THE ONLY 16 MIXING TIPS YOU’LL EVER NEED

TIP 1 - Get it right at the source
If you are recording and mixing the same track, spend more time and effort on the recording phase. A high-quality mix is 80% the recording and 20% the mix.

TIP 2 - Get the balance right first
Before you jump to EQ, compression etc. spend plenty of time (30 mins or more) adjusting the faders and getting a good static mix.

TIP 3 - Time is of the essence
Mixing is a race against the clock. Don’t waste time. Make the most of every second.

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TIP 4 - Focus on the key elements
Don't waste 30 minutes tweaking a shaker. Focus on the vocals, drums, lead guitar etc.

TIP 5 - Loop the loudest section of the song
Get the mix right here first and then automate and check the rest of the song.

TIP 6 - Start with the bigger picture
Leave the finer details to the end of the mix. After balancing, I address the mix buss and group busses (where most of my processing is) before individual channels.

TIP 7 - Avoid the solo button
If you can’t hear what you’re doing, just turn the channel up instead of hitting solo.

TIP 8 - Have an intention behind every move
Think about what you want to achieve before you adjust anything.

TIP 9 - Check your moves
Always bypass to check that you’ve made an improvement (don’t be afraid to start again if you haven’t). Adjust the output so you aren’t tricked by a change in volume.

TIP 10 - Use good reference tracks
Choose a well produced track in a similar genre and constantly compare while mixing. You can use several references - one for vocals, one for drums etc.

TIP 11 - Mix in mono for the majority of the mix
Flip to stereo at the end to sort your panning. This helps you to create separation with EQ and balancing rather than panning.

TIP 12 - Listen back on multiple speakers/headphones
I like to constantly flick between my pair of large Yahamas, my single small Auratone style speaker and my open-back headphones. This helps to reveal flaws in your mix and prevent ear fatigue.

TIP 13 - Mix at a low volume
The ideal volume for mixing is around casual speech level. You should be able to easily talk to somebody else in the room without raising your voice.

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TIP 14 - Take regular breaks

Ear fatigue is a mix killer.

TIP 15 - Assume that volume automation is needed

It's rarely possible to get a perfect balance throughout the entire song without some volume automation.

TIP 16 - You don’t need a load of expensive plugins

You can get a great mix with stock plugins. It often helps to limit your options, too - so the less plugins you use the better.

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