P5 for n00bs!   (Trance Edition)

1st of all...WELCOME...you've come to the RIGHT place! The best thing about P5 is the helpful forum...NO ONE can touch this forum for friendly advice and good-natured banter!

2nd...you couldn't have picked an EASIER piece of software to learn on without sacrificing functionality...REALLY! So if you are having troubles just think if you had gone and bought Cubase or Sonar....YIKES!

You need to just deal with the GUI (Graphical User Interface) first. That is, you need to understand *what* does w*hat* on the screen before you can plunge ahead and make progress in your project.

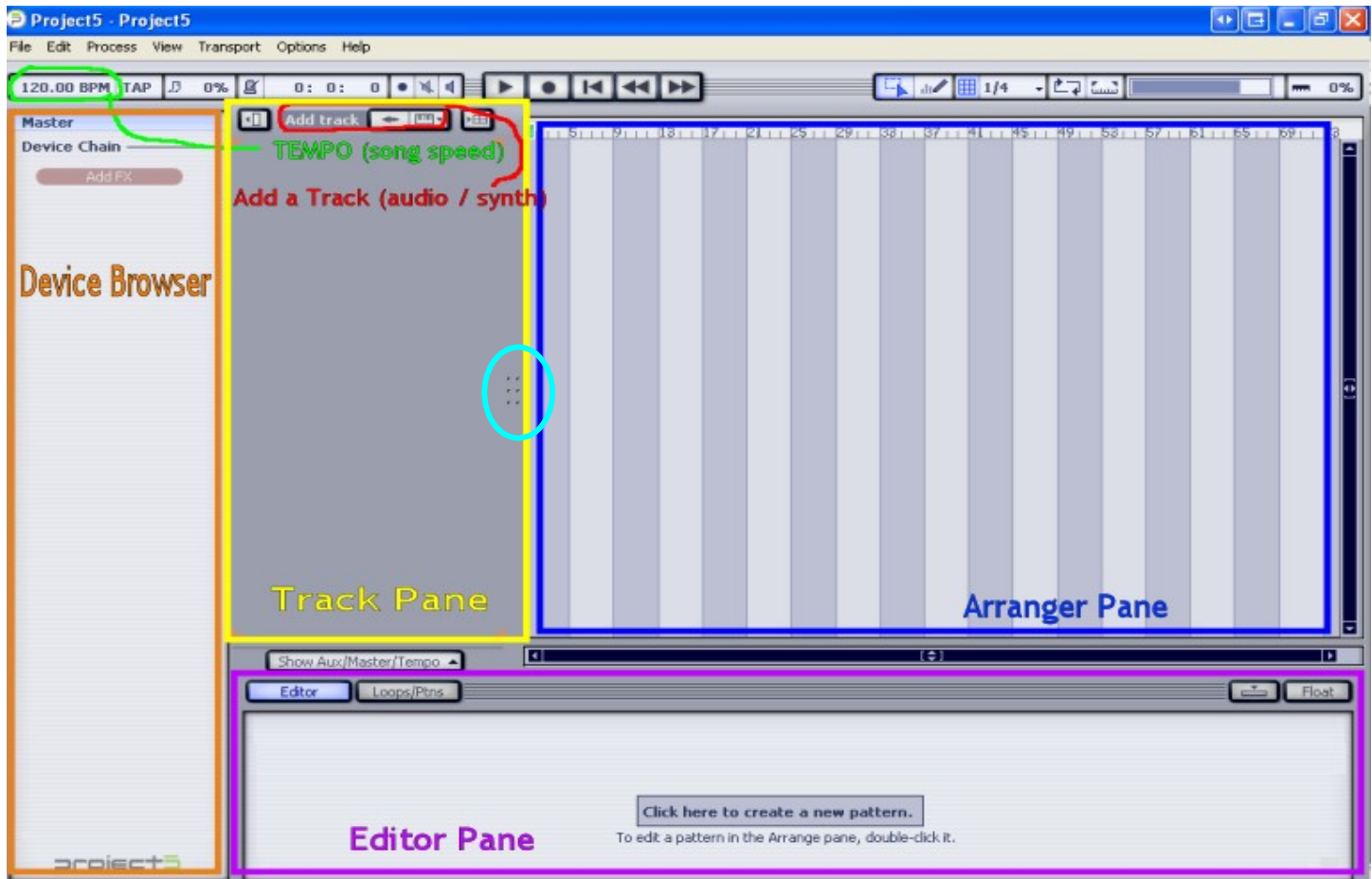So... lets start this puppy up and have a looksie!

