

## ARRANGING A TRACK

*“Trance music is all about release, it’s about energy, it’s about emotion, and you can bring that out by arranging carefully.”*

—Armin van Buuren

### SUBCHAPTERS

- The Intro
- Find Ways to Tease Your Main Melody
- Building Tension Before the Drop
- Always Keep the Beat
- Automating the Drop
- Arrange With the Dance Floor in Mind: “Sunny Days (Club Mix)”

### CHAPTER REVIEW

Trance music is all about dynamic storytelling—taking your listeners on a journey from atmospheric breakdowns to huge drops. Armin shows you some arrangement principles that you can put to use to make your tracks more captivating to dance floor crowds. Armin uses loops and filters to build tension before his drops, and uses volume automation to make sure the drops are full of climactic excitement.

Arranging is one area where your DJ skills should really inform your producing. Keep the crowd in mind and think about what’s going to keep them dancing. They can’t dance unless they know where the beat is, so use rhythmic elements, like a pluck sound, to keep the groove going when the kick drum isn’t playing. Also think about what elements other DJs need in your track in order to be able to easily mix it into their sets. Straightforward intros and outros can make for much smoother transitions. You can always judge the success of your tracks by watching how they do on the dancefloor.

### LEARN MORE

- In 2017, Armin compiled a list of the [30 best trance tracks](#) of all time for *Billboard*. Listen to some of these tracks and pay careful attention to the arrangements. What similarities do you find?

### ASSIGNMENT

- Think about the story you want to tell to your crowd on the dance floor with your tracks-in-progress. With that in mind, start arranging it. Consider how you will adapt your track so that it can be mixed into other songs easily.