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Kanye West needs no introduction. He 's definitely someone you want to emulate when it comes to hip hop music production. In this guide, inspired by our Sample Focus YouTube video, well break down a beginner-friendly way to create a Kanye West-style sampled beat using Ableton Live.

Step 1: Digging for SamplesSampling starts with finding the right source material. Kanye is known for digging deep into obscure genres, especially soul, funk, and gospel. Start with inspiration: Look for songs that spark creativity. You can use SampleFocus.com for royalty-free sounds. Example: The featured sample in the video comes from T-Fire's "Say a Prayer", a 1979 Nigerian track discovered randomly on YouTube.

Step 2: Loading the Sample in AbletonOnce youve found your sample:Import the track: Drag the audio file into Abletons Simpler plugin.Choose Slice Mode: Set Simpler to Slice Mode. This cuts the sample into smaller pieces (slices) based on transients (peaks in volume). Adjust sensitivity to control the number of slices.Tip: Lower sensitivity creates larger slices, while higher sensitivity creates more granular cuts.

Step 3: Manipulating the SampleKanye's hallmark sound often involves pitch-shifted, chopped vocals or melodies.Transpose the Sample: Adjust the pitch using Simplers transpose settings. For this track, the pitch was raised by three semitones for a bright, chipmunk-like quality.Playback Speed: Experiment with the tempo to match the feel of your beat. For this project, the final tempo settled at 100 BPM.

Step 4: Adding EffectsLayer Dirty and Clean Chains-Use an Audio Effect Rack to create parallel chains. On one chain, apply effects like Erosion and Redux for gritty textures.Keep the second chain clean for balance.EQ and Delay: Add a low-pass EQ and slight delay for atmospheric depth.Vinyl Vibe: Use tools like Abletons Vinyl Distortion or a third-party plugin to emulate a vintage, wobbling sound.

Step 5: Crafting the Drum PatternDrums play a critical role in any hip-hop track:Kick and Snare: Lay down a basic pattern, ensuring a punchy kick and snare combination.Hi-hats: Add rhythm with varied hi-hat velocities for a human feel.Layered Snares: Use multiple snare samples, each processed differently (e.g., stereo delay) for a fuller sound.

Step 6: Adding the BassUsing a simple bass preset like Airfair Bass in Ableton:Match the bassline to the root notes of your chopped sample.Use low-pass filtering to keep the bass tight and not overpowering.

Step 7: Arrangement and MutingCreate Sections: Record your loops into Arrangement View, crafting intro, verse, and chorus sections.Mute Automation: Add mute automations to allow moments of silence, perfect for highlighting rap punchlines or transitions.

Step 8: Polish and FinalizeAdd a Mastering Chain with EQ, compression, and a limiter to glue the track together.Listen back to ensure the sample sits well in the mix.Dont forget to visit SampleFocus.com for high-quality drum and instrument samples. You can download three free samples weekly or upload your own sounds to earn more credits.

Final WordsProducing a Kanye-inspired sampled beat is all about creativity and experimentation. Start with a great sample, add your unique touch, and refine it until it resonates with your own style. The best part? It doesn't matter if youre using Ableton or any another DAW you can still use this tips. Ableton Live 12.1 is now in public beta and gives you quick, precise control over sampling and pitch tuning. This update makes it easy to shape and manipulate sounds improving the workflow in both studio and live performance environments. Well cover what stood out to us focusing on features like real-time pitch correction and dynamic sampling. But first, check out the full and detailed video review on the Sample Focus YouTube channel.

Drum Sampler: Instant Sound ShapingThe Drum Sampler brings quick control to one-shot samples. Adjusting start, hold, and decay is simpleyou can shape a sounds tail in seconds. Toggle between Trigger mode (one hit, full sample) and Gate (only as long as you hold the note), and use built-in effects like Stretch, FM, and Ring Modulation to add instant depth.Youll spend less time fiddling and more time producing thanks to velocity-based modulation.

Key Features:Basic Controls: Adjust Start and Length to control sample timing, while Hold and Decay allow for precise tail adjustments.Playback Modes:Trigger: Plays the entire sample upon activation.Gate: Plays the sample only while the key is pressed.Built-In Effects:Stretch: Adjust grain amount and speed for unique sample textures.Loop & Pitch Envelope: Set loop points and add pitch variation with Attack for added creativity.Pro Tip: Use Noise mode with Filter settings to transform basic samples into layered elements like hi-hats or snares.Velocity Modulation:Velocity variations give a natural feel by automating parameters like filter cutoff, attack, and effects intensity for a dynamic touch to your drums.Auto Shift: Pitch Perfect, InstantlyAuto Shift is Abletons built-in pitch correction that lets you nail down vocal or sample pitch within your session. Sync it to your project scale, or go custom. Set Smooth for natural shifts, or crank it up for an auto-tuned vibe. Youve also got formant control and MIDI input for creating harmoniesjust send in a MIDI chord progression and get synced harmonies instantly. Your pitch adjustments stay on track, and everything stays within the workflow.

Key Features:Scale Detection: Autoshift matches your projects scale, or you can manually select scales and toggle specific notes.Smooth Control: Toggle Smooth on or off for natural pitch transitions or full auto-tune effects.MIDI Integration:Connect MIDI to control harmonies and pitches directly in Poly mode (up to 8 voices). Experiment with chord progressions for unique harmonies.Formant Shifting:Tweak the Formant to achieve vocal richness and add unique character to your vocal lines.Magnifying Glass: Precise Edits, No FussThe Magnifying Glass tool makes it easy to get specific notes or velocities. Filter by velocity to tweak the quietest or loudest notes, or select all of a certain pitch to make changes (without affecting everything else). Editing is faster, and your mix sounds consistent.Velocity Filtering: Select notes within a velocity range, like 1-90, for targeted adjustments.Pitch Filtering: Focus on specific notes, such as all C notes, for group edits or pitch shifts.

Final WordsThe Ableton Live 12.1 update is available for free to Live 12 users with its full new set of tools focused on flexibility in processing and reshaping sounds. With drum sampling and pitch correction as a stand out these updates give you intuitive, faster control to keep you more focused on your music.

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