Figure 1

Introduction to P5 Layout

Lets open a blank (new) project and start off from scratch. I'll identify the regions that make up the interface:
The yellow boxed out area is the Track Pane. This is where you can see the "track" info; any synths or audio that you will use will be listed in this area. When you add an audio recording, a loop or pattern or a synth part the pattern will be displayed as a linear event in the Arranger Pane (the blue boxout). To edit the pattern or synth part that you've "laid down" in the Arranger Pane you can double click on that pattern and it will be displayed in the Editor Pane (Magenta boxout) for further manipulation by you. Or you can click directly in the Editor Pane to begin creating a new pattern. To get more specific information on the track you are working on (synth/audio info) you can click on the track in the Track Pane and the pertinent info quickly becomes displayed in the Device Chain Browser (orange boxout). Another name for this is the Track Inspector area. This area shows what effects are "chained" to that track. You can add effects and access the arpeggiator in this area. The cyan circle there hides the Groove Matrix. We're not going there today!

Adding tracks (Inserting an Instrument)

The first thing we do in this project is set the tempo. How many **B**eats **P**er **M**inute determines how fast the song flows. Simply double click in the Tempo field (circled in green [Fig.1]) and enter a numeric value (120bpm is 2 beats for every second of time). Lets change it to 125 BPM…a fairly medium pace for trance music.

In the Track Pane, let's add our first instrument by clicking the "piano icon" shown in the red circled area. [Fig.1] This will bring up the "add instrument" menu. Note that if we wanted to add an audio track or record audio into P5 we could have chosen the "wave icon". Alternatively, there are short cuts including right-clicking within Track Pane to produce another pop up menu to access the "add instrument" command. P5 has many quick ways of achieving the same thing. Sometimes just a simple hotkey will bring up what you need. (You can view the hotkeys by clicking HELP and choosing Keyboard Shortcuts.)
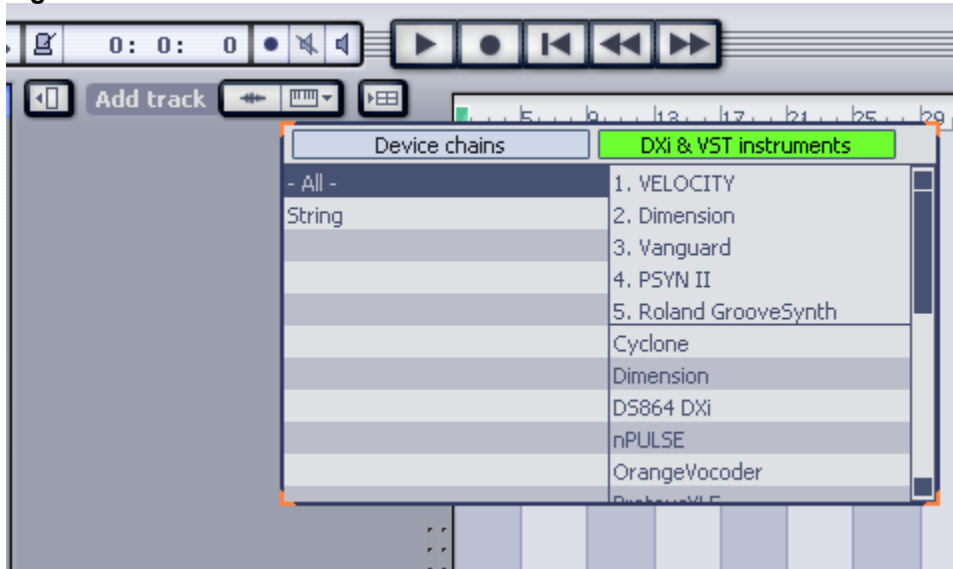
Figure 2

Figure 2 shows the menu now displayed after clicking the "piano" icon. _Device chains_ offer a quick way to access P5's proprietary "patch presets" and your own saved "device chains". Lets choose the other one, _DXi & VST instruments_.

