Elektron Machinedrum Tips & Tricks

v1.4

This document was created while I was browsing the Elektron Users Forums and Yahoo Group Mailing List looking for new ideas for things to try with my recently acquired SPS-1UW. Some of these are new tips, some are just clarifications of features explained in the manual already. I have attempted to the best of my ability to make sure that each author is properly given credit for their tips. However, if you spot an error or do not wish to have your name in this document, please let me know and I will fix the problem immediately.

In all cases, tips were quoted using the authors yahoo name, or their screen name from the forum. This was done to protect each author's right to privacy, yet still provides a way for any reader to attempt to contact the author should they wish to do so. The words "list" and "bbb" after all names denote which tips came from the mailing list, versus which tips came from the message board.

First compiled by Tarekith on February 16, 2006.

This guide is broken into the following sections, click on each to jump to that section below:

- Sequencing
- Synthesis
- Performance
- General
- Reference

Sequencing

UW Swimming Laps:

Load and play a long sample - 2 bars. Start = 0, End = 127. While sample is playing, tweak Start to 127 then End to 0. The sample will reverse on the fly and start "swimming back" to the beginning.

You can get 4 bars out of 1 sample this way without retrigging (!) and it sounds nice with pads or chords. Set up a Rom machine, a CTR-8P and Scale Length 64/64.

Trig your sample at the beginning of Bar 1. Set your Sample Length and Hold to 127 so it does not fade out. Towards the end of the second bar, have CTR-8P move the sample's Length to 127 with a p-lock (I did it on trig 14). Then on the last trig of the bar (16) p-lock the sample's Start to 0. (I actually used some Slide trigs to mimic me turning the dials but doubt it's necessary).

The sample then turns around and swims back (summer metaphor).

Don't forget that at bar 4, trig 16, reset the CTR-8P so that Start is 0 and End is 127 again. This will tell the sample to swim the right way again.

I was thinking about this some more last night and the way it's described above, it's merely fun factor entertainment - nothing you couldn't do with trigs. So I put my thinking cap back on and ...

Use LFOs to modulate the CTR-8P Start and End time parameters. Then you have a randomly starting/reversing sample. Not something you can do with trigs as this would be totally random.

- Veets bbb

Using the delay as a sampler:

You can sample the MD output in stereo at full bit rate using the MD delay.
(This can be used as an alternative to RAM machine mixing between patterns)
(Also allows you to high or lowpass filter the output of the MD)

If you set your rhythm echo parameters to

LEV = 0
FEEDBACK = 64
DELAY TIME = 127
FILTERF = 0
FILTERW = 127
MONO = 0
MOD = 0

Then go into the fx page of one of your tracks. Hold FUNCTION + DELAY and crank it up to 127 (make sure you do a full clockwise rotation from 0 to 127).

Hit play.. and then press stop after 16 steps.

Now if you turn up your delay volume you'll hear your 16 steps sampled

If the sequencer runs for more than 16 steps you'll get over dubbing. You could easily avoid this by switching into a blank pattern after the 16 steps has been sampled, then using an CTRL-RE machine to automatically turn up the volume on the delay.

The only real drawback to this method is that it overwrites any delay settings you may be using in your pattern. Also once you apply filtw and filtf to the delay loop you cannot revert back to an unfiltered version.

I should have added.. the delay loop does degrade over time. One last addition: This allows you to selectively sample. Which means you could sample say just the kick drum and snare.. as opposed to having to sample the entire output. You just choose which tracks you want to record by either sending them to the delay, or not.

- Justin Valer bbb

Using an Input and MIDI Machine on the same track:

If an INP-GA or INP-GB machine is triggered, it will stay active until another machine that makes sound is triggered on that same track. This means you can have either a CTRL or MIDI machines occupying the same track as an INP machine.

Generally this would be done using 2 patterns with different kits.

Load an INP-GA machine on a track in your first pattern.
Load a MID machine on that same track number in your second pattern

The input machine will need to be triggered first in your first pattern kit. Then by switching into the second pattern it will be replaced with a MIDI machine. As MID machines produce no audio and tracks that make sound are only disabled by another track that makes sound, the input machine will stay active indefinitely.

You will lose all control of the INP machine and will only be able to disable it again when you trigger a non-midi, non-ctrl machine on that track.

Initially I found out about this feature/exploit by accident, and reported it as a bug to Elektron. It essentially allows you to have 18+ machines running on your machinedrum simultaneously.

- Justin Valer bbb

Setting individual accent amounts for each track:

The amount of accent is shared between tracks but accent place is individual per track. So you can set accent to 8, put different accent points to different tracks, but they will all be accented by factor of 8 (at different points). And beyond this you always have individual control of each hit volume, length, pitch and so on with parameter locks.

- toni bbb

I have never used the accents on the Machinedrum - I just parameter lock in a volume tweak. Its faster for me.

- milkmansnd bbb

Copying just one note's parameter locks in Grid Record Mode:

In grid edit, hold a trig key and then hit the play/copy button, then hold a different trig and hit paste, it duplicates all parameter locks, quite handy.

-ggoodwin bbb

Using the Machinedrum to sequence external gear:

First of all, yes, the Machinedrum can sequence but its not nearly as intuitive as the live sequencer, or even the one in the mono machine for that matter. Load a MIDI machine, and you can assign a note to each step one by one using p-locks.

-milkmansnd bbb

You choose the MIDI channel you want to control when selecting the MIDI machine. You got 16 different ones. One for each channel.

- Rui Peixoto list

One good plus is using the Machinedrum to tweak another patch in the virus multi-mode. The Machinedrum LFO's can tweak the virus. You have to set your most wanted CC#s in the Machinedrum MIDI machine. Using the envelope input machine is something I have been discovering, too.

- endlessnessisticman list

You're using the Machinedrum to "play" your synth, right? That is, you've assigned a MIDI machine in the Machinedrum to control the synth note sequence. Assuming this, all you have to do is decide what are your six most favored MIDI controls that you'd like to tweak on the virus and assign them to CC's on the MIDI machine. Then tweak those while the pattern is recording and it will play them back correctly (assuming your changes fell where triggering was being done).

Now, you'd like to do this in song mode. This IS possible, but the solution is ugly :-) for example, if you're talking about having a pattern repeat 8 times while you tweak the parameters for it...you can have the Machinedrum record these changes as described above; BUT you would have to use 8 versions of the "base" pattern and have the parameter changes effect the pattern that they fall on. make sense?

BTW, if you want more than six CC controls for a given MIDI channel (for example on your virus) then you can just use another Machinedrum MIDI machine assigned to the same channel. this feature can also be used to increase the polyphony of the Machinedrum's external MIDI triggering ability. (since Machinedrum MIDI machines only use monophonic triggering.)

- Joe list

The Machinedrum has sequencing possibilities, but it's not like a regular soft sequencer. There are 16 parts in total, and they can be assigned to either internal Machinedrum sounds or MIDI sequencing parts (there are other possibilities as well, but they're not relevant here). Which means you can control a total of 16 external synths.

A MIDI sequencing part is basically monophonic (one trigger at a time, one basic note), but each step can play up to 3 notes simultaneously (triggered as one note). Which means that if you like to play big chords, you're in trouble. You would need a multitimbral synth, and set it up with the same sound on several channels. Not ideal.

It's not the most versatile of MIDI sequencers, but it does have its strengths, like the ability to set all parameters separately for each step (like CCs, eight per track). If you're using something like a modular analog synth with a MIDI-to-CV converter, you'll have a serious step sequencer. I've tried it with a Korg MS-20, and it works.

- Nils Odegaard list

Changing the default notes numbers on the Machinedrum (IE, from c1-c3 to c3-c5):

These can be changed in the global settings area. Press function+[global] and select the slot that you want to edit. Press enter and select the MIDI section, map editor submenu. From there, you can change all of the track and pattern mappings.

- malyn bbb

Realtime erase:

while in rec+play mode, hold exit/no and the trig key you want to erase. It will play the trig this time through the loop, but you will not hear it next time.

– ggoodwin bbb

Can the Machinedrum pads transmit velocity or aftertouch?

No and no. However, you can have different volumes, decay, pitch or any parameter for each individual step with parameter locks, so it's no big deal achieving more "human" like feel for your sequences.

- Flavio Alvarez list

If its absolutely necessary, just bring along an oxygen 8 or other inexpensive controller that supports pressure sensitivity, and trigger The pads from there. In fact, with the oxygen, you'll even have 8 Extra knobs you can use, too. As far as I can remember, machinedrum Still responds to pressure sensitivity (mapped to volume) this way.

– Adam Watson list

A different way of sequencing MIDI Machines:

Something a friend turned me on to, which I had never thought of for some reason: I was used to using one midi machine per synth I was sequencing. While we were both punching up patterns, he configured his Machinedrum with multiple midi machines, all transmitting on the same channel, and then set separate notes for each. This way you can enter Real-time Record and play eight or more notes into the sequence, just like a piano.

- jason vernon starnes list

Yeah, and as an extension of that, you could a make two octaves, one MIDI Machine on each track, tweak out a pattern live and then record it down to another sequence and repeat.

– jbeard list

If your looking for a step sequencer capable of driving external MIDI synths and samplers then the Machinedrum is one of the few choices that has it right with regard to tweaking while the sequence is playing. If you have been frustrated by the way the mc-series grooveboxes do this, or worse the rm1x, or even the emu xx-7 family you will find the Machinedrum a breath of fresh air. Only more esoteric (and expensive) things can work as intuitively and Interactively.

– drk list

Cycling/Looping Patterns:

1. You press function and a different pattern you'll get the single arrow and no cycling back to the old one.

2. You hold the Bank button and more than one pattern button you'll get the double arrow and cycling multiple patterns in the order you pressed the pattern buttons.

- endlessnessisticman list

You can loop some patterns (I don't mean song mode) if you hold the bank button and then hold the patterns you want to be played in a loop. e.g. push and hold d+3+4+5+6 = Machinedrum plays 3-4-5-6-3-4-5-6-... the quantization depends on the pattern-quantization so you can play 16th-32th-6th-whateverth. If you don't want to compose a song, this is a nice feature. Also very good for live use.

- rolandsh32 list

Realtime recording of external synths controllers onto MIDI Machine tracks:

As far as controlling the parameter values themselves from the Supernova (or any synth), I wasn't able to tweak the knobs and get the Machinedrum to record them. I had to map the Machinedrum knobs to the Supernova MIDI control values that I wanted to change and tweak from The Machinedrum.

- alan cannistraro list

Making the Machinedrum do triplets:

You can achieve triplets if you set the pattern length to 12 or 24.

Hmm, on second thought, all that would do is change the time signature from 4/4 to 3/4... not quite the same thing as triplets, though it can "feel" the same in some situations...

- Federico Ciapi list

You can use the swing-grid function to do the triplet (or did you mean a triple, like a waltz or something?). Put the grid steps on 3, 7, 11, 15... set the swing percentage to 80%. This is a Triol groove.

