

TRANSONIQ HACKER

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EPS Tips and Tricks

by Bill Lewis

Buying a new instrument and reading the manual will, in most cases, give you a foundation for use. But often the more subtle attributes of the board do not become evident until you've lived with it. Occasionally, the obvious is a revelation a year after opening the box. I've lived with an EPS for nearly that long, rereading the manual, exploring and using it regularly. I'd like to share some of my discoveries and suggestions on its effective use.

Guitar Layers

A unique feature of the EPS is its ability to play different layers on down and up strokes of the keyboard. In order to create a more convincing guitar, try sampling a guitar playing chords, *not* the individual strings. Start by recording one sample of a down stroke and a second sample of an up stroke, assigning them to different layers in the same patch. Then make the down stroke a Keydown Layer and the up stroke a Keyup Layer. Now you'll be able to realistically comp by merely playing one note, and you won't have to roll your hands in order to imitate to pick striking each successive string. An added benefit of this method is its use of only one voice, leaving lots of polyphony for other sounds in 20 voice mode.

As an extension of this theory, assign just the down stroke to a patch select button and the up stroke to another. Using these three patches and dominant 9 chords you'll be able to play "guitar" with Sam and Dave. On the fourth "patch," record a sample of a related chord (for example the minor version). With major and minor chord samples in different layers and on alternate patch select buttons, it's possible to play rhythm guitar diatonically from one EPS instrument.

To play a realistic rhythm guitar part with samples of individual strings there are two possibilities. One is using a similar method of assigning the *same* sample to both Keyup and Keydown layers. A gui-

tarist performs one motion to strike a sound. Two strokes equal two sounds. A keyboard player has to strike the keys, pick up his fingers and put them down again to create the same sonic effect. Up and Down layers avoid wasted motion. Just don't forget to roll your hands so all the notes don't sound at the same time.

Another possibility is to create a split with the same sound in the same range on both sides of the split. That way, alternating hands has the same effect as up and down layers, or up and down strumming. (For an excellent book on this and similar techniques, see *Power Play DX* by Steve DeFuria from Hal Leonard Books.)

Piano/Organ Layers

Another effective use of layering is to put related "real" instruments on the same EPS instrument button. This is especially useful when sequencing. For example, I like to keep my rhythmic keyboard sounds together with Electric Piano and B3 Organ in different layers, alternating between them with the patch select buttons. I'd rarely use both at the same time, but if I did, I'd copy the patch to another EPS instrument button and "lock" the copy into the alternate sound, then layer the EPS instruments by double clicking the instrument buttons.

Of course, if you use an alternate patch within a sequence (in other words, a patch other than 00), selecting this instrument will sound patch 00 on the live keyboard. This is an alternative to layering by copying the sound to another instrument button.

You can use this same philosophy with horns; trumpets, trombones and saxophones on the same instrument. However, since these instruments are likely to play together, use one layer to create a split where each tenth of the keyboard has a different sound. "Real" brass

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