

SCHOOL OF BEATS

SB101 Learn To DJ Curriculum

Summary and Overview

S.T.E.A.M. Curriculum Distribution:

- **Science:** Signal Flow, Speaker Functionality, Analog vs Digital
- **Technology:** DJ Software, DJ Equipment, Midi Language
- **Engineering:** Equipment Setup, Performance Set Programming, Midi Mapping
- **Art:** Layering, Track Pairings, Performance Techniques, Stage Presence
- **Math:** Time Signature, Phrasing, Bit & Sample Rates

Introduction - Overview and simplified explanation of the dj workflow and the responsibilities a dj has when performing. Key skills and assets that make a dj successful. The difference between a “play list operator” and a “DJ”... and why it matters. Examples of different performance and content delivery styles and techniques. The evolution of equipment and how its used in the industry.

Equipment - Overview of primary components of the DJ controller. Explanation of basic functions such as loops, cue/play, beat jumping, jog wheel functionality, hot cues, pitch and grid functionality, headphone operation and basic software functionality.

Phrasing - This is where the mathematics of DJing is introduced. Topics are covered such as the building blocks of a phrase, the mathematical structure of DJ edits, the mathematical differences between popular sub-genres of music and the parts/arrangement of a song. We cover identifying and notating the phrasing within the performance material and common anomalies that students will encounter and need to overcome.

Layering - In this section mathematics meets art. With the mathematical rules in mind, student make their first dive into the art and creation aspects of DJing. Students learn what it means to layer music and how their decisions effect what the audience hears during a performance. Finally, students perform their first mix by layering and combining two songs together to create a new piece of musical material.

Blending - One of the first tools or techniques used in the mixing process is frequency manipulation. This section focuses on the area of the equipment called the mixer. Students are given detailed info about the components in this portion of the controller. Given mixing practice drills and rules to follow and expand upon to optimize the adhesion between the tracks.

Programming - When the student reaches this point in the curriculum, they are ready to prepare for their first live performance. This section teaches the student how to pick music. Students will learn how to ask questions to narrow down programming choices and how to physically build pre-programmed playlists for their first live event.

Performance - Students performing for the first time can be a very stressful and nerve-racking experience. Our goal to reduce or eliminate as many decisions as possible during the performance so the student and focus on stage presence, crowd interaction and replicating the skills they have practiced in the classroom preparing for the performance. We also cover one of the most difficult parts of DJing, handling requests.

Class Preparation - This section is for both the students and the teachers. We cover the assembly and disassembly of the gear before and after classes and events. We also explain music library and file management with detailed instructions on how to import the new music each program receives every month into the DJ library. Finally we go over installing mapping and software updates if/when any are released for SB101.

Extra Curricular Topics - If your students have met the basic challenges of SB101 and are now performing, these additional topics will take them to the next level. We introduce more advanced topics such as grid repair, harmonic layering, recording, tempo jumping, effects and transition tricks like loop compressions and spin backs

SB101 Summary:

At the end of SB101, students will have a foundation of knowledge and skills to build upon. The curriculum teaches your students music theory along with the math, science and technology behind live electronic music performance. Most importantly, students will gravitate to your DJ program because they learn with music they love and listen to every day. Now your students have the tools to provide entertainment for school dances and social events. They will be able to produce cohesive live sets of background music for sports events, audio tracks for a video educational curriculum, even preparing premixed sound tracks for cheerleading squad routines and school musicals.

Students with these skills can easily gain employment with special events entertainment companies and make between \$20 & \$150 an hour working events like weddings, school dances, sports and charity events and pool parties. This is an excellent vocational skill set that can easily fund their way through college and allow more time for school work and less time on the job than the typical high school and college level jobs. Students who continue into our SB201 and MP101 courses will discover a path that can lead to a career audio engineering, music performance, radio, theater... the list goes on and on.