Mix Prep Cheat Sheet

- Most important phase of the mixing process.
- More time preparing = less time mixing.
- Important to mix fast.
- Even if working on own music - export tracks, start a new project and prep for the mix.
- Organization
  - Clear labels
  - Track order
  - Colors
- Checking Your Tracks
  - Make sure every track you need is there
  - Make sure all the tracks are playing correctly
- Busses
  - Group busses (All Guitars, All Vocals, Drums etc.)
  - Effect busses (Short Reverb, Room Reverb, Delay etc.)
  - Sub Mix (send group busses here, but send 'Reference' channel straight to main output)
- Gain Staging
  - Check if any tracks are hot (peaking above -10dbFS) or weak.
  - Use a trim or gain plugin to adjust the gain until peaking below -10dBFS.
  - Averaging around -18dbFS is ideal, but no need to be too particular. Important thing is to have at least 10dB of headroom.
- Check Polarity and Phase
  - Check for any instruments that were recorded with microphones facing each other
  - Check for any instruments recorded with two mics, e.g. guitar amp with two mics
- Subtractive EQ
  - Remove room resonances and other nasty frequencies.
  - Focus on vocals and acoustic instruments.
  - Do this in solo, not with whole mix.
- Vocal automation
  - Adjust your vocal to make it more consistent from the start
  - This will help when creating the static mix and when you apply effects later on