



## Electro-Harmonix Super Space Drum and Crash Pad | £92 each

[www.ehx.com](http://www.ehx.com)

We got a little excited when Electro-Harmonix announced both the Super Space Drum and Crash Pad analogue drum synth boxes. As both are faithful recreations using the same analogue circuitry as the originals, we couldn't wait to get stuck into some retro-beat action.

The workmanlike Crash Pad is capable of creating kick, snare, tom, hi-hat and cymbal sounds and opening up the decay will spew forth more drone-like sounds. Enveloping

the sound is taken care of with the Start, Stop, Time and Decay controls and they're all fed through the resonant filter, controlled by the Resonance knob, allowing you to craft all manner of percussive noises that will easily fit into straight-up Dance numbers, or more atmospheric odysseys. All drumming aside, you can feed any signal through the resonant filter via the Aux In socket. The filter can also be controlled externally by an expression pedal or

CV sequencer, so there's really a lot of potential in this little box.

The Super Space Drum doesn't feel as useful as it doesn't feature an Expression/CV input. As the name suggests, SSD is perfectly at home creating more 'out there' percussive sounds. Sci-fi bleeps can be turned into more dub-like sirens. However, with a flick of the modulation switch you can dial up some craziness with the Depth and Rate controls and there is also an Aux In, but this time

the external signal is passed through the gated amplifier.

Both units feature a trigger button on the front panel, which is just a switch and feels rather cheap. It doesn't lend itself to performance either – a small pad would be much better. Instead, the switches are fine for just demoing sounds as both units can be triggered externally with drum triggers or a clock generator, such as EHX's very own Clockworks.

It's not often we pit two products against each other, but with these two machines there is a chance that you'll have the budget for just one, so which is it to be? Both certainly have their place in anyone's arsenal, but for us the Crash Pad wins out. CP is far more flexible than its spaced-out companion with the addition of the expression input alone... But it's more than that. There is more sonic variation here, making it a more useful addition to your set-up. What is slightly against both units is their price to function ratio. Compared with the likes of the Korg Volca Beats, you're not getting much for your money, but they still offer bags full of character to warrant their price tag.

In short, these are two different drum synths, both have their own character, with the Crash Pad edging it for all-round usability. EHX would do well to release both pedals and even the Clockworks as Eurorack modules. **Simon Arblaster**

**Crash Pad**

**8/10**

**Super Space Drum**

**7/10**

## Blocs Wave | £3.99

<http://blocs.cc>

Wave is a track starting instrument from Novation's app development arm, Blocs. The app is divided into browsing, editing and recording. Included are six sound packs, with more available. At its heart Wave is a sampler with a powerful time-stretching engine and features waveform editing. During our test with an iPad Mini 4, there seemed slight anti-aliasing when making big tempo/key changes, but it is brief and incremental changes are not affected. All in all, Wave is very well thought out and, with Ableton Link, even more useful than we first thought. **Simon Arblaster**

**9/10**



## Frontline Producer Indie Rock | £29.95

[www.loopmasters.com](http://www.loopmasters.com)



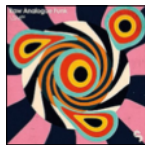
You can see the appeal of forming a Rock band out of samples. Frontline Producer's latest offering, Indie Rock, gives you all the choruses, bridges, verses and riffs, without ever throwing a bottle of Jack Daniel's at your head. Not to say that these loops don't rock hard. There are 19 song construction kits, with 1.82GB of content. And tempos range from 72-143bpm.

Each song is great to pick through, and ripe for plundering. The wildest are the heavy electric and acoustic guitar workouts, which run from *Under The Bridge*-style tearjerkers to *Last Nite* anthemia. The organ and strings are top-notch, too. Add to that great playing from the assembled musicians, throughout, and some weighty amp selections, and you have a serious collection. **Roy Spencer**

**8/10**

## Sample Magic Raw Analogue Funk | £34.90

[www.samplemagic.com](http://www.samplemagic.com)



Now, this is a proper 'one-stop' Funky House pack. Well, for this price you'd hope it was chock-a-block with 808 beats, raw analogue basslines, quirky keys and belting vocals, and it doesn't disappoint.

