

EQ Cheat Sheet - The Ultimate Mixing Blueprint

Here's a table with suggestions for EQ'ing common instruments, plus some helpful EQ tips.

Notes:

- If you're unfamiliar with equalizers, or interested in the more technical aspects [read this](#).
- These are suggestions that can be helpful when mixing - but are by no means hard and fast rules.
- "Use your ears" - if something sounds good, then go for it. Use those reference tracks to make sure you're on the right track!
- Really drill down and look for the best boosts or cuts within these ranges depending on your song. These are starting points!

Instrument	Boosts (additive EQ)	Cuts (subtractive EQ)
Vocals	-Between 80-200Hz for added warmth and fullness. -120-600Hz can add vocal presence - 5kHz can also add vocal presence -Add brightness or air at 10 kHz	- Consider high pass filter below 90Hz - 200-250Hz to reduce mud - 7.5-10kHz to reduce sibilance -Low pass filter above 14-15k to remove Hiss
Kick	-80Hz to help low end cut thru mix	-240Hz notch filter to add thump to a kick drum -150-350Hz to address mud -400Hz for even more mud reduction
Snare	-240Hz boost to fatten snare -5kHz can add clean "crack" to snare	-500-700Hz to address 'boxiness'
Toms	-5kHz add attack	-150-300Hz to reduce mud -400Hz for further improvements.
Bass	-80-200Hz for presence	-60-200HZ to reduce "boom" -350-700Hz to address boxiness -Low Pass Filter above 4k
Guitars	-120-250Hz to add warmth -2.5-4kHz for attack -8-12kHz for brightness (acoustic guitar)	-Cuts at <100Hz to reduce mud (or use High Pass Filter, especially at 80Hz) -250-450Hz for additional mud or boxiness -800-1kHz small cuts (acoustic guitar)

Additional Tips for EQ'ing

- As a general rule... [Cut narrow, boost wide](#).
- When EQ'ing, work on the track both SOLO and in the context of the ENTIRE MIX. Solo work is great for catching subtleties, but it's ESSENTIAL to listen to your work as a whole.
- Try to "carve out" frequency spectrums for your individual tracks, especially vocals to make sure they have plenty of room to sit well in the mix.
- Try [EQ'ing in mono](#), this will force you to make sure there's enough separation for the tracks in your mix.
- Discover what frequencies you like (or don't like) and make them your go-to moves for cuts and boosts.
- Every instrument and voice is different... when EQ'ing never assume the same cuts or boosts will always produce the same desired effects.
- Don't EQ if it's not required (unless you're going for a specific sound)... you shouldn't HAVE to EQ everything.
- Harsh frequencies can be discovered by boosting, then "sweeping" to discover what should be cut. Here's a short [tutorial](#) on this technique.
- When in doubt, cut before your boost.
- 'Notch' problematic frequencies.
- Slight EQ changes can go a long way
- Here's a great [Vocal EQ Cheat Sheet](#) you can download for more vocal EQ'ing guidance.
- Here is an awesome [interactive frequency chart](#) to reference if you're ever unsure about a specific instrument (very helpful to you when trying to carve out specific frequencies).
- Make use of High Pass (low-cut) filters to remove low-end mud