

A dark, atmospheric photograph of a DJ performing at a club. The DJ is seen from the side, wearing a dark jacket and headphones, with their hands on the turntables. The background is dimly lit, showing other patrons and the club's interior. The overall mood is energetic and professional.

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Pro Tips: Deep Tech-House Production

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In the latest of our genre spotlights, the Sample Magic team offer a few choice tips for producing deep, tech-infused house.



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- **Groove**
 - Deep House beats are faithful to the 4/4 rhythm but are programmed to sound loose and lazy. Keep the rhythm organic by using swing quantization. If your DAW supports groove templates, try sourcing ones from the infamous AKAI MPC60: they work especially well for deep house grooves. Some DAWs offer MPC-style swing as standard. Others – notably Logic – doesn't, so do a web search for the groove templates and import them manually.
- **Lazy Beats**
 - Offset percussion hits by a few milliseconds to give patterns a more human feel. Try shifting snares and claps a few clicks before or after the kick to get a looser sound. If your snare is layered from two or three different samples, then shift the start of each sample a little for a more interesting feel.
- **Tight Kick**
 - Deep house kick drums are usually deep and quite short with plenty of fat bottom-end. Fine-tune the length of the kick by tweaking the decay of the volume envelope so that the kick works in the context of the track. Try layering a deep kick with a high-passed bass drum from a live drum kit for a more acoustic and organic sound.

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- **Expand the stereo spectrum**
 - Pan percussive hits evenly across the stereo field. Even panning sounds by a couple of ticks gives more space for the rhythm to breathe. Remember to tune samples to the key of the track to make the drum kit made using a range of samples sound like a coherent whole.
- **Sevenths, Ninths and beyond**
 - Deep house chords are built from minor/major 7th chords and their inversions. To get a more lazy feel producers use 9th and 13th chords too. Don't be afraid to give a track a slightly dissonant feel by using unusual chord combinations.
- **Old School Work-outs**
 - Double the root note of a chord to get a fatter sound or double the whole chord on a different instrument for more definition. A classic old-school technique is to render a chord hit as a short audio file and load the resulting wave into your sampler of choice. Now play it on the keyboard like you would a melody.

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- **Huge Verb Stabs**
 - You can make great background ambient effects by taking a house stab and inserting a hall reverb effect on it. The decay should be very long with the mix slider at 100% wet so you only get the reverb effect. Now, go crazy with effects on the reverb tail. Try filters, phasers, bit-crushers or even outright distortion. For extra movement, side-chain the effected tail to get it pumping in the background. Another option is to use a delay effect instead of reverb (tape style works here) and automate the feedback level.
- **Filter it up**
 - Autofilters are great for adding movement and giving wah-wah-type sweeps to loops and one-shots. Add gentle distortion or bit-crushing to the filtered loop or re-sample at lower bit rates to get a dirtier sound. Remember to tweak the cutoff on the filter: lower cutoff values give a warmer and softer feeling while higher values give extra bite. If your plug-in supports it, try side-chaining the input of the filter to the kick drum to get a pumping filter sound.
- **Dub Delays**
 - Dub effects are made by using a delay effect with the feedback cranked up. Automate both the delay time and feedback at the same time to get warm and wobbly sweeps and crescendos. Remember to high-pass filter the reverb and delay returns to keep the low-end of the mix uncluttered.

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- **Edit Binned Tracks**
 - If you are running out of inspiration and find yourself reaching into your vinyl collection for a loop to sample, try rendering some of your older unused tracks as audio and then cutting, re-sequencing, filtering, and mangling them up. You may be surprised how many new ideas are generated this way.
- **Subtle Variants**
 - Deep house arrangements rely on subtly changing repetition rather than big leads, so you need to make the most of the sounds you have to keep a production interesting. Programming slight variations to synth lines and effects and tweaking sounds will keep the track moving. Remember also to automate any reverbs, delays and filters.

Sample Magic was founded in 2006 by Sharooz Raoofi and David Felton. Discover the extensive range of Sample Magic titles by clicking the links below.

