

From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 1. By DJ Tech

Hi there, everybody. My name's DJ Tech, and I'm here to take you on a journey from your bedroom to the stage.

Like anything you do in life, you have to have solid foundations for whatever you're doing to succeed. If you don't have solid foundations, you're going to have problems down the road.

So, I'm going to lay out some basics that I think you're going to need.

We're going to be talking totally digital. We're not going to be talking about vinyl.

The first thing you need is a controller. Now, there are loads of different controllers out there. Some are fully onboard, some aren't, and some you need a laptop to work with.

I personally recommend an all-in-one controller. Two of the best out there are Pioneer's XDJ-RX3 and Denon's Prime 4.

Pioneer is what I use and it's what I recommend. The reason for that is exactly the same reason I use Technics 1210s when I DJ using vinyl.

Almost every club in the world will be using these as a standard: Technics for vinyl, Pioneer for digital.

In other words, if you get used to the Pioneer layout now, when you're starting out, you'll be able to walk into a club and recognise where everything is. You'll instantly feel a lot more comfortable.

Having said that, one of the advantages of the Denon Prime 4 is that you can have four decks instead of two, which is really quite handy. And I'll be honest with you, the Prime 4 has one of the best brains for controlling out there.

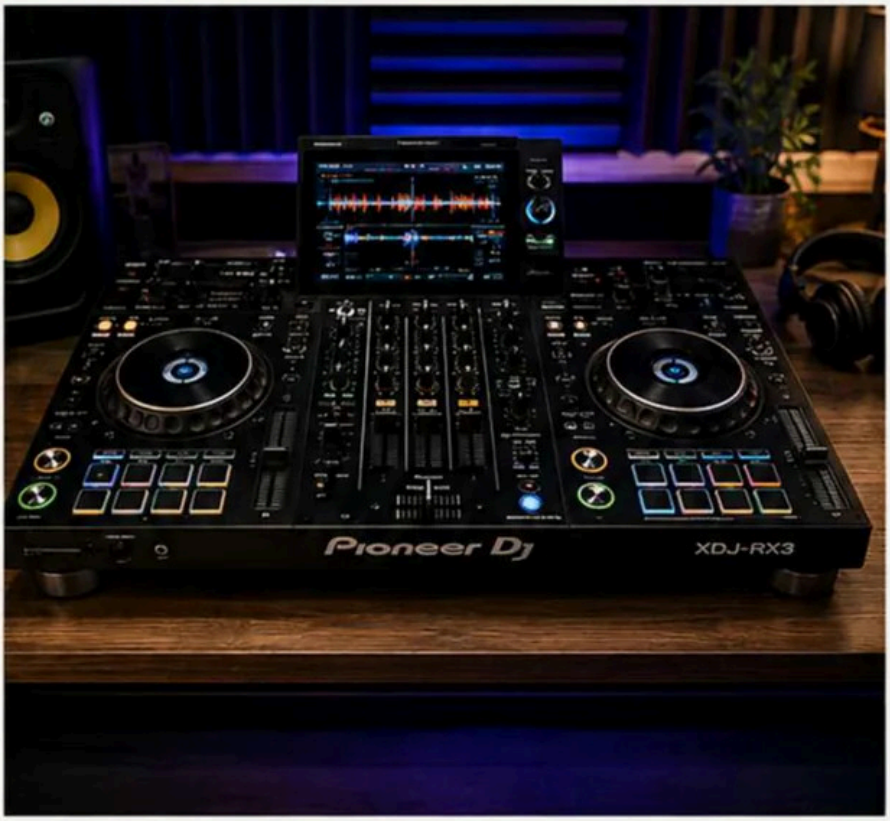
But the Prime 4 is a little bit more expensive.

If you're looking at playing out, I recommend the Pioneer. If you're just looking at staying at home in your bedroom, I recommend the Prime 4.

Right, so we'll carry on and imagine that you've got your controller. The next thing you need is a decent set of speakers.

1. CONTROLLERS

YOUR FOUNDATION



The first thing you need is a controller. There are loads of different controllers out there. Some are fully on board, some aren't, and some you need a laptop to work with.

I personally recommend an All-In-One controller. The two best out there are Pioneer's XDJ-RX3 and Denon's Prime 4.

We're talking totally digital here. We're not talking about vinyl.

ALL-IN-ONE CONTROLLERS

Two of the best out there...

PIONEER XDJ-RX3



- 2 Decks
- Industry standard in clubs worldwide
- Same layout as Pioneer club equipment
- Get used to it now, walk into any club and know exactly where everything is
- Feels more natural and comfortable when you're playing out
- My personal choice and recommendation

DENON PRIME 4



- 4 Decks instead of 2
- Best brain for controlling in my opinion
- Brilliant features and performance
- A little bit more expensive

WHICH ONE SHOULD YOU CHOOSE?



LOOKING AT PLAYING OUT?

I recommend

PIONEER.

It's the industry standard in clubs worldwide, just like Technics are the standard for vinyl.

OR



STAYING IN YOUR BEDROOM?

I recommend

DENON PRIME 4.

More decks, amazing features and the best control brain out there.

TOP TIP: If you're starting out, get used to the Pioneer layout. It will make you feel right at home in any club.

From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Getting Your Setup Together

As far as speakers go, you can go two different ways. You can either have active speakers, which means they've got power amplifiers built into the speakers, which is what I recommend, or you can get separate speakers and amps and do it that way around.

If you're looking for a recommendation, what I use are M-Audio BX5s. They've got Kevlar drivers on them, so they're really tough and really good, and I've never had a problem with mine.

The next thing you're going to need is a decent USB memory stick. What I recommend is a company called SanDisk. They're really good, really reliable, and that's exactly what you need when you're out in front of hundreds of people.

Once you've got all that equipment together, the next stage is streaming.

It's really important to stream, whether you actually want to put yourself out there on the internet or you just want to stick to the bedroom, because you need to record yourself and what you do.

It's one of the best ways of learning. You can actually see what you're doing and, when you make a mistake, see what you did wrong as well as hear what you did wrong.

That will mean that eventually you hopefully won't make that same mistake again.

For your streaming setup, what I recommend is two cameras. I personally go for Logitech C920s. They're really high-quality cameras, they're robust and they really work.

I've taken them out, I've taken them to parties, and I use them at home when I stream. They're absolutely first class and fully recommended.

Next up, you're going to need a sound card. This isn't some big, complicated thing; it's a small bit of kit and you can get them fairly cheaply.

What you're going to need to do is take the output from your controller into the input of the sound card. You then connect that to your laptop so you can bring your controller's audio into your streaming or recording software.

They're relatively cheap. You can find basic ones for around a tenner or less online. Not that I'm advertising Amazon!

2. SPEAKERS & ESSENTIALS

SOUND & STORAGE

Once you've got your controller, these essentials will complete your setup and get you ready to stream, record and play out with confidence.

These are the items I personally recommend and use in my own setup.

ACTIVE SPEAKERS (RECOMMENDED)



M-AUDIO BX5

- Active speakers with built-in power amplifiers
- Kevlar drivers – tough, reliable and high quality
- Excellent sound and perfect for home or studio use
- My personal recommendation – I've never had a problem with mine

USB MEMORY STICK (RECOMMENDED)



SANDISK USB STICK

- Reliable, fast and built to handle your entire music library
- A good quality USB stick is essential when you're playing out
- I recommend SanDisk – really good and really reliable

TOP TIP: Always have a spare USB stick with you. Better safe than sorry!

STREAMING & RECORDING ESSENTIALS

Everything you need to stream, record and improve your sets.

