

ARRANGEMENT CHECKLIST

Structure & Flow

Building a journey that keeps the listener engaged from beginning to end.

- ☐ Save a new version before making major arrangement changes.
- ☐ Does the arrangement suit the intended audience (club, streaming etc.)?
- ☐ Is the intro interesting enough to keep people engaged until more elements start?
- ☐ Does every section have a clear purpose?
- ☐ Is there a logical progression from start to finish?
- ☐ Does the track finish naturally, or does it end abruptly?
- ☐ Does the final major section introduce enough change?
- ☐ Have you tested adding a section such as a cooldown, breakdown, or pre-drop?

Energy & Dynamics

Keep listeners engaged through contrast and movement.

- ☐ Does the track build naturally to a climax?
- ☐ Are there any drops in energy that feel unintentional?
- ☐ Is there enough tension and release throughout the arrangement?
- ☐ Does the energy match the BPM and intended vibe of the track?
- ☐ Have you allowed enough space for the groove to breathe?

Variation & Interest

Avoid sounding repetitive while maintaining a consistent identity.

- ☐ Does each section introduce or remove something meaningful?
- ☐ Does the arrangement evolve naturally without relying on constant new elements?
- ☐ Do repeated or long sections evolve through automation, variation, or layering?
- ☐ Does something meaningful change often enough to maintain attention?
- ☐ Have you removed any unnecessary repetition?
- ☐ Have you introduced so many changes that the track has lost its identity or consistency?
- ☐ Have you used fills or ear candy where needed without overcrowding the arrangement?

Transitions

Help the listener move naturally between sections.

- ☐ Are transitions smooth and intentional?
- ☐ Do fills, FX, risers, impacts, or automation support the transitions?
- ☐ Have you automated filters, reverbs, delays, or volume where appropriate?
- ☐ Do transitions feel exciting without becoming predictable?
- ☐ Do the transitions fit the vibe and energy of your track?
- ☐ Could brief breaks in the kick, bass, or groove create more contrast or impact?

Final Arrangement Check

Listen like you are a fan, not a producer.

- ☐ Does the arrangement keep your attention from start to finish?
- ☐ Is there any section you're tempted to skip?
- ☐ Compare your arrangement to 2-3 reference tracks.
- ☐ Have you tried removing or adding a 16-32 bar section to see if it flows better?
- ☐ Listen without looking at your DAW. Write down the first 3 moments that lose your attention.
- ☐ Test the arrangement on different sound systems. Does anything drag or lose your attention?

Before You Move to Mixing

Finalize your track before getting it mixed

- ☐ Leave the track for a few days and revisit the arrangement with fresh ears.
- ☐ Ask another producer specifically about the arrangement (not the mix).
- ☐ Make a final pass looking for unnecessary sections, repetitive moments, and pacing issues.
- ☐ Remember: a great arrangement often needs fewer ideas, not more.