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GLOSSARY

To make music, you don't necessarily need to know the technical terms. If you are interested, however, in the technical language or a term – for example from the videos – you will find some specific explanations here:

A/D converter: Converts analogue signals, for example from a microphone or guitar, into digital data that a computer can work with.

Analogue: Technology that does not work with digital data is analogue equipment, e.g. loudspeakers, microphones, guitars, microphone cables, record players, cassette recorders.

Arming tracks: The recording for the corresponding track is activated so not all tracks are recorded at the same time, but only those that are armed.

Arrangement: The composition of the individual parts and the temporal sequence of a song, such as the choice of instruments, which instrument plays what and when, how they sound together and complement each other, and what function they have. It is possible to differentiate between the chronological sequence of an arrangement (form) and the function of individual elements of the arrangement in a certain part (bass, chords, melodies).

Audio Interface: An additional device that connects to a computer, tablet or smartphone and becomes the interface between the digital world and the analogue devices that can be connected to the audio interface. These include, for example, microphones, instruments like the guitar or keyboard but also headphones or music systems. An audio interface is equipped with various connectors, *microphone preamplifiers* (preamps), *A/D converters* and *D/A converters*.

Bar: Unit fixed in time in the music. In 4/4 time, after 4 even beats, which are called meters, the next bar begins, so you always count to 4. In 3/4 time you count to 3, in 6/8 time to 6 and so on.

Beat: The beat is the main accent or rhythmic unit of a song. The term "beat" is often also used to refer to the complete accompaniment to a song or rap.

bpm (beats per minute): Unit of measurement which indicates the speed of a song – 120 BPM = 120 beats per minute.

Chorus: Structural, sectional part of a song. The chorus is repeated several times and contains the core statement of the song. It is also called the *refrain*, whereby the term refrain refers primarily to the contents of the lyrics and the chorus to the entire music.

Clip: A field in a *Digital Audio Workstation (DAW)*, in which a music clip (e.g. *sample*) is placed and can be played individually or together with other clips.

D/A converter: Converts digital data from a computer into analogue signals. Because you can't hear data, this step has to happen for music to come out of the speakers or headphones.

DAW (Digital Audio Workstation): Music software for recording and editing music

Digital: Technology that reads or processes digital data from a computer, such as music software, apps, CD players, Blu-ray, DVD, storage media.

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Directness: Sound can be direct (near) or indirect (far away or behind an object or wall, for example). Various factors are important for this, such as the proportion of high frequencies, the amount of reverberation or the volume compared with other sounds.

Effect Preset: Preset one or more effects to create a specific sound ("effect").

Equalizer: With an equalizer you can change the signal of one track or the sum of several tracks. For example, you can just make the signal's high frequencies quieter or louder, or make a specific *frequency* that you find annoying quieter without affecting the "nice" parts of the signal.

Form: The sequence of the song, e.g. verse, chorus, verse, etc.

Frequency: We hear sound at different frequencies at the same time. High tones vibrate faster, they have a higher frequency than low tones. Physically, frequency means the speed at which the repetitions of a sound wave follow one another.

Gain dial: The Gain dial is used to adjust the volume of the input signal.

Input: The *audio interface* connection to which a signal source is connected, such as a microphone. If no *USB audio interface* is used, the audio interface and input built into the laptop, smartphone or tablet is used.

Levelling: Adjusting the input volume instead of a microphone. This is done using the *gain dial* for the *microphone preamplifier* (preamp).

Loop: A piece of music that repeats itself, e.g. after a certain number of bars.

Melodic chords: Chord tones that are played one after the other.

Microphone preamplifier (preamp): In order to bring the microphone signal to a level that other equipment components *(mixer, A/D converter)* can work with, it must first be amplified.

Mix: Arranging the sound of the individual tracks in terms of the volume, frequency range, directness and panning.

Mixer: Device or software user interface used for adjusting the sound and volume of individual channels or tracks and creating a mix.

Monitoring: Listening to the signal that you want to record or are currently recording through headphones or speakers.

Overmodulation: The computer or software program you are using can only process data up to a maximum volume of 0 decibels (decibels are specified in the minus range at the digital level and end at 0 dB). If a signal becomes louder, the sound is distorted and a recording becomes unusable. Therefore it is important to level the signal correctly (as loud as possible, but as quiet as necessary to avoid overmodulation).

Pads: Pads are chords consisting of sustained (i.e. long lasting) tones.

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Pan: Dial with which you can determine the ratio with which the signal for a *track* comes from the right or left *stereo channel*. With the Pan dials for all tracks you can distribute the signals in the *mix* from left to right.

Panning: The proportion of one or more sound signals in the left and right stereo channels. If, for example, the signal is louder on the right speaker or headphones, you get the impression that the signal is coming from the right.

Patterns: Recurring musical building blocks. Two-beat patterns, for example, mean that the elements of the pattern repeat every two bars.

Preset: Usually, virtual instruments and effects have numerous presets that you can try out.

Quantization: With the help of the quantization feature, rhythmically inaccurate sounds can be corrected automatically. The recorded tones of a selected range are moved to the nearest position in the grid during quantization. The grid can be set to a note value (e.g. 1/4 grid, 1/8 grid) and refers to the defined tempo and time signature. For example, with a set 1/4 grid, all notes that are quantized are shifted to the nearest quarter note.

Refrain: see *Chorus*.

Reverberation: Reflections from walls, ceiling and floor in a room. In music production, reverberation (reverb) is either recorded in a room or artificially created with an effects device.

Rhythmic chords: Multiple chord tones played repeatedly together.

Sample: A short recording (e.g. of a noise, sound or music) that can be handled creatively and used in a new musical context.

Sound check: *Levelling* and checking the sound before you start recording.

Special FX: Effects that were originally not music, but were removed from their context and used in music, e.g. explosions, unnatural sounds such as spaceship landings, animal sounds, etc.

Track: Area arranged as a line in a *Digital Audio Workstation* (DAW). Music can be recorded or existing recordings can be inserted into a track.

Stereo channels: We usually listen to music on two speakers, positioned left and right, or on headphones. This is called stereo playback. In the analogue world there must be two cables for this, one for each loudspeaker. In the digital world, the cables exist only inside the computer (virtually) and are called channels.

USB Audio Interface: See *Audio Interface*.