WEBCAMS (RECOMMENDED)

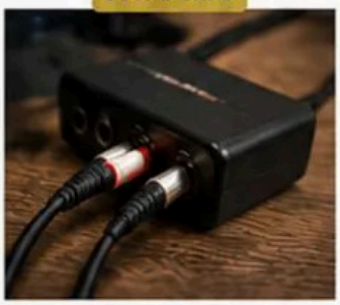


LOGITECH C920

- Two webcams for multiple angles
- High quality, reliable and robust
- I've taken mine out to parties and use them at home – absolutely first class

USE TWO ANGLES:
SIDE DJ (side view)
& SKY (overhead view)

SOUND CARD



SIMPLE SOUND CARD

- Small, simple and not expensive (around £6.50)
- Connect output from your controller to the input of the sound card
- Then connect the output of the sound card to your laptop input
- Brings your controller audio into your streaming software

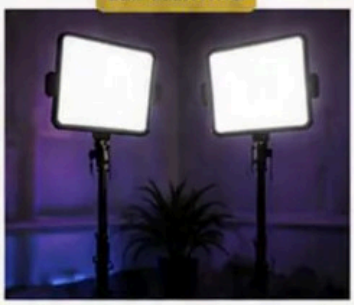
ACOUSTIC PADS



ACOUSTIC PADS

- Blocks of acoustic padding that go on the walls behind your speakers
- Helps improve the sound in your room
- Reduces unwanted echo and reflections

LED LIGHTING



LED LIGHTS WITH STANDS

- Improves the quality of your video
- Fairly cheap (around £25 for a pair)
- Essential for a better streaming setup

SET IT ALL UP AND TEST

Once you've got all this equipment together, set it all up, do a test and make sure everything works: sound, video and lighting.



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Building Your Streaming Setup

The other thing I'm going to recommend is some acoustic pads. These are basically blocks of acoustic padding that go on the walls behind your speakers and can help with the sound in your room.

Next, you're going to want some lighting. You can get that fairly cheaply as well. You can pick up a pair of decent LED lights with stands without spending a fortune.

This is important because good lighting will give you much better-quality footage from your cameras.

Right, so that's all your equipment sorted. Now all you need to do is set it all up and do a test.

As far as software for actually streaming and recording your sets goes, I recommend OBS Studio. It's free, it's really easy to use, and it's a solid and stable platform.

You can go directly to the official website and download the latest, up-to-date, all-whistles-and-bells version of the program, but I recommend you check your plugin compatibility first, and I shall explain why.

When OBS Studio brought out version 27.2.4, it was the last version I used where all the third-party plugins I relied on worked correctly with the program.

With later versions, some older plugins may not work unless their developers have updated them to support newer versions of OBS.

One of the plugins I recommend looking at is Advanced Scene Switcher. This allows you to automate how and when your different scenes and cameras change while you're recording or streaming.

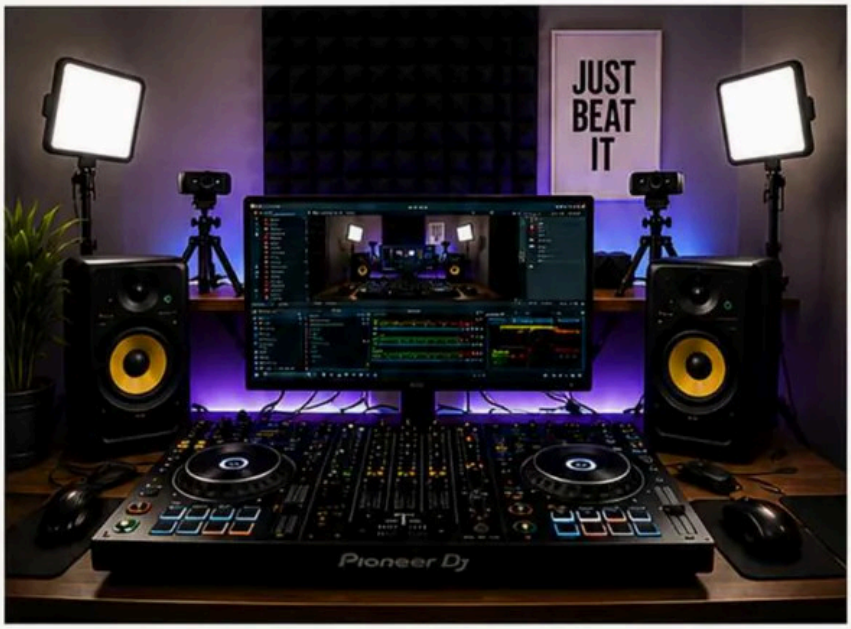
OBS basically gives you two important functions for what we're doing here: recording and streaming.

And remember, you don't actually have to stream anywhere.

You can simply press record and, once everything is set up, record all your sets privately. That alone is an incredibly useful tool for learning.

3. BEDROOM 2 STAGE

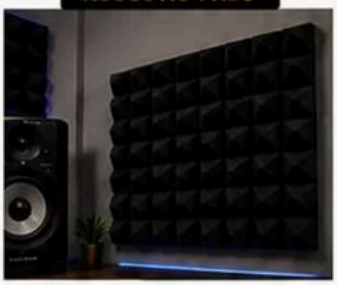
BUILDING YOUR STREAMING SETUP



Now that you've got all your equipment, it's time to put everything together and create the best possible environment for your streaming and recordings.

A good setup now will save you problems later and help you focus on what matters – your mixes.

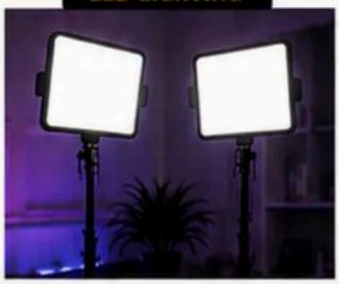
ACOUSTIC PADS



Blocks of acoustic padding that go on the walls behind your speakers and help improve the sound in your room.

- Reduces unwanted echo and reflections
- Gives you a cleaner sound
- Improves overall audio quality in your recordings and streams

LED LIGHTING



Good lighting gives you much better-quality footage from your cameras.

- Pick up a pair of decent LED lights with stands
- Fairly cheap (around £25 for a pair)
- Essential for a professional looking stream or recording

SET IT ALL UP



Once all your equipment is sorted, set everything up and do a test.

- Check your audio levels
- Check your camera angles
- Check your lighting
- Make sure everything works together smoothly

TEST EVERYTHING



Do a full test before you go live or start recording.

- Test your audio
- Test your video
- Test your lighting
- Test your recording and streaming

TOP TIP: A little time spent setting up and testing now will make a massive difference to the quality of your streams and recordings.

SOFTWARE: OBS STUDIO

OBS Studio

OBS Studio is my recommended software for streaming and recording.

- It's FREE
- Really easy to use
- Solid and stable platform
- Perfect for both beginners and advanced users

Download the latest version from the official website: **obsproject.com**

VERSION COMPATIBILITY

When OBS Studio brought out version 27.2.4, it was the last version I used where all the third-party plugins I relied on worked correctly with the program.

With later versions, some older plugins may not work unless their developers have updated them to support newer versions of OBS.

IMPORTANT:
Check your plugin compatibility before updating to a newer version of OBS.

RECOMMENDED PLUGIN: ADVANCED SCENE SWITCHER

Advanced Scene Switcher

This powerful plugin allows you to automate how and when your different scenes and cameras change while you're recording or streaming.

- Automate scene changes
- Automate camera switching
- Makes your streams look more professional

WHAT OBS DOES FOR YOU

REC

RECORDING

Record all your sets privately. This is an incredibly useful tool for learning and improving.

STREAMING (OPTIONAL)

You don't have to stream anywhere. You can simply press record and save your sets for yourself.

REMEMBER: The most important thing is to practice, experiment and have fun. Record your sets, listen back, learn and keep improving!

BEDROOM 2 STAGE



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Your First Set

Now you're ready to go.

Get your music on, do your first set and, most importantly, watch it back afterwards.

When you finish your first recording in OBS, find the folder where your recordings are being saved. OBS gives you a default recording location, although you can change this in the settings to wherever you want your sets stored.

Open your recording and watch the whole thing back.

Don't just listen to the mix. Watch what you were doing as well.

