



## **The 'Vocal Chops' Technique**

Many current Dance, Upbeat, Drum n Bass, Dubstep, and club beats are currently using this extremely effective technique. It's very easy to pull off, allot of fun, and sounds great. Here, we will show you how to create this effect, and put it to use.

The idea is to end up with a vast selection of vocal chops from a single phrase, chorus, or even word; the chops don't have to be full words, or make sense, in-fact its better if they don't, especially for dance music production, you are aiming for short vocal 'snippets,' we will show you how to incorporate these into your mix for jaw-dropping results!

Firstly, you need a vocal sample; depending on what effect you want (this will become clearer later) you could choose a harmony, rap phrase, chorus, adlib...anything really!

For the sake of demonstration we have used a Hip Hop Vocal phrase. We want to chop up this vocal into lots of little segments now, so, depending on your software/hardware there are various ways of doing this. With the hip hop vocal we have selected, there are 8 main words, so we are not just going to do 8 chops...we will most likely end up with up to 20 (even if the individual samples don't male any sense...it will still sound cool...you'll see!)

Below are some various techniques on chopping up your vocal phrase to prepare for applying this technique:

### **In an Audio Editor:**

Open an audio editor program (like Sound Forge/Cool Edit ect) and literally chop the vocal into little pieces. Be sure to put a fade on each side of your chops to eliminate peaking later on. Save the chops as separate .wav (or .aiff) files.

### **On the MPC5000:**

If your using an MPC5000, checkout our 'Using Chopshop files' tutorial, and chop your vocals that way.

### **With Reason & Recycle**

If you're using Reason, and also have Recycle. Open Recycle. Import your chosen Vocal Phraze, and adjust the sensitivity meter until you have a good

selection of vocal chops (try not to put the sensitivity meter too high, or you will end up with too many chops!) If Recycle is not picking up the chops you want, you can always move the markers to where you want. Make sure you have a nice selection of stabby vocal chops. Go to the File Menu, and 'Save As' a REX2 File (.rx2) Now open up Reason, locate the vocal sample you just saved, and open it in the Dr Rex sampler.

## **With Logic**

See our 'Beat Slicing in Logic' tutorial and apply the same technique.

## **Applying the Technique**

If you have used an audio editor to chop your samples, you will want to load these samples into your favourite sampler, for the ability to trigger these samples via your MIDI controller/keyboard. Below is a list of VST plugin samplers that, with a little tweaking will provide this effect easily. (If you are using an MPC, Reason, Logic, or any other software that has built in 'slice/region detecting' capabilities, then you are nearly set!)

Native Instruments Kontakt, Battery, Reaktor, Halion, Mach Five, Emu X2, EXS24 (Logic) and others.

Alternatively, you can load the individual samples/chops into your Drum Machine like Redrum (Reason), Drum Rack (Ableton) Guru, or any other....

The idea is to have these vocal samples at your finger tips. Once you have loaded your samples/chops into your favourite sampler/drum machine you can now trigger these samples. As you have chopped these vocals from a single phrase, any rhythms you create via your MIDI Keyboard/Controller will deliver funky, original vocal effects.

So you are looking to create rhythmical vocal effects by triggering the vocal sounds in rapid rhythmical succession over your beat. This can be the defining element to a song, and sounds great. If you're vocals are not spoke word, but harmonies, chorus sounds etc, you will want to tune the samples by pitching them up/down so they sync in-tune with your beat accordingly.

We will leave the rest up to you! Once you have played around with this technique for a while, you will find that you can apply it to virtually anything, from Vocal Loops to Synth samples, instruments to sound effects.

Whichever software/hardware you are using, it is possible to achieve this great effect with a little playing around, so have fun with it!

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