

“

90% of my time is just goofing around, trying to come up with something. — *deadmau5*

”

CHAPTER RECAP

You don't need to be a formally trained musician to make EDM, but you do need to develop a process. For Joel, music-making is all about experimentation: playing around with melodies, sounds, and structures until he hears something he likes. Try to keep yourself from being too critical of new ideas as they're taking shape and start saving clips of ideas you like, even if you're not sure yet how to make them work in a song.

Don't worry about cranking out fully realized arrangements. For now, focus on making eight bar loops that you love. That's how every great deadmau5 track got started. (You'll learn more about structuring your loops into songs later in the class.)

It can also help to borrow musical ideas from your favorite artists and find ways to make them your own. Joel says the classic deadmau5 sound was born when he put dark Nine Inch Nails-style chords together with pulsing house drum beats.

TAKE IT FURTHER

- ▶ Listen to some of the classic Nine Inch Nails records that inspired Joel like:
 - ▼ *Pretty Hate Machine*
 - ▼ *The Downward Spiral*
- ▶ Can you hear the musical ideas that helped shape early deadmau5 tracks like "Faxing Berlin"?

SUBCHAPTERS

- ▶ Find a Way to Stop Thinking
- ▶ You Don't Have to Feel It to Write It
- ▶ Experimentation not Inspiration
- ▶ Building Your Mister Potato Head Bin
- ▶ 23 Seconds is a Track
- ▶ Every Producer Copies, Good Producers Copy in New Ways
- ▶ You Don't Have to be a Team Player
- ▶ Doubts and Mistakes

NOTES

- ▶ Now that you know how he works, listen to some of your favorite deadmau5 tracks like:
 - ▼ "Some Chords"
 - ▼ "Ghosts N Stuff"

- ▶ Think about each individual element of the track—it might help to write down the different sounds or elements you hear. See if you can identify the 8 bar loop that the track was built around (it's where you'll hear every element playing all at once).

ASSIGNMENT

- ▶ Joel likes to work late at night when he's not thinking as clearly, so he doesn't second guess himself as much. Find the right time and place where you can stop thinking and start experimenting with your music more freely. Keep a log of your next couple work sessions by noting what the time and setting were and how you felt while you were working. Try to pinpoint the conditions that make it easiest for you to create without judgement.

NOTES