Look at your hands. Look at what you were doing on the controller. Listen to your transitions. Pay attention to anything that didn't sound quite right and then look at what you were actually doing when it happened.

That's the whole point of recording yourself.

Everybody makes mistakes when they're learning. The important bit is understanding why you made the mistake, because once you understand that, you can work on stopping yourself from making it again.

And that's where the journey really starts.

You've got your basic equipment, you've got your controller, your speakers, your cameras and your recording setup.

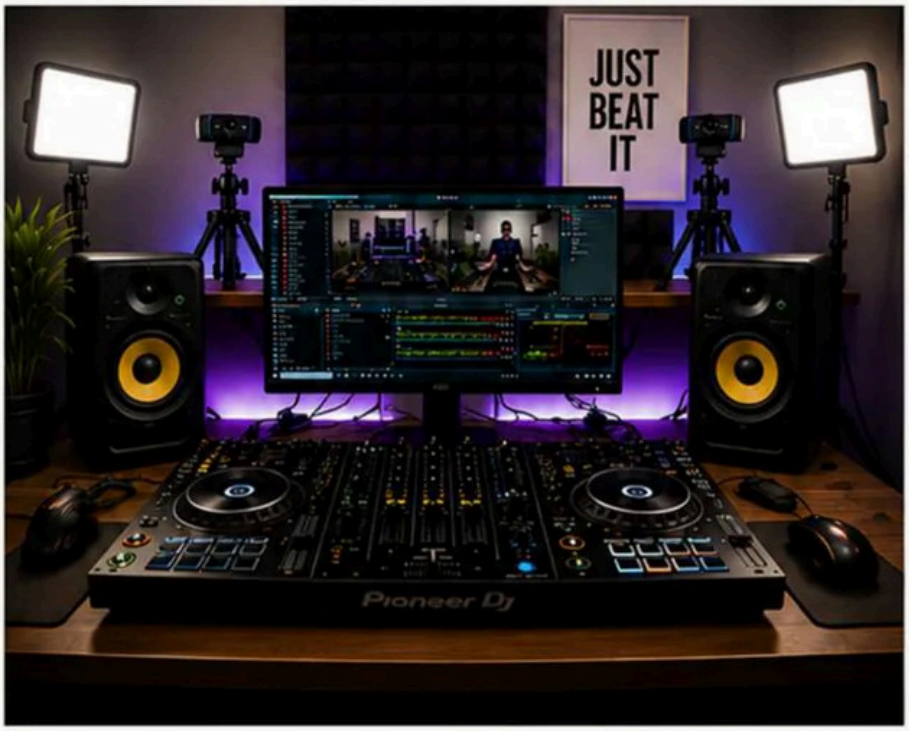
Now it's time to start using it properly, learning your equipment and developing your skills.

From the bedroom to the stage, you've got to start somewhere.

Tech

4. YOUR FIRST SET

YOUR JOURNEY STARTS NOW



Now you're ready to go.

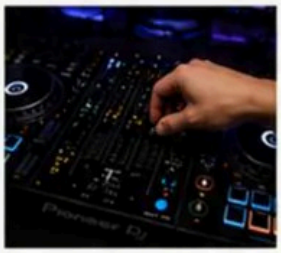
Get your music on, do your first set and, most importantly, watch it back afterwards.

Recording your sets is one of the most valuable tools you have as a DJ – it's where you learn, improve and start to take things seriously.

From the bedroom to the stage, you've got to start somewhere.

YOUR FIRST SET – WHAT TO DO

1 DO YOUR SET



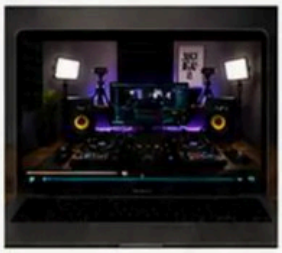
Get your music on and do your first set. Don't worry about being perfect – just enjoy the process and get comfortable.

2 FIND YOUR RECORDING



When you finish recording in OBS, find the folder where your recordings are being saved. OBS has a default location, but you can change it in settings.

3 WATCH IT BACK



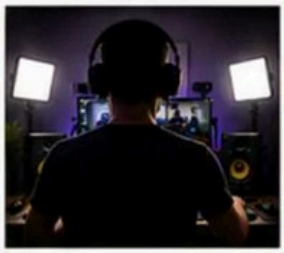
Open your recording and watch the whole thing back. Don't just listen to the mix – watch what you were doing as well.

4 ANALYSE EVERYTHING



Look at your hands.
Look at what you were doing on the controller.
Listen to your transitions.
Pay attention to what didn't sound right.

5 LEARN & IMPROVE



Understand why you made any mistakes.
Once you understand that, you can work on stopping it happening again next time.

WHY IT MATTERS

Everybody makes mistakes when they're learning. The important bit is understanding why you made the mistake, because once you understand that, you can work on stopping yourself from making it again. That's where the journey really starts.

WHAT YOU'VE GOT

CONTROLLER



The heart of your setup. Learn it inside out.

SPEAKERS



Hear your mix clearly and make better decisions.

CAMERAS



Capture your performance from different angles.

AUDIO SETUP



Get clear, clean audio into your recordings.

RECORDING SETUP



Record, review and improve every time.



PRACTICE. REVIEW. LEARN. IMPROVE.

THAT'S HOW YOU LEVEL UP.



REMEMBER: The most important thing is to practice, experiment and have fun. Record your sets, listen back, learn and keep improving!



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 2. By DJ Tech

Networking

As far as networking goes, this is the really easy bit. Where are your favourite places that you go to right now that you'd love to play? Make a list of where you'd love to play if you got the chance.

Also make a list of the local parties in your area. It might be a pub having a little knees-up on a Thursday, or a regular promoter doing parties in halls. Something that happens more than once: monthly, weekly, three or four times a year. That's the type of promotion I'm talking about.

That's where you really need to get in. Get yourself a residency in a pub or a little local party. That is what you're going to use to get a set at the parties you really want to play.

Talk to a promoter, give him a USB and say, 'Oh yeah, I'm resident at the Red Lion downtown, and at another little thing that happens three times a year.' It goes a long way. It proves you're not walking straight in from a bedroom wanting a set with no background. Even a pub once every three months counts: you're a resident at that event.

Also, always go to the parties with a pocket full of USBs. And the thing is, you're just going to have to write the money off. Every hobby has costs, and this is a cost, but it's a really important cost. You're just going to have to swallow it.

You'll probably end up giving most of them away to party heads who love what you're doing, and that's not a bad thing because they're going to go away and they're going to be playing your DJ sets to all their friends. All of a sudden, all of their friends are going to want copies of that. Then, all of a sudden, you've got a group of people or groups of people out there that have heard of you and have heard your music, heard your DJ sets.

So all of a sudden, when you do start playing at parties, there's going to be people that already know who you are and have already heard what you've done and are going to want to support you in your set that you're playing that night.

I must have given away thousands of tapes, CDs, minidiscs, and USBs over the past 30-plus years, because I've always believed in giving your music away. You don't have to charge for your music; just let the people have it. If they love it, let them have it. That's just so important in my morals.

So, I've always had that mindset, and to be fair, from my point of view, it's worked. It's worked for me because when you turn up at a party and you're like—I'll give you for instance—I used to turn up on Woodside, the Woodside estate in Luton, and I used to walk through the hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of cars to the centre point where everyone was meeting.

And when you do that walk and every other car is playing one of your DJ sets, there is no better buzz than that apart from actually playing on the night. It's incredible, a proper goosebump moment when that sort of thing happens. So, it is worth giving your music away for nothing. Don't think of it as a loss; think of it as you spreading your sounds, which is exactly what you're doing. And yeah, it's the way I went, and I fully recommend it.

1. NETWORKING

GET KNOWN



As far as networking goes, this is the easy bit. Make a list of the places you go to now that you'd love to play.

