

How To Use Reverbs

This week's weekly injection is all about reverbs. With so much choice we get in modern recording systems it is important to understand the thought process behind using and choosing reverbs.

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WHAT IS REVERB?

Whenever you have a sound source the sound travels outwards and when it hits the walls it will bounce back. A reverb is the combination of all these sources coming back to your ears. This will create a tail to the sound which would vary in tone and length according to the size and type of space. When sounds hits the wall it will come back. If the wall is made up with concrete it would have a certain sound and would reflect a lot, but If there's a textile on the wall then it would be less reflective and thus sound different. If the wall is in a library, it would sounds lot different again.

Our ears are very sensitive to reverb, and use it to form a picture of where

they are coming from. There are two main aspects to reverb:

EARLY REFLECTIONS

This is the sound from the first reflections of the wall and are going to be our first impression of how big the room is.

TAIL

This is a combination of reflections going back and forth between walls and they take longer to decay. This will come after the early reflections.

CREATING A SPACE

You can experiment with the balance between early reflections and tail to determine what kind of ambiance you are portraying in the mix.

For example, if you have a jazz tune you might want to simulate that you are in a jazz club. You'd probably have little bit of early reflections, and your tail would be 1~1.5 seconds long depending on the size of the simulated club.

If you want to simulate that someone singing in a church, then you wouldn't have too many early reflections as the walls are too distant. Instead the reverb will be more balanced toward the tail which will be lot longer, perhaps 2~4 seconds. Basically you would want to simulate an ambiance with reverb.

MAKE YOUR REVERB PERSONAL

If you just use generic reverb, it would probably sound a little bit boring. I invite you to experiment with different plugins after the reverb. You can use chorus, a phaser, saturation, delay or a spacialiser to make it wider or narrower for your vocals. The most interesting part of reverbs are that you can be creative with them rather than just predictable, so that you can make your sound personal and interesting.

If you want to learn more about mixing in serious depth, try our online video

course [“The Official Guide To Mixing”](#) with 20% discount from this blog!

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