- John Whiting list

Uses for Parameter Lock Slides:

I use it sometimes when I recorded parameter locks but I don't want them to jump around. With slide you get a smooth parameter glide. For instance, if you want panning to go from left to right in a smooth fashion you simply program a lock left pan on the first note and a firm right on the last. When you select all triggers in slide the panning will go slow from left to right instead of jumping.

- Ronald list

Neat trick for switching from Classic to Extended Modes:

Forgot to mention one interesting use of it: Switch to classic mode and then pick up pattern that would play with different kit in extended mode. Hit play and it runs with a 'wrong kit', now hit the extended mode (while it's playing) and you get wonderful noises out of Machinedrum when it changes to right kit in the fly!!

- tahvenaine2002 list

Creating time signatures like 12/8:

In song mode, you can choose how many steps of the pattern you want to play. That way is possible to use those time signatures.

- Federico Ciapi list

Machinedrum's Scale setup can give a time "signature" of 12/16. Turn the tempo down from 120 to 60, and there you have it. 12 beats per measure, every 1/8 note is a "beat", I.e. 12/8. Of course, you're left with half note resolution, which isn't all that nice.

A better way to do this is to leave the tempo set at for example 120, and choose 24/32 in the scale setup. You get the same end result, but with higher resolution (quarter note) between beats.

- oldmanfury list

Disabling MIDI clock send and receive:

That's basically what the mode Sync Tempo IN ON in the global edit window will do. Be sure Sync Crtl IN is OFF.

MIDI Sync OUT switches between transmission of Start, Stop, Continue and MIDI Timing Clocks OUT of the Machinedrum. It's page 57 of the 1.12 manual.

- lepetitmartien list

To disable the Machinedrum from transmitting MIDI-Data (MIDI clock) even when stopped:

Global menu->sync->out->off

- Federico Ciapi list

Adding different swing amounts to each tracks:

While this can't be done by using the normal means, i.e. the swing parameter, you can fake it though by using the LFO modulating the track volume. Trigger an inverted square wave LFO every time a note is hit, modulate the steps where you want the swing, use parameter locks to achieve this.

A bonus is that if you use both the normal swing and the triggered LFO swing, you can go beyond the 80% swing limit.

- Janne list

Some reasons to use songmode:

1 - Automate Mutes.
2 - Automate drumkit changes.
3 - Mix to patterns together, e.g. first 6 beats from one then last 2 from the other.
4 - Create temporary or infinite looping areas.
5 - Still have full control over patterns and sounds.

- ipassenger bbb

6 - Automate tempo changes.

- neonleg bbb

Alternate Pattern creations:

Once you have a solid basic pattern, copy it a couple of times to different slots. Tweak your kit on copied pattern with CTRL-AL, all you have to do is save the tweaked kit to another slot and then copy and paste your BD and Bass from your initial kit to the new kit and re-save it. Doing this you can create a lot of variations in patterns and timbres.

- Eminor9

Back To Top

Synthesis

Flanger trick:

Stumbled across a little trick last night to get some really crazy moving flanger sounds. I'm still exploring it a bit to see what gives the most impact, but here are the steps I took to get the sound:

1. Load up a sample (I used a 2-beat long synth chord sample) and add some BRR until you hear a little bit of hiss & static.

2. Adjust the AMD and AMF parameters until you hit a sweet spot. I was noting a couple sweet spots....some nice robotic buzzing on one end of the spectrum, and an almost harmonic distortion on the other end.

3. Set up 3 LFOs to modulate BRR, AMD, and AMF. I made my BRR be random, and AMD & AMF were both using free cycled triangles with different times. I kept these pretty slow. Adjust the depth to taste; I didn't go too deep on the modulation as I wanted it to kinda swim around my sweet spot.

The results were a really cool robotic flange that was constantly evolving. Extreme settings will make your sample bow down to the hypnotoad, and a lighter use will give your sample a little bit of gritty metallic sheen. I'm doing this to a dubby chord sound and got great results; kept it organic but with a little bit of dirt flange on top.

- Gys

MD Timestretch:

So I was messing about with my MD last night and I came up with a pretty cool trick. It's probably already been mentioned ages ago but worth a share anyway.

Load up a sample, I used a drum loop that came with the MD. Use one bar/scale for testing, and set BPM to 100 or so. Now, move dial to the sample machine and hit the REC button.

Place trig in the XOX on beat one and PLock the START at 0

Place another trig on beat 16 and PLock START to 120 (or near end depending on sample)
Turn up the RTRG to 127
Turn up RTIM to 127
Hit FUNCTION and SLIDE together and select all XOX buttons, (this will start the Plocks moving from one to the other).
Hit play

What you'll get hopefully is the sample playing back in time with the tempo, but if you move the tempo around the sample stays in time. You may need to tweak the end PLock a little and also the RTIM Rate sepending on the tempo, slower tempos are better with a faster RTIM rate and faster with a slower RTIM rate. Pitch change also adds some cool features tonally.

- Reporter

Using RAM Machine Feedback as a soundsource:

Last night I realized that with the UW, you can use the cue-feedback as an instrument and sound source. This meens that you can make music using RAM Machines only.

No there's nothing in the RAM before, and it's retrigged and reset every time the patterns loops. This is why it sounds different all the time, try it:

1. Add a RAM Record machine.
2. Set Mlev to max.
3. Set an LFO to Cue1, Updte: Trig, Depth: Max, Speed: whatever you like, shape: I_ (falling sawtooth).
4. Play with the filter to soften it down.

There you go.. a really weird and unstable ocillator, but cool.

It's just about forcing the RAM Playback Machine to different things no matter what's inside it. Fast pitch env to do kick/snare, hipass and short decay to have some kind of hihat sound, etc. Live was mainly about pressing mutes, changing the RAM Record Machine filter (which is also affected by a lfo) and sometimes function+pitch or Samplerate Reduction. Also if you want it less chaotic you could just set the rec length to something short like 6-7, then it's actually quite stable. You can just release the monsters by turning that up later. Oh and of course, you can easily just freeze the sound by muting the rec channel since then the ram content just stays solid until you unmute it again.

Another thing that makes it more alive is that I had the rec length set for the full pattern. On top of that, the start setting is param-locked all over the sample. This makes everything change a bit but at the same time keep fragments from the last cycle... or something.

- Kotton BBB

I just gave this a shot. Try these settings for starters (in addition to the one's Kotten mentions) - certain settings will get you absolutely nothing:

LFO Speed - Keep it on the low side - say 40.
LFO Shape - Does seem to matter - try saw or tri.
LFO Shape Mix - Start out all the way counter-clockwise (0).

Synth Cue1 - Start out @ 0 - almost seems like a decay setting as you move up Synth ILev - W/ Cue1 low, sort of soften things up like a 3/6db LP filter.

Track effects - start w/ everything @ default.

Now start pointing some of those extra LFOs towards the track effects.

Kind of sounds like a tri/saw kind of mix before filtering/amplitude mod/etc. For some reason, I was expecting a Sin. Well, I guess it is a Sin w/ some clipping/brr/srr going on.

Can it hurt anything? Start out w/ the track level low so you protect your speakers but aside from that I doubt it - it's probably the noise floor forced into clipping.

- Ceterisparibus BBB

Extreme distortion on the Machinedrum:

Route a sep. out back in and use the gain stage on the ext. input machine. Fucking nosebleed dutch hell death. No problem with the industrial sounds.

-D.E list

Creating thick 80's drum sounds:

This can totally happen with the Machinedrum - even that tight comp'd sound can be had with the dynamix. You definitely have the right machine for the job - play with the dynamix, reverb, and a combo of the fm and trx machines - maybe a little noise machine to double the snare hits, and you will have that sound nailed.

I usually work the output gain and threshold on the dynamix to make everything hit as hard as possible and be as "up front" sounding as I can get it - plus, you will see the elektron box grow louder and stronger than everything else in your rig without even touching the potential or the ceiling of headroom.

- milkmansnd bbb

...and gate it! The gate parameter in the Machinedrum reverb is perfect for this... Instant 80s

- anon bbb

Yes, a short gate time with fm machines and little compression is good for 80's sounds

- mike bbb

Vinyl crackle:

I was just documenting a little trick I used recently and thought I'd share. I managed to get some pretty cool crackly hissy vintage sounding goodness using nothing but some RAM machines and LFOs. Audio Demo: http://soundcloud.com/gys/vinyl-tape-emulation-on

How to do it:
1. Set up a RAM Record machine on a channel with with the record length set to max.
2. Trigger one step. Your trigger step will impact the rhythm of the tape crackle. Doing it on an "off" step like 5 seems to give the best results, but experiment.
3. Set up a RAM Play machine with the following settings:
- Decent amount of BRR (48)

-High FLTF (97)
-High FLTW (126)
-High FLTQ (127)
-A bit of SRR (22)
-Low VOL (28)
-Lots of delay (106); delay time set to (24) with low feedback
-Lots of reverb (87)
4. Trigger one step. Again, your chosen step will affect the rhythm. I chose step 17 in this case.
4. Set up 2 LFOs to modulate your RAM Play machine:
**LFO1 modulates BRR with the following settings:
- Shape1 is random and Shape2 is ramp up; mixed slightly towards Shape1 using HOLD
- Speed is very low (1) and depth is pretty low (30)
**LFO2 modulates FLTF with the following settings:
-Shape1 is triangle and Shape2 is random; mixed slightly towards Shape1 using FREE
- Speed is very low (1) and depth is very low (9)

After playing with this while writing this tutorial, I just noticed that tweaking the RTRG and RTIM of the RAM Play machine can also subtly impact the sound of the crackle. I could see adding another LFO or two to modulate these parameters.

-GYS

----

8 Bit Synth Sounds:

If you max out all of the first page parameters on the GND-IMP and then set AMD to full and play with AMF as well as setting the DIST and SRR to full you get a pretty nice 8 bit synth sound.

- Unknown (sorry)

Granular technique:

Cheap sample loaded into my mduw.. (i.e., saying "wisefire") Put strt on 127 and rtrg on full. Rtim on something in the vicinity of 25. Leave the left LFO on random, and the right LFO on exponential slope, depth on full. And then adjust speed so that the full rtrg is filled. And the finally the param to LFO is strt. This way you can get a very cheap but fun little timestretcher and/or pitchbender.

- wisefire bbb

----

ctr-al and ctr-8p machines:

I'm not in front of my Machinedrum at the moment so bear with me...the ctrl-all machine basically sends any param locks that it receives to the corresponding knob on all other tracks. Parameters on page 2 and 3 are the same for all tracks, but the parameters on page 1 vary depending on what machine you have on that track. So if you crank knob 4 on page 1 of the ctrl-all machine, you will be changing whatever parameter is assigned to knob 4 for every other track.

You were correct to notice that it is destructive. It changes the setting of each track. Also, if you move the knob down 20 then up 20, you can't be certain that all tracks will be back to their original setting (for example, if one of the tracks had a value of 10 in that position to start with, it's final value would be 20 since moving down would take it to 0 then moving back up 20 leaves it at 20).