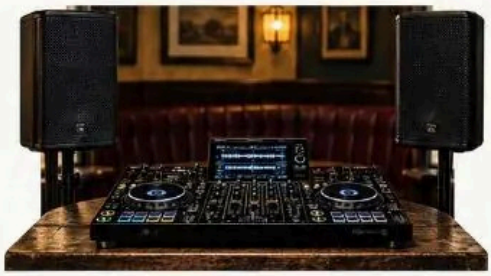
Then list the regular local parties: a pub's Thursday knees-up, nights in halls, anything happening weekly, monthly or three or four times a year.

That's where you need to get in. A residency at a little local party helps you get a set at the parties you really want to play.

GETTING YOURSELF OUT THERE

Local nights, residencies and a pocket full of USBs

START WITH A RESIDENCY



Talk to a promoter, give him a USB and say, 'I'm resident at the Red Lion downtown, and at another little thing that happens three times a year.' That goes a long way.

It proves you're not walking straight in from a bedroom wanting a set with no background. Even a pub once every three months counts. You're a resident at that event, and that helps push your name forward.

A POCKET FULL OF USBs



Always take a pocket full of USBs. Write the money off. Every hobby has costs, and this is an important one.

You'll give plenty away to party heads who love what you do. They'll play your sets to friends, who'll want copies too. When you start playing out, people will already know you, have heard your music and want to support your set.

THE WOODSIDE BUZZ

I must have given away thousands of tapes, CDs, minidiscs and USBs over the past 30-plus years. If people love it, let them have it. That's important in my morals.

I used to turn up on Woodside, the estate in Luton, and walk through hundreds and hundreds of cars to the meeting point. Every other car would be playing one of my sets. There's no better buzz apart from playing on the night. A proper goosebump moment. It's worked for me, and I fully recommend it.



TOP TIP: Don't think of it as a loss. Think of it as spreading your sounds.



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 2. By DJ Tech

Promoting Yourself

Promoting yourself and getting yourself DJ sets out and about.

The first thing you really need to do is to build yourself your own archive.

The best way to do this is to record your DJ sets. What I recommend you do is in OBS, if you go to Settings in OBS and then go to the General tab. Then in the Output section, pick "Automatically record when streaming." What I do from this point is I upload the video to YouTube, and I convert the audio to MP3 and upload that to Mixcloud.

What this does, this gives a future promoter the ability to hear your DJ set if they want to listen to it on Mixcloud, or actually physically see you do the set on YouTube.

Now whether you upload these to YouTube and Mixcloud and make archives on both of them or not, you're going to need the video. You're going to need to keep the videos because you need to look back at the videos after you've heard your set and played your set and see where the mistakes are that you made, because every single set is going to have mistakes in or things you could have done just slightly differently that would have been so much better.

And you aren't going to work those out unless you watch your videos back. It is the number one way of getting better: by listening to your mixes back in the car on Mixcloud or something, or physically looking at the video clips to see where you went wrong or see where you could improve—not necessarily have gone wrong, but see where you can improve it.

What I'd suggest you then do is make a playlist on Mixcloud and a playlist on YouTube which are just your DJ sets, nothing else at all.

The reason for this is when you've got a few videos there and a few DJ sets there—say you've got 10 of each there—what you can then do is you can then send a promoter the playlist. So every single thing there is just you mixing, and that'll give them a good feel of what you're doing, what you play, how you play, and everything else all in one hit.

And to be fair, that's what a promoter wants. He wants to have a bunch of things that you've done, and he wants to be able to skip through them as quick or as slow as he wants and have the ability to see more than one at the same time, or hear more than one at the same time.

The other thing after you've done say 10 sets that I highly recommend is you go to one of these USB companies and get your little logo printed or your name printed on the side of the USB. Then, fill that USB up with all the sets that you've done up to date.

So you've got 10 on there—20 doesn't matter, but say you got 10 on there—get them on the USB, and that's what you hand to the promoter when you're in the club or at the party and you're after a set, after looking at a set.

On the USB, when you do that, what you want to do is have a text document on there with your two addresses: your Mixcloud address and your YouTube address. So, just in case the promoter wants to have a little sniff around and see what's going on, they can go straight to your page.

Make sure they're both the playlist so they go straight to exactly the right place where they need to go. Now, if they want to backspin it and then have a look at what else you're doing, they can do that, but it takes them straight to where they need to be, which is how it's got to be. It's got to be as easy and as quick and as sharp as you can get.

2. PROMOTING YOURSELF

BUILD YOUR ARCHIVE



The first thing you need is your own archive. Record your DJ sets.

In OBS, go to Settings, then General. In the Output section, pick 'Automatically record when streaming'.

I upload the video to YouTube, convert the audio to MP3 and upload that to Mixcloud. A promoter can hear your set or physically see you do it.

RECORD IT. WATCH IT. SHARE IT.

Give promoters a proper feel for what you do

WATCH YOURSELF BACK



Keep the videos whether you make online archives or not. Every set has mistakes, or things you could have done slightly differently that would have been so much better.

You won't work those out unless you watch it back. Listen in the car on Mixcloud, or look at the video to see where you could improve. Not necessarily where you went wrong, but where you can improve. It's the number one way of getting better.

PUT YOUR NAME ON IT



After, say, 10 sets, get your name or logo printed on a USB. Fill it with the sets you've done. Ten, 20, it doesn't matter.

Hand it to a promoter in the club or at a party when you're after a set. Add a text document with your Mixcloud and YouTube addresses. Make both links go straight to your DJ-set playlists.

They can have a sniff around and backspin it to see what else you're doing afterwards.

JUST YOUR DJ SETS. NOTHING ELSE.

Make a playlist on Mixcloud and one on YouTube containing only your DJ sets. Once you've got a few, say 10 of each, send a promoter the playlists. They get what you play and how you play, all in one hit.

That's what a promoter wants: a bunch of sets they can skip through as quickly or slowly as they like, with more than one to hear or see.

TOP TIP: Take them straight to the right place. Easy, quick and sharp.



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Setting Up OBS

Setting up your OBS can be tricky at first.

The first thing you need to do is plug the output of your controller with the cable, the other end of it going to the input of your laptop. Once you've done that, get a tune going on your controller, open up your OBS on your laptop, and see if you've got an input signal.

When you open OBS, smack-bang in the centre of the application, you have an audio mixer. On the left-hand side of the audio mixer, you've got written which inputs are available. What you gotta do, you gotta find out which one is the input from your controller.

When doing this, be careful you don't choose any input with a signal, because one of the signals coming in will be from the microphone from your laptop, which you definitely don't want.

The way of working out which signal you've got is simply by dropping the volume of the music on your controller and keep talking. The signal will pick up your voice talking if it's coming out of the microphone—the incorrect microphone from your laptop.

So what you then have to do is carry on searching for another input signal, which will be the direct input signal from your controller.

Once you've located the correct input from your controller, what I advise you do is delete all of the others so you've just got one. You're just looking at one control signal on your screen; it's just so much easier.

Once you have the sound input correct, the next thing you need to do is plug your webcams in and locate both of them.

First, in OBS, you need to pick a source for your webcams. This will be under the heading "Video Capture Device". The next thing you need to do is name the device. If you've got one to the side of you, call it "side cam" for instance. Call it what you want, but that's what I do.

Right, the next thing to do is turn the volume off on your audio mixer from your webcams. You're not interested in any webcam audio because the quality is just not good enough.

So after muting the videos, you've now got good audio and good HD video cams coming through. The next thing you're going to want is possibly some content.

3. SETTING UP OBS

YOUR OBS SETUP



Setting up OBS can be tricky at first. Plug the output of your controller into the input of your laptop with the cable.

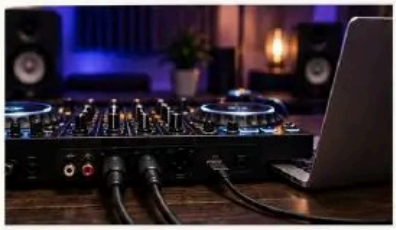
Get a tune going, open OBS and see whether you have an input signal.

