

## MIXING AND MASTERING, PART 1

*“Trance music is—of all the types of dance music—one of the hardest types to mix simply because you have so much information going on in one mix.”*

—Armin van Buuren

### SUBCHAPTERS

- Always Mix With Fresh Ears
- Mix Case Study: “Sunny Days (Club Mix)”
- Sculpting the Kick Drum
- Honing the Bass Sound
- Choose the Right Bass Sound for Your Mix

### CHAPTER REVIEW

Mixing and mastering is all about making creative choices to highlight different elements in your track. Using EQ and volume control, you’re trying to make sure the audience is hearing the most important parts of your recording.

Armin explains that it’s better to let your tracks sit a day or two before you mix and master them. Things always sound different when you’re listening with fresh ears. When you do sit down to review and mix your tracks, Armin recommends testing your mixes on multiple sound systems—in your car, in a friend’s studio—to make sure they have the same sound quality in any environment. Another way to test your tracks is to try them in your DJ set and see how they do on the dance floor.

Armin’s club mix of “Sunny Days” is built around the sonic character of the kick drum and bassline. He stacks plug-ins to give those instruments big low-end presence and high-frequency transient bite—they’ll need both to have maximum impact on the dance floor. Later, he’ll use EQ and LFOTool to keep the leads, pads, and other instruments out of the kick and bassline’s way.

### EXPLORE THE PLUG-INS

In this chapter Armin makes use of the following plug-ins:

- [Bark of Dog](#)
- [LFOTool](#)
- [L1 Limiter](#)
- [iZotope Ozone 7](#)
- [Little Labs Voice of God](#)

### ASSIGNMENT

- Start mixing your tracks. Work from the ground up, honing the kick and bass sound for big impact. Always think about guiding your listeners’ ears to the most important elements in the track. When you start layering in your pads and leads, they shouldn’t overwhelm the groove. Your kick and bass should still be hitting hard.