The ctrl-all machine seems to be more useful as a chaos-inducer rather than a controlled sound sculpture tool. You will probably be using load-kit a lot with this machine.

Another related, undocumented feature: you can achieve a similar effect without loading the ctrl-all machine to a track, by holding "function" while turning a knob...the knob movement will be sent to all tracks. The advantage to using the ctrl-all machine instead of function+knob is that you can sequence and param-lock with the ctrl-all machine.

-ggoodwin bbb

Holding function changes parameters for all machines simultaneously - from my understanding, the ctr machines automate this like parameter locks would to a single sequencer. So, lets say you want the entire pattern to drop in pitch - this could either be done manually - by holding the function knob - or you can automate it with the ctr machines. Its prime directive is to control all, thus the name.

- milkmansnd bbb

The ctr-8p machine allows you to assign whatever you want to the first 8 parameters of the machine (I.e. On the synthesis page). You can take any parameter from any other loaded machine and assign it to one of these. Which means that you can stare at one control page and tweak completely different and independent parameters for several different machines without having to change pages or active tracks. In addition, you can sequence changes to these parameters via parameter locks. What's great about this is that the locks on a ctr machine track (for this or for the ctr-al) don't trig anything; they just change parameters. Which is great because this is the only feature that the mono machine's sequencer has over the Machinedrum's and these machines make it possible.

The ctr-al machine changes the respective parameter on every track. It's the same as holding function while changing a parameter on a track. The difference here is that you can sequence these global parameter changes through parameter locks.

- chiasticon bbb

CTR stands for "ConTRol". The Machinedrum does not have the ability to place parameter locks for a track on a step which does not have a trigger on it, so these CTR machines fill a gap in the Machinedrum's functionality, by letting you use a track to do nothing but "send" parameter changes to other tracks. The mono machine, of course, can already put parameter locks on any step you want.

The exciting part for me is how the CTR-8P (for "8 Parameter") machine centralizes control of many parameters on different tracks onto one screen. Now you can have the pitch from the bass drum, the interference frequency from your snare drum, and the decay settings for your hats and things all on one screen, for easy use during live performance, without using up a lot of hand movement changing active track. That is why CTR-8P is cool.

The other CTR machine is CTR-AL (for "ALL tracks"). You do not choose which specific tracks the control changes on this machine go to - changing a parameter on CTR-AL changes that same parameter on EVERY track. Using CTR-AL, you can create some interesting kit-wide effects on drum tracks which would be difficult to achieve otherwise.

The danger of CTR machines is that they alter the non-locked parameter settings in the active kit, so if you save the kit while it is being altered by a CTR machine track, the changes that the CTR machine made are saved! You have to make a habit of saving a kit directly after adding CTR machines to it, before you do anything.

So, the feature of having a collection of arbitrary parameters from all tracks on one screen is very, very useful on a 16 track machine such as the Machinedrum, in addition to fulfilling the trig-less lock function. Using 1 track out of a 6 track Monomachine just for controls would be somewhat less exciting. I would rather the Monomachine got a new FX machine, like a ring modulator or distortion synthesizer.

-Andrew Deyes list

Creating basslines with the Machinedrum:

For bass lines, I had some good results using some samples that came loaded in the uw upgrade. Also got some results from trx-xt "tom".

- mmboom bbb

I don't have my Machinedrum around at the moment to exactly tell you but the e12 machines with retrigger work well for me. Take a low tom sound for example, make it retrigger with very short interval and low-pass filter it. Lfo or param-lock the interval and you're good to!

- divi bbb

The second basskick of tr machines (trx-b2 the last one in the list). You can really get some awesome fat basslines out of that one. Just set the hold parameter to a high value, then f*(k about with pitch and ramp parameters. Then set noise, dirt and dist to your liking. Set up a LFO and link that to (for example) filter freq.

-bartbral bbb

Bass drum tips:

Here is one of the many methods that I use to destroy a speaker with the Machinedrum's kick:

1 - Go into the master effects section and do a teeny tiny little boost on the low end.

2 - Then, go to the one labeled "p" and pull it down a bit. Make a medium width q, and sweep it down near the low end to about 200-250hz. Listen to how it clears out headroom for the low frequencies!

3 - Go into the dynamix part and turn the output gain up while lowering the comp threshold.

-milkmansnd bbb

Compression on individual outputs is what gives me punch; or try the dynamix with short attack, long release, hard knee, hp set so that the kick does not over trigger the compressor, threshold and ratio to taste.

-meca bbb

1. First problem was that I was trying to do beats that sound somewhat like what you hear on the records. I was trying to get dynamics of the beat match the finished records. This was wrong from me. I've find out, that to make good beat, it has to have pretty much more dynamics than what you hear with common records. Kick and the snare needs to have a lot of volume, a lot more than others. Then when you add some basslines, melodies, harmonies (if you do any of those), the kick and snare will settle to be right amount punchy. If you don't have enough dynamics, kick and snare will drown under other sounds; you lose the punch.

2. Machinedrum gives me a starting point, different from using samples. Usually I put some reverb to whole drump attern (rounds the kick) and one one-band compressor after it; makes reverb pump a bit and enlivens the drums. What I'm trying to say, that working with Machinedrum is a whole drum production route (with it's compressors and reverbs and stuff you might add), unlike using samples (where you can do useful stuff by just making the balance right (other people have done the other work for you)). It is a longer route, but at the end the day when you have mastered it, you can make pretty much anything work.

3. Using trx-kick I used to be in this mindset, that trx-kick needs to be sound right with it's machine parameters. I tend to think it's odd to use for example lpf for it, because the originals didn't have it. So using the trx-kick with the way I think the original tr-machines were used, I should get good results. This was also wrong thinking of me. Trx-kick will sound a lot more analogue, if you use a lpf on it a bit. Just get the dynamics right and it will work (see number 1). You can experiment a lot, just get the dynamics right in the end.

4. To get good bass end to song does have a lots more than a kick (or even bass). What I mean to say, stuff that sounds shit on it's own, can and will sound terrific with right material glued on top of it. Then how to find what works and what doesn't. I just try different things (mainly from mnm), till I get the right one. Then I program it to fine tune it. If I try to program stuff to sound good from the scratch, it tends to sound too weak at the end of the day (night that is).

-toni bbb

One way to add some beef to your kick might be to add a GND sin machine and chain it to your kick.

- niall munnelly list

Another trick I use is simply using two different bd machines. For example trx-bd2 and trx-bd.
Bd2 is lp filtered so only the low boom is heard. Bd however is hp filtered so you only hear the higher frequencies....now you have indpendend control over high and low frequencies / pitch / volume which is great for "sculpting" your bassdrum into something unique.

- Merlin bbb

You should remember to also use EQ to eliminate frequencies that you do not need from the seperate kicks you use, and make sure all the elements are the right length. For example:

Kick 1 - attack phase, roll off the bass frequencies and shorten the sample/sound to just a few milliseconds.

Kick 2 - mid range - cut off frequencies up to about say 200 HZ and frequencies above 4 KHZ. Sample length should be the full length of the kick you require but this is not a rule.

Kick 3 - sub bass - roll off all frequencies above say 100 HZ. Again sample length although not a rule should be around the same as kick 2.

These elements should sit together more comfortably, and you can also use some amience effects or whatever to glue them together after compression.

- Shaun bbb

My tip to get strong kicks out of MD:

* Adjust decay until it's long as possible that you can get (and want) without clicks.
* Route kick to separate output.
* If you want to adjust tail, use gate on your mixer or ext. efx that closes and opens quickly (assuming your kicks are solid ie. not varying with amplitude from kick to kick). This used to solve the problem with MD's envelopes having only decay without hold/sustain phase.
* If you want to bring bass back, use compression (put it after gating if you use one). First set attack and release to zero, max ratio (inf) and bring threshold down so that you compress the shit out of the kick.
* Open attack until you get kick attack you want (snappy).
* Open release until you get body you want (boom)
* Set ratio for compression you want
* Set threshold so that gain reduction is able to go to zero dB.
* You might need to go back to MD's decay at some point in this process so think it as a iterative process.

Also, remember to eq, and do it before compression. I usually cut -6 dB at around 315Hz with narrowish Q to remove cardboard box sound.

- TexMex bbb

You can also simulate hold/sustain phase using LFOs. Set your LFO to square and route it to Decay of your BD. Choose trigger mode Trig and put Depth to max. Now you have 'Hold' for your BD and can set its lenght by choosing right amount of speed for the Square-LFO.

- Toni bbb

Snare drum tips:

I've made snares with e12-snare-machine a lot. You can also find some kind of brushed snare there (with high distortion I've managed to get it to decent snare sound). Another good snare is Trx-snare, which is so close to tr808 snare! But this is what you probably know already. Here is some things how I do my snares:

1. I always try set the pitch of snare very carefully. Sometimes when you have 'good snare sound' you find out later that it's too whimpy, because the pitch is set too high. As for me, I like sizzling snare and it happens a lot of times. I always try to watch that the fundamental hit is somewhere 400 Hz. If it is higher I know it's going to be problem later on.

2. I have also found out, that I cannot hear if snare sound is good or bad, until I play it with other material. You can get very high-end sounding snare with e12 and pitch set only to '3' and little srr (8), when you have right background. This is true for trx-snare also, sometimes it doesn't sound like 808-snare at all when in right background.

3. Sometimes I layer snares. Like for now I'm doing new song and I have trx-snare layered with Pi-snare. I love the way it sounds! Must be the best snare sounds I got from Machinedrum!

4. I like to do fills and rolls with snares a lot. Because of this I almost always do one snare that is the accented one. It might be layered. So I hit my accents with this. Then I usually use e12-snare with retrigs to do rolls and stuff like that at lower velocities. Getting a good rolls is really a matter of velocities and I feel it doesn't matter what's the basic sound on those rolls, just make it soft enough and they start to work.

- tahvenaine2002 list

I also find in the stereo outs I should pan different parts in different areas. This is also good with the stereo delay. I pan it like a real drum kit is set up. After I pan everything I use the filters in the routing? menu. Not the synth menu. This puts the drums in a high or low part in the pan. The pan is left and right, and the filter is up and down.

I think the filter will really put the snare out there. Not to mention using the multiple trigs. I haven't done this yet. But once you get one snare set in the stereo pan copy that machine and make another one in the same pan and everything but change the synth parameters. I haven't done this yet. I've just been thinking about it.

- endlessnessisticman list

I've never tried this. but my Machinedrum snare tip is to copy the track trigs to another track
and then change that track's machine to a tom sound. then turn it down very low with a medium amount of decay. you shouldn't be able to tell that it's a tom sound, but it should thicken up your snare. If you take a real physical snare drum and turn the snares off, it sounds like a high-pitched tom; you can hear the body of the drum. once the snares are on, they create a noise effect and blend with this body sound; that's what makes a real drum sound thick/full. so when your Machinedrum snare has too much noise and not enough body, adding this tom sound on another track should do the trick. you just need to be careful to balance the levels right so that it doesn't sound like a tom but like they are the same instrument.

You can also use the multiple triggering option for this, but I don't since I usually have some quiet snare "ghost" notes that I don't want to add this sound to.