It will show a drop down list of all your P5 and third party synths. Let's begin by clicking on VELOCITY, which is Project5's awesome drum synth module.

Figure 3

Before we begin working with Velocity, let's look at what just changed in the GUI in Figure 3. With a track now added and selected the Device Browser Pane now contains information about Velocity. You can tell the track is ACTIVE or selected because the _MIDI ROUTING OVERIDE_ light is lit (that's the MIDI plug icon circled in yellow).

Here we can change the MIDI parameters (circled red), access the arpeggiator, add Midi FX and Plugin FX, and manipulate the actual presets in the chosen instrument, Velocity. The area circled in green shows how we can quickly access banks and active outputs. That's a lot of complicated jargon…but we'll get to that later.

For now, click on the orange circled "synth properties" icon. Clicking either of these will open our Velocity synth so we can get busy droppin' our beats!
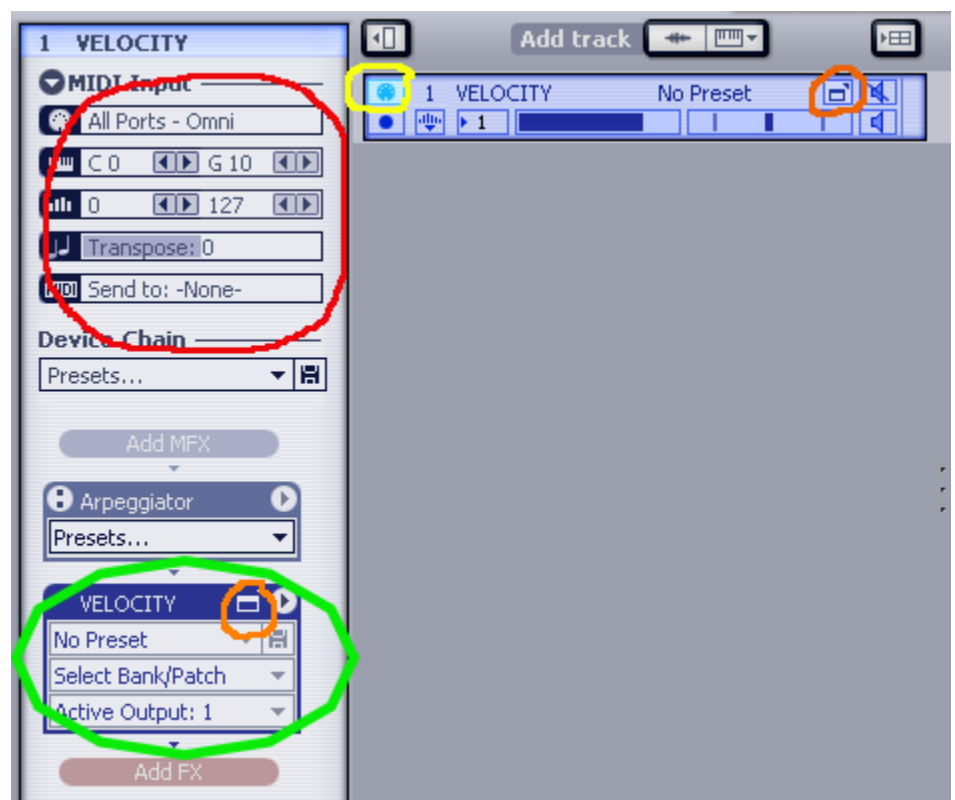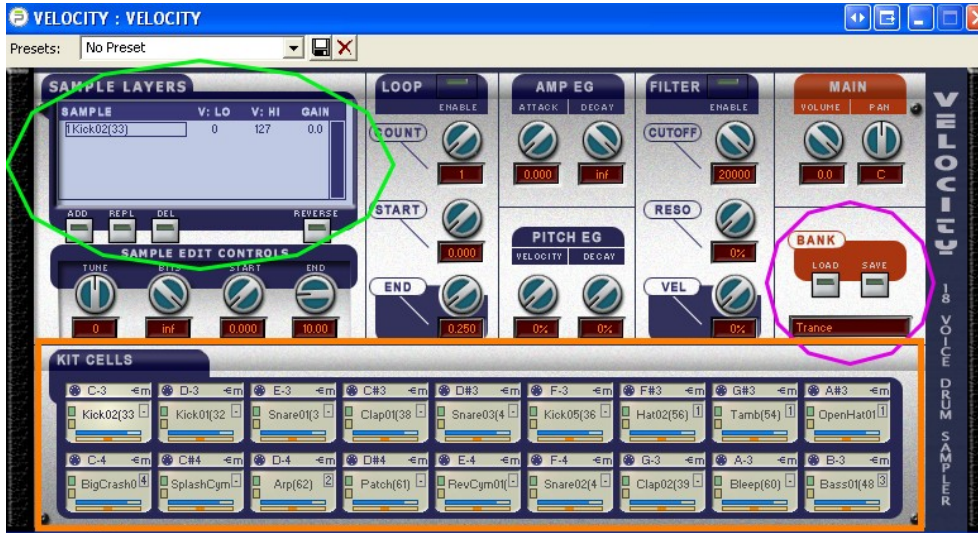
Working with Velocity and the Editor Pane

