

KENZO PRODUCTIONS:

FROM LOOP TO FULL SONG

An Arrangement & Production Guide

INTERMEDIATE / EARLY ADVANCED GUIDE

A guide by Kenzo Productions

A Personal Note Before We Begin

I've put a lot of work into creating this course, because I often hear a lot of producers struggle with exactly what I used to struggle with. Arrangement isn't talked about nearly as much as sound design or mixing, but it's often the actual difference between a loop that stays a loop and a track that people finish listening to. If any of this saves you the time it took me to figure it out the hard way, it's done its job.

Before We Start

Almost every producer can make a loop. Fewer producers can turn that loop into a song that holds someone's attention for two or three minutes. That gap — between a good loop and a finished, arranged track — is what this guide is about.

This isn't a theory lesson. It's the practical side of production: what to actually do with your loop once it exists, how to build a track around it that grows, breathes, and keeps someone listening, and how to shape all of that around the artist and genre you're working with.

I've made the mistakes covered in this guide myself, more than once. Some of what follows is exactly what I wish someone had told me earlier. Let's get into it.

POINT 1 Know Your Sections and Their Job

Every section of a track has a role to play. The intro's job is to grab attention and set the tone. The verse's job is to hold space for lyrics or melody without competing for attention. The hook's job is to be the moment someone remembers. The bridge's job is to offer a break from the pattern before the final hook hits harder than ever.

If you don't know what a section is supposed to do, it's very easy to make every section sound roughly the same — same energy, same density, same instruments. That's usually what makes a track feel flat, even when every individual sound in it is great.

Before you start arranging, it's worth asking yourself, section by section: what is this part actually for? Once you know the answer, the arrangement choices become much easier to make.

TRY THIS

Open one of your finished beats. Without listening, just look at the section markers in your DAW. Could you tell, just from looking at the arrangement, which part is the hook? If not, that's worth fixing.

It helps to think about each section as answering a different question for the listener. The intro answers "should I keep listening?" The verse answers "what is this song actually about, or what's the vibe?" The hook answers "why will I remember this?" The bridge answers "is there more to this song than repetition?" If a section isn't clearly answering its question, it's usually because it's borrowing another section's job instead of doing its own.

EXAMPLE

A verse that's just as loud and busy as the hook is answering the wrong question — it's trying to be memorable instead of being a comfortable space for the vocal or melody to sit. Pull it back, and let the hook be the one moment that answers "why will I remember this."

POINT 2 The One-Element Rule

When you move into a new section, change one or two things — not everything at once. Add a hi-hat pattern. Drop the bass out for a bar. Bring in a vocal chop. Small, deliberate shifts feel intentional. Changing every single element at once tends to feel jarring, like the song restarted rather than progressed.

This is one of the simplest rules in this whole guide, and also one of the most broken. It's tempting to throw in a completely new set of sounds every time a new section starts, especially when you're excited about an idea. Resist that. Save the big new elements for moments that actually need a big impact — usually the hook.

A useful way to check yourself: count how many things change at the exact bar where a new section starts. If the answer is more than two or three, it's worth asking whether all of those changes are necessary right there, or whether some of them could be spread across the next few bars instead. Staggering changes, rather than stacking them all on one downbeat, almost always sounds more natural.

TRY THIS

Pick a transition in one of your beats where a lot changes at once. Try removing one or two of those changes and moving them two or four bars later instead. Listen to both versions back to back.

POINT 3 The Hook Has to Be the Peak

Your hook should sound fuller, louder or more energetic than your verse. If your hook and your verse sound roughly the same, the hook isn't doing its job, no matter how good the melody or lyric is on top of it.

This doesn't always mean adding more elements. Sometimes it means widening the stereo image, adding a harmony layer, bringing the drums up in energy, or simply making sure the hook has something the verse doesn't — a new synth line, a bigger low end, extra percussion. The point is contrast. The listener needs to feel the lift.

It's worth checking this with fresh ears, because it's easy to lose perspective after hours in the same session. Play your verse, then your hook, back to back, and honestly ask whether the second one actually feels bigger. If they feel roughly equal, the hook needs more, or the verse needs to pull back further than it currently does. Sometimes the fix isn't adding to the hook at all — it's stripping more out of the verse so the contrast becomes obvious.

EXAMPLE

This Was Just a Taste

You've just read the opening of *From Loop to Full Song*. The full course goes much deeper — all 10 points in full, plus how to match your arrangement to different genres, how to shape a beat around a specific artist's vibe with real examples, how to make your intro instantly grab attention, a glossary, and a full quick-reference checklist to run through your own tracks.

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kenzoproductions.co.uk/courses.html

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