effects on them so the engineer can see the direction of the mix, but also provide the raw unaltered versions so they can do their part.

# Project Impact

6 Week Music Production Bootcamp Taught By  
Grammy Winning Producer Symbolyc One

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