Smack-bang in the centre is the audio mixer. The available inputs are on its left. Find the one coming directly from your controller.

GOOD AUDIO. GOOD HD VIDEO.

Get the sound right, then add your webcams

FIND THE RIGHT INPUT



Don't just choose anything with a signal. One may be the laptop microphone, which you definitely don't want.

Drop the music volume on your controller and keep talking. If the signal still picks up your voice, that's the laptop mic. Keep searching for the direct controller input.

Once you've found it, I advise deleting the others. Then you're looking at one control signal on your screen. It's so much easier.

ADD YOUR WEBCAMS



Once the sound is correct, plug in your webcams and locate both of them.

In OBS, pick a source under 'Video Capture Device'. Then name the device. If one is to the side of you, call it 'side cam', for instance. Call it what you want, but that's what I do.

Next, turn the webcam volume off in the audio mixer. You're not interested in webcam audio because the quality isn't good enough.

MUTE THE WEBCAM AUDIO

After muting that audio, you've got good sound and good HD video cams coming through.

The next thing you might want is some content: video clips and things you can mix in with your set. That's where we're going next.



TOP TIP: Your audio comes from the controller. Turn the webcam audio off.

From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 2. By DJ Tech

OBS Content & Visual Effects

When I say content, I mean things like video clips and things like that that you want to mix in with your set.

What I advise with video clips is: don't make them very big. Try and keep the file sizes down to under a hundred megabytes if you can. If you can't, just chop the clip up in a video editor and make it smaller. Or you can reduce the quality, which I don't recommend because you're going to want everything as high quality as possible all the time.

It might mean you need to do a bit of work, but it's worth it for the end result. The last thing you want, if you put a video clip in that's too big, is for it to interfere with the entire streaming process. It will make your video lag, it will make things stutter, and possibly stutter video-wise or audio-wise; and that's the last thing you want.

The other thing to do straight away, before anything else, is when you load your video clip up, make sure you mute it. It is so important that you do that immediately, the very first thing you do, because the last thing you are going to want to do is get halfway through your set and it has gone really well, then you put a video clip on and the audio is still on on the video clip and it just ruins the whole set.

That has happened to me four or five times over the last 20 years or so and it is an absolute nightmare. So, the very first thing you need to do is mute the video. Whatever clip you put in there, it does not matter what it is, anything, always mute it straight away so there is no interference ever.

The next thing that you might be interested in is special effects. Now, there's loads of different programs out there; you take your pick. I personally go for the free ones normally, but there's this one company that does a free one that you can use right now, free. But what they do, they also sell an add-on because if you like what you got, if you buy the add-on, it is absolutely off the scale. It really is, and I fully recommend this company. It's the one I use.

The company is called Nest Drop and it's really, really good, and what I fully recommend.

It's an independent company that runs on its own. All you have to do is fire it up and then go to OBS and pick "Window Capture" from the drop-down menu in Sources. And don't forget, first thing you do, adding anything at all, is always mute it. Straight away, just mute it. Doesn't matter whether there's anything coming out of it or not. Mute it anyway so there's never any interference.

So now you've got the audio running perfectly, you've got two webcams running perfectly, you've got video clips in there running and muted perfectly, and you've also got a special effects unit in there running perfectly.

Now the special effects program, you can continually change, or you can pick a random, just keep playing everything type of thing. It does go fairly deep. You can choose to make your own palettes up so it plays your own templates. Pick your favourite ones, put them all in a little playlist, and then tell it to just play all of those but randomly.

What it also does, it also plays to the beat of the music, so it's sound to light and it will just work with your sounds. It has worked really well; I really like it.

4. OBS CONTENT & EFFECTS

CONTENT & EFFECTS



By content, I mean video clips you can mix in with your set. Try to keep files under 100 megabytes if you can.

If not, chop the clip up in a video editor. You can reduce quality, but I don't recommend that: you want everything as high quality as possible.

A clip that's too big can make the stream lag or the video and audio stutter. The extra work is worth it.

VIDEO CLIPS & SOUND-TO-LIGHT

Keep it running smoothly — and mute it straight away

MUTE IT!



The very first thing you do when loading a clip is mute it. Immediately.

You don't want a set going really well, then to put on a clip with its audio still running and ruin the whole thing. It's happened to me four or five times over the last 20 years or so. An absolute nightmare.

Whatever the clip is, always mute it straight away. No interference, ever.

NEST DROP



There are loads of effects programs. Take your pick. I usually go for the free ones. The one I use and fully recommend is Nest Drop.

They do a free version and sell an add-on. If you like what you've got, the add-on is absolutely off the scale.

It runs independently. Fire it up, then choose 'Window Capture' in OBS Sources. When you add anything, mute it straight away, whether anything is coming out of it or not.

VISUALS THAT PLAY TO YOUR BEAT

Now you've got audio, two webcams, muted clips and special effects running. You can keep changing the effects or choose a random, keep-playing-everything type of thing.

It goes fairly deep. Make your own palettes, pick your favourites, put them in a little playlist and play those randomly. It also plays to the beat: sound to light that works with your sounds. It's worked really well for me. I really like it.

TOP TIP: Anything you add: mute it straight away. Mute it anyway!



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 2. By DJ Tech

Prepping Your Set

Prepping your DJ set before a party should be fun. I normally sort out six tunes: two to start with, two in the middle, and two at the end. That's really where I base my structure on.

Having said that, the first two tunes are totally up for negotiation on the night at the time because you have to read the crowd when you get there, and what you've organised in your playlist might not fit the moment that you go on.

So what I generally do is sort out the first two, two in the middle, and two at the end. They all sing together; they're what I call singing mixes where they're absolutely perfect. They're the three mixes I'm really looking forward to playing, but the first tune will always be determined on the crowd at the time, every time.

Then what I normally do is just fill up the USB with other tunes that I really love to play, but I'm not really worried what order or where I drop them. They're all really, really good tunes that I really want to play if I could, and there's usually far too many of those to fit in a set. It just gives you a big case of tunes to choose from that you make up at the time in the right moment.

By doing it this way, you've now got the confidence that you know you've got two absolute bangers that are hand in glove at the beginning, in the middle, and the end. So, all you have to do is fill the spaces.

This is how I set things up. However, sometimes it goes right out the window and you start with something completely different from a completely different playlist, and your set goes off in a totally different direction than you were expecting. But that's the excitement of DJing: finding out what happens at the time.

What I also tend to do is I tend to have two or three different sets on the USB. So I'll call one set the set I'm playing at, so the name of the party, for instance, Exodus or whatever.

And then I'll have another set next to it that I can dip into if I need to, and another set I can dip into if I need to. Maybe one more towards the drum and bass style, maybe one towards the techno style, and maybe one towards the hard trance style, so I've got three different sets to choose from.

Just because you've organised the set that you want to play, you have to be fluid. You have to be able to just drop the whole idea and move somewhere completely different. Because if it's working on the dance floor, that's great. But if it's not, you've got to do something about that quick sharp. So you might have to do a right hander into drum and bass or you might have to do a left hander into techno. You need to be able to just flick between styles.

And if you've got three different styles on your playlist, three different playlists that are completely different styles, it's just really easy to just drop into something. As soon as you see the dance floor and you think it needs to go a different direction, you can just drop straight into it really easily.

Yeah, the other thing I always do every set is I always have two USBs with me. They've both got exactly the same tunes. They're identical. But if one fails, you've got another one around your neck that you can pull out and drop it in.

Because sometimes USBs just fail. Even if you use really good quality ones, like the ones I've recommended previously, all you can do is get the best you can get and cross your fingers. But if you've got a second USB around your neck, if anything does happen, you can just flip it out, flip your new one in and you're away.

That has happened to me a couple of times over the years, but because of the decent quality USBs that I now use, it happens very rarely.

5. PREPPING YOUR SET

PREP YOUR SET



Prepping your set should be fun. I normally sort six tunes: two to start, two in the middle and two at the end.