- Joseph Melnyk list

Mimicing snare drum 'flam' sounds:

You can also use the retrig function on the e12 sounds.

- belplascaprod list

Its a little tricky buy you can offset another track slightly with swing. Completely fill a track with swing triggers and set swing at about 51%. This track will run slightly behind the other tracks.

So now program your main beat on the swung tack and add your flams on the unswung track. Its crude but what can you do with 16th note quantisation?

- wavecircle bb

Making snare rolls:

Check out re-trigger with the e12 drums. It really speeds up production time for rolls. If you use parameter slides over a roll that starts off with a low volume, then builds to full volume, it sounds wicked. Also play around with sliding other parameters during rolls. One of my favorites is setting fltw low, then sliding fltf from a low setting to a high setting.

– sidstationownsyou list

I've been messing with a e12 rim shot with hi retrig with slow timing. Some other tweaks too, and some echo too. Well I go to the filter and give it a high q. Then I turn the filtf or filtw and the sound goes from brain-rumbling to 303 style squeeks.

– endlessnessisticman list

Making 909 style hihats:

I was able to create similar cymbal sounds. Try experimenting with the ride cymbal machines (efm and e12). The Machinedrum lacks such good samples, but it's a synth, not a sampler! Don't worry, the Machinedrum cymbals are fine and "fresh" sounding, you just need to work a bit on the parameters.

- federico ciapi list

I find that the hats need bit reduction (only a little) and a huge peak with the Eq and sometimes the res filter too. Seems to bring out the bite and sizzle present in the original 909 samples.

– amosluyk list

Bit reduction sounds like a good idea since the original 909 samples for the hats are something like 6 bit IIRC. Also, if you want to emulate a 909 fully

you should only tweak the controls available on the original machine during playback or it won't sound genuine. That is, once you've made a 909 hat-sound don't touch anything but the decay.

- Niklas Winde list

Crunchy drum sounds:

TRX -> SN

PTCH DEC BUMP BENV
13 110 44 0

SNAP TONE TUNE CLIP
60 127 127 57

AMD AMF EQF EOG
0 0 24 63

FLTF FLTW FLTQ SRR
39 49 109 11

DIST VOL PAN DEL
127 127 6 0

REV LFOS LFOD LFOM
1 108 66 64

Put the LFO on Ptch, triangle shape plus reverse exp env
Free-running, SPEED = 108 depth=68 Schmix=64

PTCH=13 = F#4 = 185Hz

- Crackpot list

Making tuned sounds in the E12 kit:

E12->RS
PTCH DEC HP RATL
-37 127 1 127

STRT = anything (e.g. 41)
RTRG = 44
RTIM = 45
BEND = anything (e.g. -16)

Also interesting is LFO on STRT times!

- Crackpot list

Echo and Compressor interactions:

Try making a short, sparse sound with a lot of echo at say 105 BPM and echo delay of 16/128 or 24/128 or so. Then, employ the compressor heavily. Move your kick to a separate output, so it doesn't affect the compressor. You can actually hear the echoes get quieter and quieter, than louder and louder, then disappear. I was doing
this with the infamous EFM Cowbell. It's really weird, especially in stereo....

– Crackpot list

LFO Speed Settings:

As far as I know (someone posted here long time ago) LFO speeds 0-63 are synchronized to the tempo of the Machinedrum. 64-127 are faster, with no tempo sync. Speeds of 1/2/4/8/16/32/64 are the one who are equivalent to bars/beats/16ths and such (I do not find the right words here, my excuse is being Swedish :).

- Janne G:son Berg list

Reinitialising LFO's:

Just discovered something cool. It seems the MD's LFO's reinitialise each time you reload a kit. So if you have some parameters being modulated by rndom LFO's, each time you press FUNCTION+Classic/Extended button, it resets the phase of the LFO. Neat way to add some variations to a tune on the fly...

- Tarekith bbb

Emulating synth envelopes:

You can use the right LFO's upward ramp set to "trig", with Shapemix all the way to the right, and assign it to volume to get a Slower attack, but it's still not the same as a dedicated adsr.

- falabala66 list

Using the Machinedrum mainly for melodic material:

I use the Machinedrum for melodic material, although I don't limit it to that. You may want to get the uw upgrade for sampling synth stuff to push it more in that direction.

- milkmansnd bbb

I find the uw much more suitable for melody 'cause:

-you can use samples with a slow attack (this will be linked to the pitch so the lower you go the slower the attack, higher=shorter)

-you always have a hold parameter! (parameter lockable sustain) This can be up to 2 bars long.

-if you sample a note at c3, set pitch on mduw to:

-12 for ...
-9 for a2
-6 for a#2
-3 for b2
0 for c3
3 for c#3
6 for d3
9 for ...

-you can loop your samples.

-you can use a sample editor on your computer to put different "wavetable osc's" samples all in one sample. Say sine-triangle-square-'noise'-pulse. Then on the mduw use start point to choose an 'osc' type. Put retrigger on full and use retrigger time for basic pitch. Then use pitch parameter to parameter lock your melody. Or use pitch for basic pitch and retrig time for parameter locking the melody. What ever you like :)

-you can use the ram record/play machines to create real nice arpeggiator type fx.

-bartbral bbb

I love using the e12 hats...with a very tight long retrigger...for buzzing synth leads. Outside of that... I tend to use mine for drums only after many attempts to make complete songs using just the Machinedrum. I just don't have the skills yet.

- jsrockit bbb

Besides EFM-HH, the snare part of the EFM-RS machine is also very good for melodic parts. SDEC has the release time about 7 sec (same as EFM-HH). SNAR has some control over the sound and with cranked up DIST parameter, it morphs from the sine wave to some kind of overdriven triangle wave. SPTC ranges from notes B1 to E4 so it has fewer steps then GND-SN, and thus it is more accurate at pitches.

- env bb

Emulating string sounds with the Machinedrum:

Get an impulse , send it to an external output such as C , connect the output directly into an input machine , give both pulse and input machine delay (short 1 till 20 will work) now you got a physical modelled string sound, based on the karlpluss string algorithm, good luck!

- ecz2003 list

I already tried using the gnd-sn a lot, but I always end up with kind of "bell"-type fm sounds, or some weird "rocket scientist" elektro tones. The Sarpsborg Tune on the Elektron website was made by nils odegaard.. It amazing how those strings sound, and I would really like to recreate them. A long time ago he stated in this forum, that the efm set is the key to this, but when I use it, I just get bell type fm sounds, but not string like sounds.

- steril707 list

Use the LFO's for adding more string like envelopes. Go for the reverse LFO's, apply them to filter width and such. Use the eq to emulate the resonant frequencies of the violin body.

- Janne G'son Berg list

EFM-HH as a violin type sound:

Pitch: 70
Decay: 96
Trem: 101
Tfrq: 64
Mod: 96
Mfrg: 96
Mdec: 127
Fb: 19 (very important parameter, vary this to get more life from the sound)

Cut the bass with the filter (Fltf: 64) and the highest treble as well (Fltw: 71).

Dist: 64 Rev: 127 (with suitable reverb settings)

LFO-page:
Param: Fltw
Shp2: Inverted ramp
Update: Trig
Speed: 34
Depth: 54
Shmix: 127

Parameters not mentioned should be at their original settings for the EFM-HH machine.

- Janne G:son Berg list

I used a similar setup. The main differences between our setups are:

- LFO's; I combined both ramps to get a slow attack
- Mod/tremolo values; these were both at their presets
- AMD/AMF; I used these to get a bit more depth out of the sound

Other than that, they're pretty similar settings. I'm very anxious to try your values and combine them with my values.... I'm sure I'll get something interesting; knowing this machine, that is.

- Joe list

Hint1: The EFM HH machine is very melodic.

Hint2: Using the following LFO settings will give you a softer attack: shp1 and shp2 set to their fifth waveform, mix set to 100-ish and speed set around

8 or 16. This got me a decent string sound.

- Joe list

Creating build up sounds:

use repeat on low, like 1-16 and set it to infinite time, use a trig ramp lfo on the start time, experiment with lfo speed with full depth. another more lofi way, set speed 300 bpm x2, use 8 or so steps for the sound and 1 trigg ramp for the start time on a second track, an additional track to ramp hpf should make it more clean.

- hbinc bb

You can sort of cheat and assign an LFO to a tracks volume parameter and have the volume ramp up. It isn't reversing the sound, but it sounds pretty convincing, especially for hats and stuff.

- cchocjr bb

Saving individual drums:

Since there isn't any availability to save individual drums I use the very last kits (60-64) as a favorite kits. for example my kit number 64 is called "fav bd/sd". I save my precious and best working bd's and sd's to that kit (8 bd and 8 sd). Then when I'm in a mood of trying to find good bd for some pattern I might copy a machine from favorite kits and see if they work. It's good also, because I have only 8 fav BD's, so when I create a new and good sounding BD I must compare it to fav BD's and maybe erase some of them. That way my Fav kit evolve over time (at least I hope so).

- Toni Ahvenainen list

Using effects from more than one track:

Try using the "THROUGH" effect. That way you can route the output of one track into another, and use the track effects of the second one to add distortion to the first one, after the first filter!

- Daniel @ Elektron

Simple Compression via the Dist parameter:

A good use for the distortion btw, is as a simple compressor type effect. Only use a little bit of it, not enough to where you actually head the distorted aspect though. Works good on kick drums, or basslines (especially) if you're making instrumental sounds on the MD. Just a little bit can really help a sound come through the drum mix better.

- Tarekith bb

I also use the subtle distortion tip, mainly on kick drums but also on my snares too. I often run bass and bottom heavy drums thru the HP filter with Res to get some extra boom. Can be quite useful when trying to chaneg the shape of the decay, using the resonance and freq to change the low tail off.

- ipassenger bb

Various Sound Design Ideas:

The LFOs/envelopes are invaluable as "sound shapers"; I use them to control the length/decay of the volume, add pitch or filter envelopes to make things snappier. Often i vary the amount of LFO with lock programming to emphasize certain events and make the track more dynamic. Sometimes I use triggered LFOs from other tracks to get a separate "trig track" like on the MnM. I also find the LFOs work well as subtle randomizers (addressed to pitch, pan etc). if you use tonal sounds, they often sound static or dead with reverb or delay, a subtle LFO to pitch can warm things considerably.

The track EQ is very flexible; I use it for everything from tidying up the the mix, adding weight to basses or kicks, or LFO-controlled phaser-like effects.

I also like making background "noise drones", sometimes semi-tonal, just to add atmosphere to a pattern. For this I use negative ramps controlling volume. Then filter, and panned delay to get stereo effects. Drones become more dynamic when applying subtle compression.

- Nils bb

Granular style of looping:

Take a sample (not too short) and set the following parameters:

-start 64
-dec 127
-hold 127

Add a square LFO on end parameter, trig mode, depth to 127 play the sample, if the speed of the lfo is not too short the sample will play and never stop, You can now play with the speed for granular effect ...