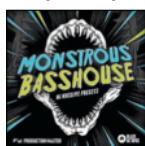
From the weighty batch of Gospel choir chops and salacious frontman moans and groans, to the straight-up grooving Rhodes workouts, everything is a joy to work with. And they come in bulk, too. 283 track-starting music loops, anyone? Besides head-turning amounts of WAV, REX, Apple Loops and MIDI files, you get five custom drum kits and five sample patches to mess with. So, put a weekend aside to get your hands dirty with this one.

All the folders can be bought separately at the Sample Magic website, so pick what you need if your budget is tight. Gotta give a shout out to the breaks and percussion loops crate – that's some funky drumming, fo' sho. **Roy Spencer**

**8/10**

## Black Octopus Monstrous Bass House | \$29.95

[www.primeloops.com](http://www.primeloops.com)



The Black Octopus collective are back with another 'does what it says on the tin' sample pack. This time around it's your bass monsters that are catered for. For just under 30 bucks you get 75 bombastic sounds for NI Massive, modelled on the output of the nastier end of the EDM scale – think Habstrakt, Skrillex, Ghastly, and

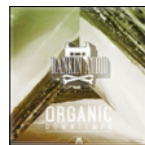
the aptly named NGHTMRE and you're on the right track. There's enough variation to keep the goose bumps on your arms up as your cones get a workout, with a decent mix of subs, leads, and some serious FX to layer as you see fit.

'Top producers' are credited with the sound design and, whoever they may be, they certainly know their bass onions. Although the title says 'Bass House', you can see Glitch heads and Techno bods dipping their fingers in this pack and finding some treats, too. **Roy Spencer**

**7/10**

## Rankin Audio Organic Downtempo | £29.95

[www.loopmasters.com](http://www.loopmasters.com)



Another issue, another dope Rankin Audio sample pack. This one is a tad tenderer than their usual fare, but no less polished. Organic

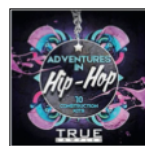
Downtempo is a set that conjures up some lush and verdant beats for the more discerning electronic music producer. The 'organic' elements come from real world sampling and field recordings – from micro hits to more drawn-out melodies, captured from a wilderness not near you.

Also in this 1.1GB pack are snappy live drums, vocal hits, and rich, ethereal pads. Perfect for adding a touch of class to your more straight-up Future Bass arrangements. The boffins at Rankin manage to make the Foley-driven sound design sound like a vital component when you add them to your tracks, which is no mean feat. **Roy Spencer**

**9/10**

## True Samples Adventures in Hip-Hop | £27.49

[www.soundstosample.com](http://www.soundstosample.com)



The True Samples packs usually have names like Techno Bullets and Future Bass House, rather than Adventures in Hip-Hop. Still, after flicking through the ten mastered and unmastered construction kits on offer here, fans of that techier style will soon find out they keep that big room noise they're famous for, regardless of genre. Not that this is 'Hip-Hop' in the Golden Era sense. It's on that modern, Trap-ish tip producers like DJ Khaled, Bones and the 808 Mafia like to bring – booming sub basslines are to the fore across all kits, as are skittish 808 hats, and Post-Dre melancholy piano chords.

Props to the engineers here – the deep bottom-end on each bassline is always matched with the perfect balance of the more searing top notes in each track, giving each of the kits a full sonic spectrum that'll give the speakers in your local club a proper workout. **Roy Spencer**

**7/10**



samplemagic.com

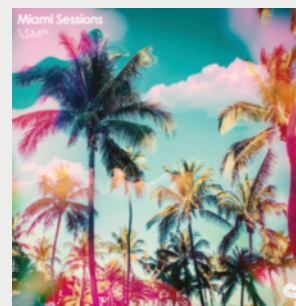
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