They all sing together. I call them 'singing mixes', where they're absolutely perfect. The three mixes I'm really looking forward to playing.

But the first two are up for negotiation on the night. Read the crowd. The first tune is always determined by the crowd, every time.

TWO + TWO + TWO

Six tunes, three singing mixes — and room to move

FILL THE SPACES



Fill the USB with other tunes you love. Don't worry about their order or where you'll drop them. There are usually far too many for one set: a big case to choose from in the right moment.

You know you've got two absolute bangers, hand in glove, at the beginning, middle and end. Just fill the spaces.

Sometimes it all goes out the window and you start from a completely different playlist. That's the excitement of DJing: finding out what happens at the time.

BACKUP!



I always carry two identical USBs. If one fails, there's another around my neck to pull out and drop in.

Sometimes even good-quality USBs fail. Get the best you can and cross your fingers, but have that second one ready.

It's happened to me a couple of times over the years, although very rarely with the decent-quality USBs I use now.

BE READY TO CHANGE DIRECTION

I keep two or three sets on the USB: one named after the party, Exodus for instance, with others to dip into. Maybe drum and bass, techno and hard trance.

Be fluid. Drop the whole idea if you need to. If it works on the dance floor, great. If not, do something quick sharp. You might need a right-hander into drum and bass or a left-hander into techno. Different playlists make it easy to flick between styles when the floor needs it.



TOP TIP: Have your singing mixes ready, but let the crowd decide the direction.

BEDROOM 2 STAGE

From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 2. By DJ Tech

Travelling to Parties + Staying On Site

In a perfect world, you're always going to have someone driving you. I never have anyone driving me ever because I always have to get to the party and get away myself independently.

But having said that, if I had the choice, I would always have someone driving me to a party and back. Always.

Firstly, you can stay in your bubble. If you're not driving, you can stay in your bubble. You can control what happens in your bubble.

So what I do is generally listen to the music I'm going to be playing at the party I'm going to. Just to get me in the mood, and I haven't got to worry about driving because someone else is doing it.

Now the good thing that you can pass on to the driver is free entrance to the party you're going to, if it's a pay party.

"He's my driver, he gets in for nothing."

Everyone else in the motor, there's a good chance you can get a bit of discount for them. They might not get in for nothing, but they may get half-price entrance, so you're all buzzing then.

It also means you can have a drink at the party without worrying about having to drive home. And it means you get the most enjoyable time you can get out of the experience.

Now I drive for a living, so I can't risk my licence in any shape or form ever, because it would mean I'd be unemployed immediately.

So I fully recommend you try and get someone else to drive you every time. At the end of the day, you don't want to be worrying about where you're going or what turning it is; you don't need all of that. Let someone else deal with all of that.

If you can get someone to do it, they get a free entrance, they have a good night out, and they get to drive you to the party and back. Everyone's a winner.

Staying on site

If you get a booking at a festival, happy days. But there are a couple of things you might want to think about. Something I use is a roof tent. They're absolutely banging, they just clip onto your roof bars and you're away.

Another thing you might think about getting hold of is a power bank.

6. TRAVEL & STAYING ON SITE

GETTING THERE



In a perfect world, someone's always driving you. I never have anyone driving me because I have to get there and away again independently.

But if I had the choice, I'd always have someone drive me to a party and back. Always.

You can stay in your bubble. I generally listen to the music I'm going to play to get me in the mood, without worrying about driving.

TO THE PARTY — AND BACK

Stay in your bubble and enjoy the experience

EVERYONE'S A WINNER



At a pay party, the good thing you can pass on to the driver is free entrance: 'He's my driver, he gets in for nothing.'

For others in the motor, there's a good chance of a discount. Maybe half-price. Then you're all buzzing.

It means you can have a drink without worrying about driving home. You don't need to worry about where you're going or which turning it is. Someone else deals with that, gets a good night out and drives you there and back.

STAYING ON SITE



If you get a booking at a festival, happy days. A couple of things you might want to think about:

I use a roof tent. They're absolutely banging. They clip onto your roof bars and you're away.

Another thing you might think about getting hold of is a power bank.

MY LICENCE IS MY LIVING

I drive for a living, so I can't risk my licence in any shape or form, ever. It would mean I'd be unemployed immediately.

I fully recommend trying to get someone else to drive you every time. If you can get someone to do it, they get entrance and a good night out, and they drive you there and back. Everyone's a winner.



TOP TIP: If I had the choice, I'd always have someone driving me there and back.

BEDROOM 2 STAGE

From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 2. By DJ Tech

Rules: Commercial Events vs Free Parties

The rules work slightly differently with commercial events and free parties when playing records.

The commercial events: you're booked, you know you're playing, you just bowl in with your tunes, dump your tunes behind the deck, say hello to the DJ, find a promoter, say hello to the promoter. Nine times out of ten he'll get you a beer. Then start lapping up the vibe that's there and then work out how you're going to change that vibe or make the vibe better than it is.

With free parties, it works slightly differently. The rules are slightly different.

The rule with free parties, my rule, is: keep your tunes in your motor until it's time to play. Simple as that.

There's nothing worse than walking around a free party with a bag of tunes on your shoulder. Everyone's saying, "What time you on? What time you on?" and you end up not playing for whatever reason. There's nothing more embarrassing than that and doing the walk of shame to your car with your records.

I don't like doing the walk of shame. Having said that, I don't play every time, but I don't do the walk of shame.

"Keep your tunes in your motor
until it's time to play."

7. THE RULES

KNOW THE RULES



The rules work slightly differently with commercial events and free parties when playing records.

At a commercial event, you're booked. You know you're playing.

With free parties, my rule is simple: keep your tunes in your motor until it's time to play.

COMMERCIAL EVENTS VS FREE PARTIES

The rules work slightly differently

COMMERCIAL EVENTS



You just bowl in with your tunes, dump them behind the decks and say hello to the DJ.

Find the promoter and say hello. Nine times out of ten, he'll get you a beer.

Then start lapping up the vibe that's there and work out how you're going to change it or make it better than it is.

FREE PARTIES



There's nothing worse than walking around a free party with a bag of tunes on your shoulder.

Everyone's saying, 'What time you on? What time you on?'

Then, for whatever reason, you end up not playing. There's nothing more embarrassing than doing the walk of shame back to your car with your records.

NO WALK OF SHAME

I don't like doing the walk of shame.

Having said that, I don't play every time, but I don't do the walk of shame.

Keep your tunes in your motor until it's time to play. Simple as that.



TOP TIP: Free parties: the tunes stay in the motor until it's time to play.



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 2. By DJ Tech

Writing to Labels

What I suggest you do here is make a list up of all your favourite labels.

Then what you need to do is make a bio up, your own bio, which will be:

Your name

Your stage name

Where you're from

Places you've played at or are playing at at that time

This will be a template letter that you can send to all your favourite labels. All you need to do is add their name to each bio that you send to that particular label. So it's personalised to them, or they think it's personalised to them, but everybody knows people make templates up.

But yeah, make your template up.

In that list, you also need the links to your Mixcloud, the links to your YouTube.

It's not the easiest thing in the world to get hooked into a label to get on their promo list. You have to prove to them that you're worth them sending you their music, and you do that by:

Telling them where you're playing

Telling them what you've done

Telling them how excited you are about their label and their music

And keep your fingers crossed.

"And keep your fingers crossed."

8. WRITING TO LABELS

WRITING TO LABELS



What I suggest is making a list of all your favourite labels.

Then make up your own bio: your name, your stage name, where you're from, and places you've played or are playing at the time.

MAKE YOURSELF WORTH KNOWING

Your bio, your links and the labels you love

MAKE A TEMPLATE



This will be a template letter you can send to your favourite labels. Add the name of the particular label to each one, so it's personalised to them.

Or they think it's personalised to them, but everybody knows people make templates up.

So yeah, make your template.

INCLUDE YOUR LINKS



In that list, you also need the links to your Mixcloud and your YouTube.