- Howdragonsdisappear bbb

You can actually push around the relative center of the loop point by setting your LFO's SHP 2 to a sine wave and setting the mix control in the area of "30". Too much and you'll lose hold of the loop endpoint altogether. Use a wave with vocals.

For example, this would loop forever unless I pushed the loop point forward with the LFO shape mix control. It really reminds me of looping on my speak and spell where I have a button that does the same loop point push function.

- Allerian bbb

Point another track's LFO to the start parameter. I found these settings pretty good:

SHP1 - Triangle
SHP2 - Exp. increase
UPDTE - Free
SPEED - 1
DEPTH - 38
SHMIX - 74

- Syncretism bbb

Creating Chorus or a Doubling effect:

Anyway, one more neat tip. You can use the Amp modulation parameters to mimic a chorus or doubling effect. Raise the AMD parameter to about 35-45, then use the AMF parameter to 'tune' the ringing with your pattern. You need to play around with it for the best results, but it can actually do a lot to make a part stand out in the pattern without sounding clangorious (new word there). The key is little steps on those 2 parameters until it's tuned just right.

- Tarekith bb

Yeah, this is a cool trick. I've sometimes tried to apply it to an already programmed melody, but tuning it to an already sour melody, it's difficult to get predictable results. Since it's actually an amplitude modulator when set to 12 o clock (and ring mod at clockwise), it can turn one note into two :-)

- Nils bb

Ableton Beat Repeat style sounds:

Ok, ever since the CTR-FX machines came out, one of my favourite things to replicate with the Machinedrum is Ableton Live's Beat Repeat effect. For those of you who haven't used Live, Beat Repeat does exactly what it says on the tin, it snatches a section of audio and stutters it. You can do this easily with the Rhythm Echo thanks to the CTR machine.

It's fairly obvious how to do it, but here's a little guide:
1. Set up a CTR-RE machine in your kit.
2. Set all the steps you want "muted" (as in not to stutter/repeat) by locking the FB and LEV parameters to 0.
3. Likewise set the steps you do want to repeat by locking FB to 64 and LEV to 127. (Note that you only have to do either one of step 2 and 3, I usually go with step 2 so then I can fully adjust what is repeating)
4. Route the parts you want to repeat by setting their DELAY send parameter to 127.
5. You can now tweak away with the CTR-RE parameters to totally screw around with your beats. I use it a lot with inputs. Using the MOD is interesting, really weird time warping stuff. You can use the filter just like in Ableton Live. It's a great little trick IMO.

Hope that helps a few people!

- Future Image bbb

Randomly reversing samples:

One trick I've been using with shorter one shot samples is to set the start and end controls pretty close, and then modulating one or the other with an LFO so at random points it will reverse the sample. This sounds particularly great with hi-hats...gives them a nice slightly everchanging groove.

I like sampling the output in short bursts..say a quarter note, and effecting the sample with some distortion + LPF and using it as sort of a grungy bassy undertone. Has a good hard techno sort of feel. Put in a few p-locks to reverse it here and there and it's great. Experiment with the quality of the recording too...there's a parameter for that and you can get some really mushy sounding weirdness if you turn that dial down.

- Gys

There are many wonderful tricks. Here are a couple of them that I've done videos for.

Start/End LFO control:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdOvD8SHOT0

Resampling for derivative music:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-YsmaSuHIjU

- Allerian

Boutique Fine Tuning:

It is possible to fine-tune the sample playback capability of the MD using an LFO. Currently the pitch function changes tuning about 30 percent of one tone. Using an LFO allows for the most minute adjustments. The way it works is by using the two LFO waveshapes and mixing them together to achieve differing levels of fine tuning.

Select a ROM Machine, and load a snare or synth sample with fairly steady tonal content. Open the LFO screen, select the target parameter to be Pitch, and the Updt parameter to be Trig.

Select Speed to be zero - therefore, no movement. This is important to make note of because then the very starting point of an LFO wave shape will be the only value applied to the target parameter. To fine-tune the sample upwards choose Shp1= Triangle Slope (shape #4) and Shp2 = Triangle Wave (shape #1).

Shp1 has the Triangle Slope shape, and that one is the 'effector' as the starting value for that wave is high to begin with. Shp2 has the Triangle Wave shape, and this is the 'moderator', as the starting value for this wave is zero, neither plus nor minus. Strength of the LFO wave to be applied to the parameter is indicated by Depth. In this situation, the objective is to achieve fine-tuning, so perhaps select a value around 17. By adjusting this value the fine-tuning parameters are adjusted - to be utilized fully or partially depending on the Shmix rotary.

Essentially the Shmix parameter fine-tunes the strength of the LFO fine-tuning mod. Therefore, by twirling the Shmix rotary all the way right, there will be no pitch change whatsoever, the reason being that only Shp2 is effecting the pitch, and the effect is zero change. By setting Shmix to be 103, some value change from Shp1 is happening, and the sample is fine-tuned upwards ever so slightly.

It is possible to fine-tune lower, by using Shp1 = Triangle Wave and Shp2 = Inverse Triangle Wave. This technique also works brilliantly to fine-adjust sample start value.

- PreviewLounge

Back To Top

Performance

Using MIDI Program changes:

It's a very clever system because you can also send program changes which will only happen once until another is encountered. This way your connected gear won't reset the sound parameters every loop due to the program change.

- Ronald list

Using the RAM Machines:

Just trig a ram-record machine at the point where you want it to record. Param-lock the length. Trim it later by adjusting the start/end of the corresponding ram-play machine. You don't have to push the record button to record samples (but you do have to record the trigs in the first place!)

So if you have a ram record in your pattern, it will re-record every time the pattern loops, unless you mute the record track. I usually have the ram record in one pattern, and the ram play in a variation pattern, although all kinds of strange, and I mean strange, feedback stuff can happen when you mix and match them both in the same pattern.

- ggoodwin bbb

I'm still trying to get my head around how to use the ram machines properly as it isn't very intuitive to me. The mduw quick start guide that came with the upgrade has good info but lacks information on the ram-record machines a bit in terms of actual usage or work flow.

I understand the fact that the ram-record machine is used for doing the actual live sampling either from the mains or the external inputs and that the ram-playback machines are used to play back and trig the samples. I've assigned each machine to its own track in my kit. But how do I enable the ram-record machine to start/stop recording at particular time and length? When putting trigs on the ram-record machine track, what does that do exactly to the incoming signal? How are people using the cue parameters? Can you somehow preview what you just sampled before sending out to the main mix?

If anyone can either point me to a thread or perhaps could type up a quick step-by-step on using the ram machines, I would be very grateful and others may benefit as well.

- crixmadine bbb

I had a pattern with some pretty convincing turntablist-style sounds going on. Used the ram record to sample the mains, then p-locked the hell out of the play machine to create a baby scratch buffa buffa type of sound...it was a bit gimmicky but the principle is cool. Theoretically you could create everything from babies and chirps all the way through flares and tears, but it would be kind of a pain.

The details escape me at the moment, but I remember getting some ridiculous feedback type of stuff using the ram machines as well.

Also, I have a concept which I haven't actually tried yet so I'm not sure how well it will work, but the basic idea is to make a pattern based completely on a ram play machine, without making any assumptions about what the actual sample in that machine will be...then other patterns can load up the memory with some samples, either internal or external, and then switch to the first pattern, which will then become sort of like an abstract fill tool. Of course you could use multiple tracks with the same ram play machine and each with different filter/fx settings, to make an abstract drum kit whose actual sound depends on whatever sample you feed to it.

Now that I have my uw fully patched up, I'm planning some tripped out stuff where one output will go to an fx unit, then into one of the ins to be sampled, which will go out a different output into the evolver, then back into the other ram machine...etc.

Edit: before I forget, there is one more way to use the ram record that you didn't mention...you can manually trig it and it will record on the spot. You never have to enter record mode at all, if you don't want to. This is kind of cool because you can easily record custom fills on the fly, etc.

- ggoodwin bbb

Haven't explored ram machines much yet, here is one way of using them.

1. Set up 1 rec-machine to record output. Sequence it with parameter locks.
2. Now fill up rest of the kit with _multiple_ play-machines. Record something and play with the play-machines. Pitch up/down some of them, use delay, make interesting tones and percussion of them.
3. Now take mnm-sequence or similar and hit play on both machines at the same time. You can find out endless tones and such; just pattern on the mnm. By the way this works very nicely when recording gameboy's nanoloop software, which is set to different tempo (like 100 on Machinedrum and 75 on gameboy).

- toni bbb

You need to have ilev turned up in order to record the input. So you don't want it around 0 like you settings indicate. And turn ibal up if you don't want the input to be in mono.

- chiasticon bbb

Place a step on ramrec track then turn up ilev (volume to be recorded), if you wanna hear what's coming in to the input turn up cue1 on the ramrec machine. Now, if you wanna hear what you just recorded only, turn down cue1 and turn up cue2 . Go to ramplay track put in a step and you should be able to hear what you recorded and tweak it to another dimension

-neonleg bbb

Set up a RAM Rec and RAM Play machine. Input a step in the RAM Play. Now, with the sequence playing, but NOT in record mode, just hit the RAM Rec trigger and it will start recording immediately and be played at the RAM Play step. With each pass you can hit the Rec trigger again at different spots in the sequence, constantly changing up the pattern.

To give it a bit more funk, set the RAM Rec to something short, say around 8. Now in the RAM Play machine, add a bit of retrig with a 127 value, and add some delay. You'll get nice rhythmic rolls this way. Add a HPF with a high Q on the RAM Play track as well to elevate from your bass & kicks.

To go further...keep your edit page focused on RAM Play. Now you can trigger the RAM Rec while simultaneously adjusting playback...start/end, retrigs, filters, etc. You can start getting very lively and funky improvs this way.

- Gys

More on UW ROM features:

The SPS-1UW has 32 different sample slots where you can place a sample.. the sample length isn't important.. however the UW does have its limits, the combined size of all the samples put together has to be smaller then 2048KB.

There are tricks of putting more then 32 different samples into a UW. For example making a 10 second sample of 10 bassdrums and selecting the specific bassdrum by the start time and end time parameter.

- Wisefire bbb

Technically repeat is like sync. If you want to loop, set it up in your sample before transferring it! Several of the presets use loop points. You could loop the whole sample, or have an one shot attack and looping end (the latter is mainly how we looped the presets).

- Daniel, Elektron

Machinedrum with DJ decks:

Sounds like you're after the ram machines. These capture live audio and allow you to resequence/tweak/effect/filter/chop/pitch it. You can sample from either of the audio inputs (or a mix of the two, but only in mono), or resample the Machinedrum's output. For DJ work I imagine you'd be more interested in sampling the inputs. The way that recording works with the ram record machines may be a little different from what you're used to, and by that, I mean completely ass-different. You will set up one pattern with a rec machine trigger (set length param to the entire pattern). Make sure the Machinedrum is synced to tempo at this point. Let the record pattern play, each loop it will capture one measure worth of sound. When you record the measure that you want, switch to your ram play pattern (which you set up beforehand). Of course, this pattern will sound totally different depending on what you fed the ram record with. Make sure you use lots of parameter locks with the ram play machine... you can use it as a simple phrase sampler, I guess, but that would be a grave injustice.