Tell them where you're playing.

Tell them what you've done.

Tell them how excited you are about their label and their music.

GETTING ON THE PROMO LIST

It's not the easiest thing in the world to get hooked into a label and onto their promo list.

You have to prove you're worth them sending you their music.

And keep your fingers crossed.



TOP TIP: Your name, stage name, location, gigs, Mixcloud and YouTube links.



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 3. By DJ Tech

Vinyl to digital

Most DJs who started over 30 years ago, I've always played vinyl.

But in the 2000s, digital really is the way forward for me.

It just opens up every single tune that's ever been made that's available for you to play.

I've spent a good 20 plus years going to record shops all over the UK, going through hundreds of tunes and maybe pulling out two or three.

With digital, the whole world is your oyster. Any tune you've ever heard, you can play.

To be totally honest with you, it's a no-brainer to me. I had to convert to digital DJing.

The main reason I converted to digital was after going to five or six different parties and being told I couldn't play because they didn't have any turntables.

On the last party out of that list, I ended up going to the car and getting my USB out of my car, which was just full of tunes of my own making, and just did a live set.

One of my best friends, who's also been DJing for over 30 years—it took me five years to talk him into doing digital because he was so stuck on the vinyl and didn't want to move away.

And now every time I see him play out, I get a really warm feeling that he converted to digital because he's now so happy that every single tune he's ever wanted to play, he can now play.

The best place to download your music as a DJ digitally is what they call a DJ music pool or community.

There are hundreds of them out there, all depending which sort of music genre you're into.

I personally belong to one called Underground Sounds, which is a private group on Facebook.

Underground Sounds is aimed at hard house, hard trance, and techno.What I've found is the absolute best out there.

What I recommend you do is just go onto Google and write the genre of your music with the word "music pool" afterwards.

The way I find music what I want to play is by using an app called Shazam.

When I've identified the tune I want, I then copy and paste it into YouTube to get the exact reference to the tune I want.

Those DJs that are stuck on vinyl and will not move off under any circumstances, they call purists.

My advice is: just let him get on with it and don't worry about it, and don't let them stop you from switching to Digtal.

BEDROOM 2 STAGE

From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 3. By DJ Tech

Vinyl to digital



FROM THE RECORD BOX TO THE USB

Explore the music you love. Find your tunes. Be ready to play.



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

One step further

The next natural stage from DJing is making your own music.

The process I use is I make my music on Ableton Live, get it all ready to go, and when it's ready and you're happy and finished, then send it off to a mastering company to get it mastered.

Many, many ways of doing this. The one I recommend is a company called Ableton Live.

Not only can you make your own music with Ableton Live, you can also use Ableton Live out on a stage or in a club. To play the music you have made. From what I have found, it is the most stable piece of software you can use in a live environment on a stage.

All you need is the software, and everything else you will already have, like a sound card.The process I use is I make my music on Ableton Live, get it all ready to go, and when it's ready and you're happy and finished, then send it off to a mastering company to get it mastered.

By doing this, you will have the best output quality for your performance.

You get yourself ten or more tunes together, all mastered, and play them out live in a set. You go from being a DJ to being a live PA, which is the next natural level to go.

Once you're at that stage, you can start adding things like an APC40, or any midi controller so you can make changes live, including FX.The APC40, which is what I recommend, linked up directly to Ableton on your laptop.It also has a crossfader so you can chop and change in a DJ style throughout your set.

The biggest advantage of doing a live party is no one else can do it. No one else can sound like it, and you own it 100%.

Most DJs who make their own music get them pressed up onto a dubplate and play them live out in their DJ sets. But a live PA is the next level.

So the added advantage is you can add things like a live singer and live artists like instruments, like saxophone, trumpet, guitar, whatever you want.

BEDROOM 2 STAGE

From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 3. By DJ Tech

One step further



MAKE IT. MASTER IT. PLAY IT LIVE.

Your own music, a MIDI controller and a sound that is yours.



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 3. By DJ Tech

Everyone's a DJ

I started mixing back in 1992 \ 93 DJs were royalty and all superstars in my book.

I'm assuming somewhere between 1992 and 93, if you were a DJ You had earned your position.

After you get into grips with the basics at home in your bedroom, the very next thing you had to do was get a residency anywhere.

I was lucky enough to be a regular partygoer at a club called Milwaukee's in Rushden.

The good thing about this club was every headliner in the whole country used to play there: Grooverider, SS, Vibes, Seduction, all of them. The big difference about this club was you could stand right next to the DJ and watch what he was doing as well as hearing what he was doing.

This is where I gained 90% of my techniques for DJing, because being able to see what's going on, as well as hearing what's going on, just makes your learning depth even deeper.

These DJs were the best of the best. It looks like it. A big-eyed raver, but I was there on a mission.

All my mates spent most of their time on the dance floor enjoying themselves, and I spent 80% of my time stood right behind the DJ. Believe you me, I was having as much fun as my friends were on the dance floor. As soon as I got home, I was straight on the decks, practicing, trying out the new techniques I'd witnessed that night. In most clubs, you don't have the ability to stand right next to the DJ, but my advice is to find somewhere you can stand next to the DJ and make that your home.

In the likes of Ray Keith, Nicky Blackmarket Grooverider, DJ SS, and DJ Fat Controller was a godsend. The thing was, they didn't even realize that they were teaching me how to DJ while they were playing their DJ sets. The thing about me is I'm either all in or I won't bother. If I'm doing something, I have to focus 100% on what I'm doing or it's just not worth wasting my time with.

And I never was aiming to be the best, just the best that I can become within myself.

And I think that's the right way forward for everyone.

Nowadays it's so much easier to learn how to DJ because there are so many bedroom DJs out there. Everyone knows three or four bedroom DJs, so what I recommend is link up with them and learn together. By doing that, if one of you learned something, you will learn it. And it just helps push your ability forwards. Four or five other friends always take turns going round to each other's houses. Have a mix, Noreen, and we'll have five tunes each and just go round and round in circles, and it used to be fantastic every single time.

We're doing this. It moves from being a solitary hobby to a community project because you're all on the same tip.

Finding out which bars, which clubs, I've got parties that you want to be involved with. Also, keep your eyes open for sound systems in your town. There will be plenty of sound systems; they're all over the place in every town. You just need to find out which are the ones worthy of following and then start following them, attending their parties, helping out if you can, carrying speakers, doing whatever you need to do to help out, hopefully looking for a set in the future.

BEDROOM 2 STAGE

From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

Part 3. By DJ Tech

Everyone's a DJ



WATCH. PRACTISE. LEARN TOGETHER.

Share techniques, take turns on the decks and find your community.



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

By DJ Tech

FROM GETTING NOTICED TO GETTING BOOKED

Twisted Radio

From this month onwards, we're really trying to focus on twisted radio.

We are starting a show on Sunday evenings at 8pm and inviting all the DJs from the Music Recognition Awards to step up and do a live stream.

As I write this article on Sunday the 22nd of November, I shall be kicking things off with my own set from the Music Recognition Awards as a live stream on Twisted Radio.

All DJ sets will be going via Restream with multiple platforms for the widest reach we can get you.

If you're a DJ and haven't streamed before, we're here to help. So whatever you haven't done before, we can help you do it.

As well as doing a live stream set for Twisted Radio, you will also be gaining knowledge, hopefully, in doing your live streams with other people.

Twisted Official is all about giving the up-and-coming DJ a leg up. A bit of help and a bit of encouragement.

There are many different levels of live streaming. There's your basic, straight from your phone, straight onto the Restream, or straight from the computer, straight onto the Restream. Or you can add things like effects, scenes and video clips, photo montages. There's many, many things you can do, including having multiple cameras and having the cameras change automatically so you don't have to worry about them. We've still the possibility to override it if you would want to add a quick effect.

The main two external effects units I use are called Nest Drop and Photism.