Edit: to clarify: the ram record machine will sample audio whenever it is triggered in a pattern...the Machinedrum itself doesn't have to be in record mode for this to work. You can even live-trigger the ram machine if you want.

- ggoodwin bbb

General live playing tips:

I cheat when I transition from one song to the next. I create the transition period using an external effects processor. I used to do it with my virus c, but now I accomplish the same thing with my Electrix mofx. Typically, I start into a delay of the Machinedrum's output, and then up the 'regen' parameter on the mofx until the delay becomes a loop. From that point, I'll fuck around with the effects while loading up the next 'song' (I sequence my Machinedrum manually) and either fade the loop out into the next track or kill the loop abruptly--right as the next 'song' starts. I'll soon be getting an external analog filter which I'll also use to these sorts of ends. I think that combining this strategy along with some transitional patterns would be a great way of getting between tracks. -cchocjr bbb

Was trying something out where I would mute some tracks before the transition. Switch the pattern then unmute using the arm function. I was also trying to get the arming and pattern change really close and quick. The Machinedrum reacted strangely sometimes though since I had to hold function while changing patterns.

I also did a song with 16 patterns. Every four went together so I'd trigger them in a row live. One kit would be assigned to every four. I started the first four. Tweaked that kit to make parts sound different but not too much. Saved that for the next four, and so on. I could go through each set of four and then even go back to like the second four. The first and third four were breaks and the second and fourth four were 4/4 beats.

- udenjoe bbb

For my first live set with the Machinedrum, I focused on getting the biggest sounding patterns. I did not care about which sound was on which track. I used pattern mode and mutes to build each pattern up and down, with the bass drum on track 1 being the lone transitional element, also I muttered and shouted into the mic to shroud the transition. Not very sonically attractive, but it worked. Another bad point was that I was sometimes left guessing which percussive elements were under each muted track.

For my second live set with the Machinedrum, I focused more on organization and how I was going to work it live. I kept the bass drum on track 1, snare on track 2, etc, somewhat following the labeling on the Machinedrum panel. Tracks 13-16 were always MIDI machines, each triggering a certain type of sample in each pattern. So the execution on the Machinedrum level was in control, but I think the overall impact of the patterns were compromised and didn't have nearly the energy of the first set, because I stuck to my pre-fabricated layout for every pattern (as opposed to having the latitude to do special, impactful things like layering and using contrasting snares and high-hats and creating custom synthetic tones, which don't fit traditional categorization.)

For my next live set, here's my rationale: in trying to squeeze everything on the Machinedrum, I've discovered that basically I can't do what I want with just the Machinedrum. So I've added (3) more external sequencers: rs7000 for instrumentals and vocal samples, emx-1 for 808/909/other standard sampled percussion and va basses/synths/efx/etc, the esx-1 for custom sampled percussion and other samples, and finally the Machinedrum for synthetic percussion and most importantly the bassdrum.

The Machinedrum tracks 1-4 will all contain bass drum variations, so I can instantly add and remove dramatic bassdrum fills, tracks 5-8 will be what I'll call "core Machinedrum percussion" as in whatever I want for each pattern, and tracks 9-12 will be predestined for oh, ch, rc, cc, as per Machinedrum panel labeling. Tracks 13-16 will be where it will get interesting. Here I will do one of the following - either setup ctr-al machines, input machines, or MIDI machines. The idea will be to have a few tracks which can be instantly launched to warp the entire Machinedrum sound.. Or maybe the sound of my other boxes. Fun stuff.

Again, I'll use pattern mode and mutes to build the song structure live, and likewise for the other (3) sequencers.

-synthy bbb

Using the inputs in stereo:

Those are mono inputs. Try using the filter input machine first. The Gate and envelope require more tweaking and you have to make a pattern with the drum keys with these to hear a sound. The filter doesn't need a pattern programmed. Also make sure alev and gate are all the way to the right when you start. You can turn this down later. Keep trying, you'll get it.

- endlessnessisticman list

I wanted to hook my Machinedrum up to reaktor on my laptop via MIDI and then have the audio output go back through the Machinedrum but wasn't sure if the a/b inputs are mixed to a single mono?

– Polyhex list

Hi, you can do exactly what you said, pan the 2 inputs hard left and hard right.

– Creepjoint list

Using the Machinedrum as an effects unit:

I've found that the easiest way to use it as an effects unit is to use the gate machine. you old need to trigger it once (I.e. you don't have to have a sequence running all the time) to allow sound to come through and then adjust it as needed and utilize the delay/reverb/filter. I do this with my Sidstation all the time (to gate the noise as well as to use the Machinedrum's effects).

- Joe list

Fun with Function:

If you hold down the Function button while tweaking the FX ex: hold Function while tweaking the filter knob will control all 16 parts at once very cool for Real Time Tweaking Live. I don't think thats in the manual.

- hOmeSLiCE bb

well just after mangling every thing with that function+knob combo you revert the kit back to its saved state with function+classic/extended : indispensable ;)

- divi bb

I always set up a CTRL-AL track on track 16. This avoids having to hit the function button while tweaking and controls all the tracks. Very cool while playing with filters and the decay. Love it

- deaf-mute bb

And then you can LFO the Ctrl-Al knobs (that's what you meant right?) from any of the other tracks (it doesn't have it's own LFO) and LFO all 15 tracks with 1 LFO... or have 15 LFO's modding 15 params on all the tracks at once

- husker bb

Random Performance Tips

Small tricks (for short breaks, microstructure):
- Obviously, filter tweak, use a highpass on the entire pattern and tweak that to remove bass drum and bass or thin them out, then kick them back in after a multiple of 4 bars.
- Same trick with other sound effects: lowpass, sample reduction (those are the ones i have on the drum machine).
- AM (also on the drum machine) is tricky to use, cause it's very pregnant and not very musical. Also you have to repeat your tweaks in the exact same way because of the "tonality" of the AM.
- Muting things on and off, especially effective with things like: soloing the bass, soloing bass and kickdrum, muting kickdrum, etc...
- Reversing the sampled audio for 1 or 2 beats.
- Looping smaller parts of the sampled audio : looping 2 beats of the 4 bar loops, then 1 beat, then back to normal.
- I almost always have a 3/16th delay. When sending a hat or another rythmic into it and cranking up the feedback, that element will play on every 16th, with some awesome rythmic loudness changes. I use that to quickly have a 16th hihat or 16th tom when there is none in the pattern.

Longer break tricks:
- Send something into the delay and then gradually highpass the filter, while turning up the feedback (like at 5:45 in the set), then kicking everything back and drying up the delay.
- Using one very specific element, soloing it, and starting to tweak into oblivion. Favorite trick is gradually turning up the decay of the sounds envelope, while kicking distortion and delay. Also for example playing a lot with the pitch ramp on sine sounds, playing with the attack. then after some heavy heavy tweaking (the weirder it gets, the better), kick everything back in. This is my favorite "crowd go mental plz" trick, people can go berzerk when you use weird weird weird sounds.

Sound tricks:
- Turning the delay into a mellow pad by turning up the feedback and simulatenously filtering out the high end. Works well with voices, chords, melodic stuff going into the delay. You can do it with bass also but watch the low end of the feedback loop, it will drown out the bass.
- Having a very soft pad-like sound (for example a noise floor) go louder and louder and more distinctive and more rythmic. One way I do that is to loop a sound very quickly (every 16th for example), but leave different settings for 1 beat, so when tweaking stuff i can suddenly "invoke" the 1 beat settings over the quick loop, which will change my sound from a fast subtle noise floor into a 1-beat rythmic sound going "woooOSH woooOOsh woooOOsh".
- Having different offbeat hihat or clap sounds allows for a lot of flow inside one pattern by just changing those "iconic" sounds. For example oging from a short clicky like offbeat to a full on 808 cymbal sweep.
- You can achieve big flow effects with clap and hihat sounds, for example 6:00 in the mp3 above shows bringin in the clap and then a brutal offbeat hihat to make everything go "tssk tssk tssk". I love oldschool techno for that kind of things.
- Play a lot with chord sounds to make pads, big dub, stabs, etc.. by changing the attack and decay of a chord sound, you can go from hihat (very short click) to short funk guitar (no attack, short dec), to stabs (longer decay), to organ (short attack), to pad. add delay to taste for the dub.
- When resampling a pattern, it is mostly good to sample a "dry version" with just bass and some percussion, because that makes mixing easier later on. However it can be very nice to sample 2 bars out of a heavy dub moment, and kick that back in full blast later on after a dry moment. That will give a nice flowing loop later on.

Transition tricks:
- Using offbeat (ska-style) patterns to bring back some funk and throw your hands in the air feeling. Offbeat patterns also can give a lot of flow to patterns which are a bit dry else.
- Having the resampled version, start to filter tweak it. If removing low end, now is a good time to introduce either the new bass of the next pattern (if unsure what the bass pattern is, fading in volume wise is a good way to bring in drastically different stuff), or the kick drum for example.
- If removing high end, introduce th new offbeat hihat or the new clap. That can also be done without removing low end if the new pattern has a very disticntive offbeat hihat. I have to say the offbeat hihat is my favourite element ever.
- When the foundation of the next track is in (kickdrum, mostly), start to introduce new leemnts. At the same time, start to transmogrify the previous loop, highpassing it, starting to distort it, etc... I love the BRR on the machine drum for that cause it will gate a lot of things as well when going to extreme settings. Lower volume and start to let the old pattern run along as a kind of rythmic noise. If at lower volume you can do some drastic reverb effects as well, or finally modify the old loop into a pad using the delay / filter trick above.

- Daswesen bbb

My favorite breaks are the ones with this combo:

Function + Delay (MAX)
then, Function + Reverb (MAX)
then, Function + Decay (MAX -slowly)
then, Function + Pitch (Down to 0 -slowly)
then, Function + Distort (MAX -slowly) -This really takes the sound to another level
then, Function + Filter Width (all the way down to 0 -slowly) -to "kill" it

Then, Function + Extended/Classic -kick in the original pattern. Also, LFO depth + speed can do a lot of crazy stuff.

- Hageir bbb

Undocumented Mute and Pattern selection trick:

It says in manual that if you enter the mute screen and hold function you can cue up several mutes/unmutes that activate when you release the function button. What it doesn't say is that once you cue your mutes/unmutes you can then press the mute button again (while still holding function) to exit the mute screen, your cued mutes don't activate at this point. However when you return to the mute screen your cued mutes are still there and ready to go. What I use this for is to cue up my mutes for the next part of a track, exit the screen, tweak parameters like crazy, then quickly press function + mute and all the cued mutes/unmutes kick in right away.

This works in a similar way with the pattern selection also. If you hold down the bank button (A,B,C,D...) then press function, then release the bank button, then release function, the available patterns will remain selectable until you choose one (instead of just a couple of seconds) or press the exit button. I always found it hard to change patterns if i was tweaking the knobs but not anymore!!