Both of these units give you different styles of visual effects. Plus, I always have one channel with a video running. The only thing about using a video that I should tell you immediately is: do not ever use big clips. Always make sure you chop the clip down in a video editor because if you're using OBS, for instance, OBS gets a little bit confused and starts lagging if you use big video clips.

My advice is: get your video, and make two or three one-minute video clips. Just save them in a little folder and then you can direct OBS to that folder and get it to continually play all three or four little video clips. To everybody on the outside, it's just going to look like one continual thing. If you also pick "always playing," it won't keep going back to the same video clip, which will become repetitive and not what you want at all.

All DJs that play on Twisted Radio will automatically be sent an overlay for the radio station.

And in OBS, once you've added the overlay, all you have to do is go to add and then text, and then you can write your DJ name and put that anywhere you want on the stream or on the overlay.

As far as lighting goes, what you need to remember is the more light you have, the clearer the picture you're going to have on your video cams. It's as simple as that.

Yeah, you can do it in the dark with all your lights flashing and all that. That's a really good effect. But if you want to have a really clear picture of you DJing, you need to have good lighting. You can get LED streaming lights on little tripods for about 20 quid off Amazon or a shop like that. They're pretty cheap and that's what I use and what I recommend.

LIVE STREAMING WITH DJ TECH

TWISTED RADIO



STEP UP AND STREAM

We are starting a show on Sunday evenings at 8pm and inviting all the DJs from the Music Recognition Awards to step up and do a live stream.

A LEG UP

Twisted Official is all about giving the up-and-coming DJ a leg up. A bit of help and a bit of encouragement.

LIGHT YOUR SET

As far as lighting goes, what you need to remember is the more light you have, the clearer the picture you're going to have on your video cams. It's as simple as that.

If you're a DJ and haven't streamed before, we're here to help.



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

By DJ Tech

FROM GETTING NOTICED TO GETTING BOOKED

Playlist Styles

We all have our favourite styles of music and they're all different to everybody else's. Me personally, I love a range of styles. I think it's important not to just have one specific style, but also I have a couple of backup styles. Myself, I love acid techno and hard trance and everything around the outside and in between the middle.

But I also love old school music, old school house, old school hardcore. And I also like jungle techno, massively. They're the styles I was playing back in the 90s, and I still love playing them to this day.

So there's a lot of big scope going all the way from the left-hand side to your House, Hardcore, Hard trance, Techno, Acid techno, Psytrance, Drum n Bass. That whole range is a massive range, and it's so good that when I go out, I go out with more than one style set on my USB.

So it's basically like taking five record boxes with you of your favourite tunes to a party, all on one USB. I can go from one to another, or just do one type of set, or just do another type of set.

The thing is, I choose at the moment. After checking the crowd out, seeing how the crowd's feeling, seeing who's playing before you, and seeing what the vibe of the place is, I might just do a completely different style of set completely, which is why I go out with several sets on my USB.

This way really works for me, and I fully recommend that everyone else does the same sort of thing. In your own styles, so your main style is there, but you also love doing that, so have that style there. And you really like if you ever get a chance to do that as well, so you have that there.

So there's your three styles straight away. So when you go to an event, even though you've done a playlist and know exactly what you want to play in the order you want to play it, you might end up doing a completely different set. And I'll be honest with you, it's quite exciting working like that. It's putting the live and skill back into DJing, whereas technology sometimes takes it away.

I'll also make some playlists up before I go out, but I don't necessarily play the playlists in the order that I've worked them out. After working my playlists out, what I tend to find is there's always two tunes that absolutely sing together. They're perfect, like hand in glove.

So what it is, I've got a bunch of pairs and I've just laid the bunch of pairs down so they flow from one all the way through to the end on a little journey, but that still doesn't mean I'm gonna play it like that when I go out live. Because I might get halfway through a set and a tune doesn't work and I think the next tune might not work, so I'll completely change to the end of the set or somewhere else or change styles completely in the set.

So, I mean, I call that freestyle. Even though you've got a playlist, it is still playing the playlist in a freestyle way.

And for me, being a DJ, that puts a little bit of excitement back in there, whereas the digitalness has taken some away.

I used to do exactly the same with vinyl. I'd just put a couple of tunes together at the front, put a couple of tunes together at the back, and put everything else in the middle. I could go anywhere, start with anything, but I know roughly I've got a direction if I want to dip into it.

PREPARE YOUR MUSIC. PLAY THE MOMENT.

PLAYLIST STYLES



ONE USB

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FREESTYLE

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KEEP THE EXCITEMENT

And for me, being a DJ, that puts a little bit of excitement back in there, whereas the digitalness has taken some away.

It's putting the live and skill back into DJing, whereas technology sometimes takes it away.



From the Bedroom to the Stage with DJ Tech

By DJ Tech

FROM GETTING NOTICED TO GETTING BOOKED

Vibers

Every party you ever go to, there are people that I identify as Vibers.

They're the people that totally identify with the sound that's coming out the speakers, whoever's playing. It's irrelevant. If they're getting into it, getting in the groove with it, that's what I call a Viber.

Now, every time I enter a party, I'm always on the lookout for Vibers. Always. You can tell straight away. You do it as well; you just don't realise you do it. But basically, you identify all the people that are on it and are really thoroughly enjoying what's happening at the party on the set that's playing.

Now, the Vibers come in all shapes and sizes. It doesn't matter who they are, what they look like. It doesn't matter how they dance. It's irrelevant. It's the mental level that they're on at the party at that exact moment in time.

Now when I get up behind the decks and I plug my USB in, pull up my playlist, the one I'm going to be doing at the time, hit the first tune, get the first tune lined up, check the speed, make sure the speed's alright, check all the effects are off, because the DJ before me might have left something on. Which happens so often. It really does.

So I'm ready to go. The very next thing I do is look at the crowd and check for the Vibers. Identify which of the Vibers that are clocked coming in and see how they react to what you're just about to do with the first tune.

Now some will love it, and some won't. So it all depends, at the time, on the percentage of Vibers that do like it and do think you're doing a good thing, rather than the ones that fall away and don't.

So now I've clocked all the Vibers that I'm interested in, and what I'm going to be doing is I'm going to be clocking them either every mix or every other mix, just to see how they're doing, seeing if I'm doing them personally a good job.

Now the rest of the crowd matter as well; of course they do. I'm not saying anything other than that. All the crowd, everybody there is important.

But I am critically looking at my personal Vibers now. They're my personal Vibers. They haven't got a clue any of this is going on.

And I've been doing this since I started in 1993 on vinyl. It's exactly the same process, exactly the same thing. And those Vibers from back then are now my best friends because I've got to know them all, because I needed to meet every single one of them. And I did.

And all of them have now become my following and friends.

, if you get what I mean. And if I ever see any of them at a party, I'm clocking them all the time. They'll tell you

if asked ,"Yeah, Tech's always clocking me. I don't know why." Lol well after reading this they will finally know.. And a massive big-up’s and thank you from me..

But I do. Because what it is, they are my personal thermometers of the vibe. Nothing else, just the vibe. If they're glowing red, I know I'm doing a good job. If they're sort of like amber, I need to pump it up a bit. Do you know what I mean? That's how I read the crowd.

So when people say DJs need to read the crowd, that is how I read my crowd. Now, every DJ might have got a different way of doing what I've just explained. But that's how I do it.

And at the same time, of course, I take a thermometer reading of the entire crowd as well. So I'm not just looking at those people; I am weighing up the whole situation, but with those people leading the way for me in the crowd.

READING THE CROWD WITH DJ TECH

READ THE VIBERS



FIND THE VIBERS

Every party you ever go to, there are people that I identify as Vibers.

KEEP CHECKING

So now I've clocked all the Vibers that I'm interested in, and what I'm going to be doing is I'm going to be clocking them either every mix or every other mix, just to see how they're doing, seeing if I'm doing them personally a good job.

THE WHOLE CROWD

Now the rest of the crowd matter as well; of course they do. I'm not saying anything other than that. All the crowd, everybody there is important.

Nothing else, just the vibe.