- EagleRoad bbb

We all know that by pressing function + classic/extended button reload the current kit unedited, a great way of back to a known place after some heavy tweaking session. But the interesting thing is that if you got some free running LFOs they retriggers at the time you press those buttons, so you can use that to set the phase of the free runnings LFOs of a running set. Since "hold" LFO mode is free running too it works in this mode as welll as in "free" itself.

I achieved some cool rythmic fx by doing that along a pattern, so this could be another of the legions of live performance tools that elektron machines delivers, intentionally or not!

- Anselmi

Ghost Note variations using Parameter Locks:

Cool trick if you ever p-lock the MD's volume and other parameters that gives your beat ghost notes.

During a jam you can hit the classic / extend button to remove the p locks of the ghost notes to give a defined roll. Basically it brings out the ghost notes as solid notes. Hard to describe in words. But it switches up your drum programming a bit if you wanta throw in little excentuated fills. Tap back and fourth between classic and extended to snap different drums out and go back to your regular programming.

- NLDJ

Switching Scenes in Ableton Live with the Machinedrum:

1. Setup MD as master, Live as Sync'd slave.
2. Set up a midi machine channel on your MD. This channel will be present in all patterns.
3. Set the midi channel on this midi machine to be the lowest available midi note number for pattern A01. Next midi note number for pattern A02, etc.
4. With Pattern A01 open, and midi mapping activated in Live, select the first scene clip button in Live. Hit the Midi Machine track button on MD, linking this midi note to scene 01 in Ableton.
add one step to the midi machine track, on the SECOND step (not the first!)
5. Click one of your clips in the row of the first scene, then select all the clips in this row together. Go into tip details view and, in the launch options panel, select Legato ON, Quantization - 1/4, Follow Action - 0.0.1, and in the left box below that, select the down arrow.
6. Duplicate this scene row.
7. In the duplicated row, select all the clips on this row together as before, and turn off the down arrow in the box in launch options.
8. Repeat all these steps for the next rows of scenes, using the next pattern on MD for each, with the next midi note. Yes, you duplicate each scene. Two rows per scene. The second row never has midi mapping.

Now, what happens when you set this up like this? You change pattern on the MD, and live changes to the next scene. All MD patterns can have a matching Live scene and you will never have to think about which Live scene to change to. The reason for the duplicated scenes and other settings mentioned is just a way round a problem that otherwise occurs.

Set up in this way, what happens is:
Change MD pattern on first beat, then on second step of bar, Live receives scene change message, Live is now on standby; ready to change on next beat (not bar, because of 1/4 + 0.0.1 setting) then on second beat of bar, Live changes to next (duplicate) clip, and because legato is on, the loops fire off in their correct alignments with the MD.

In practice, this means (counting the beats in bar) :
1(MD beat), and 2(Live beats), and 3 (all together!) and 4....
Works a treat! ...

You may sometimes need to use BLANK dummy live clips, with no legato, and other clips with quantization on 4 bars to trigger Live clips that contain longer sequences when needed. Try this trick with 1 bar loop before moving on to more complicated uses.

- Grain

Back To Top

General

Little dots next to Kit names in the Load Kit screen?

That means that that kit (with a dot) has no pattern assigned , and therefore the Machinedrum shows you which kits are unused....

- Ed Beukers list

Did I see Elvis?

Today, when I have push the on button, I have seen an easter eggs with Elvis and this sentence "the machinedrum is a nice piece of gear" or something like this. It was very fast and when I try to turn off, and turn on, the easter egg doesn't appears anymore !!!

I have send a mail to elektron and the respond "we don't know about that"... With a big smiley at the end of the mail :)

- onosendai list

Serial Number = Machinedrum number?

I would like to know if the white sticker on back of my Machinedrum is the serial number. If it is how do I know if the machinedrum is one of the first 200 units with the bad 9 twist knobs. This is the number on the sticker d20400357-45. So would this unit be 357 or 45?

- fuentes925

I believe its 357. Mine is 544.

– endlessnessisticman list

Using the Compressor:

With short release times the compression just lets go sooner after the sound to be noticed (not unlike the release in the reverb). The longer the time, the more noticeable the effect after the sound). The compression is right there, but the effect does not carry to the empty spaces.

What you're trying to achieve with your compressor is increasing the "volume" of your mix without increasing the output levels. What you want to do is add body to your mid-ranges and tighten your bass while bringing down your highs into the mix (I hope this is making some kind of sense, so far). As compression will affect everything in the mix, many recommend applying compression first and later applying eq (where you will bring back some of those highs lost in compression).

On a related note, I recently took my Machinedrum to a studio to help a friend do some tracks. He's been a sound engineer for years now and commented on how the Machinedrum's compressor felt weird (not bad, just different). I've also felt this sometimes, while trying to compress minimal techno tracks and trying to achieve a sort of warehouse feel. If this is what you're trying to achieve yourself, then also let the reverb be big in the mix (with a lot of low freq, and little hi freq. so that it gets "lost" after you compress it).

- sr minimo list

It took me a while before I got to grips with the compressor. This is what I did:

1. Put a handclap with loooooooong decay on beat 2 and 4. Quite low volume, I'd say about 40/127.
2. Kick drums on beat 1,2,3 and 4. Max volume.
3. Go to the compressor, lowest possible value for triggering compression, maximum compression ratio.
4. Minimum attack time, maximum decay time.

Start the pattern, lower the decay time until you hear the compressor start pumping. Play around with the rest of the controls for the compressor. This made me understand a bit more of how the compressor in the Machinedrum works.

- janne g'son berg list

To be totally correct, I think the Machinedrum does not have a multi-band compressor, so it is always the whole spectrum that is compressed.. But the side-chain let you filter the signal that will be used to decide the amount of compression to be applied. So if you use only hf, the compressor will not react to the bassdrum and over-compress your track.

- m-.-n list

Tempo syncing the LFO's on Machinedrum and mnm:

You should have noticed by now that the power-of-two LFO values correspond to tempo subdivisions on the machines. So 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 and 127 (not 128, oddly) correspond to different tempo subdivisions on both machines. On the mnm, this can be multiplied by the mult parameter as well (so with mult at 2, an LFO value of 2 becomes 4, 4 becomes 8, etc.). So long story short... With mult set at 1, the LFO values should be the same on both machines. And if you're using a power of two, they should be tempo-synced in one way or another as well.

Chiasticon - bbb

Pops and crackles:

I sometimes have little pops coming out of Machinedrum. But I know these are coming by Machinedrum reacting to electricity network. If I turn the light off at my bathroom, I will get a pop. It would be nothing, but it gets annoying because neighbors light-switches also make my Machinedrum pop!!! Just to clear; the nonfunctioning thing here is the electricity network of my house (it's an old house).

-toni bbb

The Machinedrum should not make crackle and pops, only certain cereals. First update to os1.30, then see if the pop goes into the delay. Also do the basic strip-down test - disconnect all cables (MIDI included), use another power outlet, preferably in another house, see if the behavior is the same. If it continues, contact support.

- Daniel, Elektron

The clicks that I have complained about are caused by large and fast changes in the filter cutoff. If the cutoff frequency makes a big jump too quickly [either because of 1) a parameter lock, or 2) an LFO] it will "Pop" (often randomly and unpredictably). Elektron have confirmed that this is the way a filter will behave on any instrument and it cannot be corrected. That's just the way a filter is.

- machinedrum99 list

Cases:

Maybe try an old trumpet case too. I know a used trumpet case fits my virus a tabletop perfectly. And for around $30 u.s. used. Check with whoever sells used orchestra instruments for school bands and Orchestras. Old beat up cases can be cheap but sturdy.

- jmundo list

Any photography store will have nice hard plastic flight cases for around 50-75 bucks.

- cryogenick list

I think I'll save up for a pelican case. They are pricey at around $200, but they are advertised as indestructible and airtight, and I figure that it is worth protecting an instrument like this completely. Their model 1500 is a good size comes in silver plastic that would look nice with the Machinedrum, and it uses that "pick and pluck" foam so that you can get the perfect fit. Camera shops carry these, and www.pelican.com has dimensions and photos. Also check http://www.all-pelican-cases-4-less.com

- jvs list

I got a case I'm really happy with: the pelican 1500. As hard as it is to spend money (around $130-150) on a case rather than more gear, anybody with an Machinedrum knows it's worth protecting. If you're not familiar, pelican cases are advertised as indestructible and are completely air tight (if you change altitude you have to open the purge valve to release the vacuum inside!). The 1500 size gives you plenty of room around the edges of the Machinedrum, and once you pluck out the foam you don't need the machine sits in there nice and snug. My Machinedrum's cardboard box has had it. Since I got a case I've been traveling more with the Machinedrum, never give a second thought about tossing it around. It can be propped up within the case for playing at a better angle and keeping it off yr buddy's bar where someone is waiting to spill on it :)

- jason vernon starnes list

I heard DAP makes a microphone case which matches the Machinedrum exactly.

- yvobogers list

I got my case for $25 from Loewe's Hardware. Home Depot has similar "adjustable" tool cases with foam packing. Groovy.

- W. Brent Latta list

I use a Flightkit! Machinedrum fitting fine and I still got space enough for all the cables and power supply. There some cheaper ones mad out of leather, but also the Aluminum, which look better.

- privat_joy list

I use an Don Skeller SN4 camera bag with some custom cut gray packing foam to transport my machinedrum (and either a nord micro modular or an evolver)... it took about a half hour to cut the foam just right to fit in the bag and hold everything, but it fits the machinedrum and everything else perfectly now. The bottom and sides even have ceramic inserts to avoid puncture damage! The bag itself was 70 bucks or something, and is made locally in Seattle. I'm not sure if they're available everywhere or just a local thing.

- Damon Menne list

Replacing the power supply:

The replacement machinedrum power supplies are listed on http://www.elektron.se/products.php?sStatus=mdAccessories page. It is not the most obvious place to look I know!

- Eddie Higginson list

Removing the knobs and data encoder:

So, during one of my coding breaks, I finally decided to do it: I took a flathead screwdriver to the knobs of my Machinedrum in order to modify and replace them with more comfortable counterparts.... I have found that it is, in fact, possible to remove the knobs very easily using a flathead: just place the screwdriver flathead right underneath the lip of the knob below where it almost meets the surface of the faceplate, and use a gentle twist motion to pop the knob upward.

Be aware that a small washer/nut sits inside the knob, to keep its base elevated up and away from the faceplate when it is on the unit, so that friction never is a problem when turning the knob. Don't lose the washer, it will fall out when you remove the knob! You will want to hang onto these after you mod your knobs and want to replace them onto the unit.

As for the large selector wheel knob, that is also removable - and has a hidden feature underneath: an LCD contrast adjuster! I have been wanting a darker contrast on my Machinedrum since I bought it... and now I am in heaven.

I highly recommend you use a non-abrasive "padding" that sits "sandwiches" your screwdriver and the faceplate of the unit (and the plastic knob), so you don't scratch or nick/dent the plastics or the surface of the metallic faceplate.

I will post photos I have taken of my findings, along with more detailed instructions on my website soon at www.soundwithin.net - just wanted to spread the news that it is, in fact, a reality... you can mod the Machinedrum knobs very easily!

Just be forewarned: I am not sure if this voids any warrantee: make sure you know absolutely what you are doing and if you will still be covered before attempting such a thing yourself....

- Adam Watson list

Be VERY CAREFUL when removing the big selector knob. Mine really didn't want to come off so I wiggled it back and forth and kinda forced it... and ended up almost ripping a piece off of the mainboard rather than just removing the knob. To fix it I had to re-crimp the connector (not sure what the proper technical term is). I'm pretty certain that if I'd wiggled a bit more it would have been much worse. Anyway, it was a *BAD* situation. Luckily I got it sorted out and no permanent damage was done. I also got my contrast properly adjusted

– Mind Mechanic list

The knob is plastic as we all know. It encoder shaft is the same material. The shaft is about 1/3 moon (like in the sky) shape sticking out about 3/4 inches(1.5 cm?). The knob has a corresponding hole to fit the moon. Just grip and pull slowly straight up, don't pull any force to the side. It's snug and smooth. I wouldn't do this too many times. You'll probably wear down the hole and shaft since they are the same material. Slide it back on with one finger smoothly.

- endlessnessisticman list

Classic to Extended Mode tip:

Have you guys and girls noticed that when you are in classic mode and you a pattern playing that has different kit in extended mode and you switch to extended mode while Machinedrum is playing you get a fabulous fill-in sounds and
something unpredictable beauty? Some times it's just modulating noise and sometimes it's cool electronic sounds. I love that feature and it's a shame that you cannot write it in songs. :(

- Toni Ahvenainen list

Test Mode info:

About the test mode, all of the buttons and encoders should just do some kind of action. They light up leds corresponding to the latches activated by the keys/encoders. And the first four buttons have the special functions of lighting up/turning off all the leds and pixels on the display, just to be able to test them quickly. It's not intended to make so much sense to end users without guidance.

- Daniel @ Elektron

Reference

Useful Links:

Unofficial Elektron users forum:

http://www.elektron-users.com/

Elektron Yahoo Group & Mailing List:

http://launch.groups.yahoo.com/group/elektron-users/

Official Elektron Machinedrum Site:

http://www.machinedrum.com/

Another unofficial Elektron users forum:

http://phpbb-host.com/phpbb/index.php?mforum=electron

Performance based software for the Machinedrum:

http://www.strangegizmo.com/products/emptymagic/

Windows XP Machine Editor:

http://www.xs4all.nl/~avg/madillion/

Mac OSX based Machinedrum Editor:

http://www.cs.camosun.bc.ca/~c0262447/software/

Comparisons of Machinedrum to the original TR808 and TR909:

http://www.pixelem.fi/muut/md/

Shifty's Machinedrum page (has list of machine pitches):

http://www.gweep.net/~shifty/machinedrum/

Shifty's MD Tuning Reference tables as Word documents (courtesy Future Image bbb):

http://www.twango.com/media/futureimage.machinedrum/futureimage.10013

http://www.twango.com/media/futureimage.machinedrum/futureimage.10012

Pictures of a disassembled Machinedrum:

http://www.zerozillion.net/md/

Machinedrum demos:

http://www.erekutro.com/md/

Machinedrum UW Software Editor:

http://www.bl-project.com/Ivity.html

Machinedrum Delay time values:

```
1   = 1/128  3   = dotted 1/64
2   = 1/64   6   = dotted 1/32
4   = 1/32   12  = dotted 1/16
8   = 1/16   24  = dotted 1/8
16  = 1/8    48  = dotted 1/4
32  = 1/4    96  = dotted 1/2
64  = 1/2
127 = 1 bar approx
```

- Robert Krueger list

Retrigger values corresponding to note length:

```
127 --> 4 retrigs per beat (i.e. 16th)
117 --> 5 / beat
109 --> 6 / beat (i.e. 16th triplet)
101 --> 7 / beat
96 --> 8 / beat (i.e. 32nd)
90 --> 9 / beat
85 --> 10 / beat
81 --> 11 / beat
77 --> 12 / beat (i.e. 32nd triplet)
64 --> 16 / beat (i.e. 64th)
52 --> 20 / beat
44 --> 24 / beat (i.e. 64th triplet)
32 --> 32 / beat (i.e. 128th)
```

- Legofriendly

SYSEX Error codes:

For the Machinedrum there are 4 possible error codes:

-1 length error
-2 checksum error
-3 memory full/position out of range
-4 version error

- Nils

Pitch mappings for the ROM machines:

The 3 steps for a semitone mentioned in the manual is not entirely right.

PTCH freq note freq note

-64 110.0 hz (110.0 hz) A2
-62 115.5 hz (116.5 hz) A#2
-59 124.0 hz (123.5 hz) B2
-57 130.2 hz (130.8 hz) C3
-55 137.4 hz (138.6 hz) C#3
-52 147.5 hz (146.8 hz) D3
-50 154.9 hz (155.6 hz) D#3
-48 163.6 hz (164.8 hz) E3
-45 175.6 hz (174.6 hz) F3
-43 184.4 hz (185.0 hz) F#3
-41 194.6 hz (196.0 hz) G3
-38 208.9 hz (207.7 hz) G#3
-36 219.4 hz (220.0 hz) A3
-33 232.2 hz (233.1 hz) A#3
-30 246.6 hz (246.9 hz) B3
-27 260.4 hz (261.6 hz) C4
-24 276.4 hz (277.2 hz) C#4
-21 293.5 hz (293.7 hz) D4
-18 309.9 hz (311.1 hz) D#4
-15 328.9 hz (239.6 hz) E4
-12 349.2 hz (349.2 hz) F4
-9 368.9 hz (370.0 hz) F#4
-6 391.4 hz (392.0 hz) G4
-3 415.6 hz (415.3 hz) G#4
0 438.7 hz (440.0 hz) A4
3 464.5 hz (466.2 hz) A#4
6 493.3 hz (493.9 hz) B4
9 520.8 hz (523.3 hz) C5
12 552.8 hz (554.4 hz) C#5
15 586.9 hz (587.3 hz) D5
18 619.8 hz (622.3 hz) D#5
21 657.8.hz (659.3 hz) E5
24 698.4 hz (698.5 hz) F5
27 741.4 hz (740.0 hz) F#5
30 782.9 hz (784.0 hz) G5
33 831.2 hz (830.6 hz) G#5
36 877.7 hz (880.0 hz) A5
38 924.2 hz (932.3 hz) A#5
41 991.7 hz (987.8 hz) B5
43 1041.5 hz (1046.5 hz) C6
45 1099.6 hz (1108.7 hz) C#6
48 1180.4 hz (1174.7 hz) D6
50 1239.8 hz (1244.5 hz) D#6
52 1308.7 hz (1318.5 hz) E6
55 1404.7 hz (1396.9 hz) F6
57 1475.0 hz (1480.0 hz) F#6
59 1557.1 hz (1568.0 hz) G6
62 1671.5 hz (1661.2 hz) G#6

- daswesen bbb

Machinedrum EQ Frequencies:

40Hz - 10
60Hz - 18
80Hz - 23
100Hz - 28
150Hz - 37
250Hz - 47
300Hz - 50
500Hz - 60
1000HZ - 73
1500Hz - 80
1800Hz - 83
2000Hz - 86
2500Hz - 90
3000Hz - 93
3500Hz - 96
4000Hz - 98
4500Hz - 101
5000Hz - 103
6000Hz - 106
7500Hz - 110
10000Hz - 115
12000Hz - 119
14000Hz - 121
16000Hz - 124

- SaunaSound

Default Machinedrum MIDI CC Chart:

Mid Base Channel	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
	BD	SD	HT	MT	LT	CP	RS	CB	CH	OH	RC	CC	M1	M2	M3	M4
Param1	16	40	72	96	16	40	72	96	16	40	72	96	16	40	72	96
Param2	17	41	73	97	17	41	73	97	17	41	73	97	17	41	73	97
Param3	18	42	74	98	18	42	74	98	18	42	74	98	18	42	74	98
Param4	19	43	75	99	19	43	75	99	19	43	75	99	19	43	75	99
Param5	20	44	76	100	20	44	76	100	20	44	76	100	20	44	76	100
Param6	21	45	77	101	21	45	77	101	21	45	77	101	21	45	77	101
Param7	22	46	78	102	22	46	78	102	22	46	78	102	22	46	78	102
Param8	23	47	79	103	23	47	79	103	23	47	79	103	23	47	79	103
AM Depth	24	48	80	104	24	48	80	104	24	48	80	104	24	48	80	104
AM Rate	25	49	81	105	25	49	81	105	25	49	81	105	25	49	81	105
EQ Freq	26	50	82	106	26	50	82	106	26	50	82	106	26	50	82	106
EQ Gain	27	51	83	107	27	51	83	107	27	51	83	107	27	51	83	107
Filter Base Frequency	28	52	84	108	28	52	84	108	28	52	84	108	28	52	84	108
Filter Width	29	53	85	109	29	53	85	109	29	53	85	109	29	53	85	109
Filter Q	30	54	86	110	30	54	86	110	30	54	86	110	30	54	86	110
Sample Rate Reduction	31	55	87	111	31	55	87	111	31	55	87	111	31	55	87	111
Distortion	32	56	88	112	32	56	88	112	32	56	88	112	32	56	88	112
Volume	33	57	89	113	33	57	89	113	33	57	89	113	33	57	89	113
Pan	34	58	90	114	34	58	90	114	34	58	90	114	34	58	90	114
Delay Send	35	59	91	115	35	59	91	115	35	59	91	115	35	59	91	115
Reverb Send	36	60	92	116	36	60	92	116	36	60	92	116	36	60	92	116
LFO Speed	37	61	93	117	37	61	93	117	37	61	93	117	37	61	93	117
LFO Amount	38	62	94	118	38	62	94	118	38	62	94	118	38	62	94	118
LFO Shape	39	63	95	119	39	63	95	119	39	63	95	119	39	63	95	119

- Filament bbb

Back To Top

On a more personal note, if this guide (or any of my other guides) has helped you in your music making, please consider a small $1 donation via pay pal to the email address below. Even a dollar here and there really helps me and my family out more than you can realize. Thanks, and I hope you find this guide useful.

Donate

Like Share 892 people like this. Sign Up to see what your friends like.

Peace and beats,

Tarekith
Tarekith@Gmail.com

I'm the owner of Inner Portal Studio, a Seattle-based facility with over 10 years experience providing quality mastering and mixdowns of electronic music for producers around the world. I have been writing, releasing, performing and DJing electronic music of all genres for over 20 years, and currently I'm one of the few independent artists with music for sale on Addictech.com. You can find my blog, original music and DJ mixes, as well numerous audio production related tutorials available for free at http://tarekith.com.

Feel free to pass this document on as you see fit, though I ask that you do not modify it from it's current form, and give proper credit. If you see any errors, please let me know so I can correct them asap.