Velocity is your daddy! At least for beats! It is a very potent drum sampler that can contain 18 different drum samples that can all be routed independently to various effects.

I'll show you, don't worry.

For now you're kit cells are empty (the orange boxout in Figure 4). To add drum samples to the cells you *could* enter them all individually by clicking on each cell in turn and "browsing" to your Velocity samples folder to the kit you want. You can even "stack" samples using the Layers module circled in green. For example, if you have a plain bass kick in a cell and want to hear a hi-hat hit as you strike the bass you can click the "ADD" button (region circled green) and browse to the hi-hat you wish to layer on the kick. This green-circled region is also used to control gains and velocity of the kit cells. Want a reverse cymbal crash? Just load a kit cell with your cymbal and click the "REVERSE" button. It will sound in reverse every time. Cells can be auditioned by clicking on them. You can see that many other parameters can be tweaked from Tuning to Pitch to Filter Cutoff. You can investigate those on your own later. For now lets load a preset bank by clicking the LOAD button in the area circled magenta in Figure 4. *Browse to* and *select* the "Trance.p5d" kit (by default you should be able to find it here: *Cakewalk/Shared DXi/Velocity/Velocity Banks/*).

Notice that the kit cell corresponds to an assigned Midi note (see that midi plug icon again?). That means you could record/play drums by playing the appropriate notes on your MIDI keyboard controller.

Whats in a cell?

Velocity cells contain a lot of info. The trigger note is indicated at top along with the assigned output channel. Why is it shown as "m"? Who cares. Just realize that the "m" is output #1. You can change this from 1 to 5. Routing refers to what group of effects you want the cell to travel through in the Device Chain Browser pane. The green and yellow areas represent the Solo and Mute buttons respectively. The other block (with the -) is the Choke Group assignment. (For "choking" cymbals or hi-hats as needed). The blue bar indicates the cell volume and the orange is the position in the stereo field (panning). More on routing later.

Having so many modules and panes can take up a lot of room on your poor overused monitor! Learn how to resize these various panes by dragging the edges of them out or in as you wish or learn the appropriate hotkey commands to view and close the panes. The Editor pane can be docked/floated or dragged out. You can refocus many windows by clicking (and holding) the scroll bars while dragging them in or out. This will effectively "zoom" in or out.

Now I will show you one way in which to program your trance drum loop patterns. This is only one way, and you may wish to map the drum cells to different keyboard keys and play them live or use the "step mode" in the sequencer or drag and drop pre-made drum loops from the Editor/Pattern bin. For the sake of my tutorial, we get to do it my way!
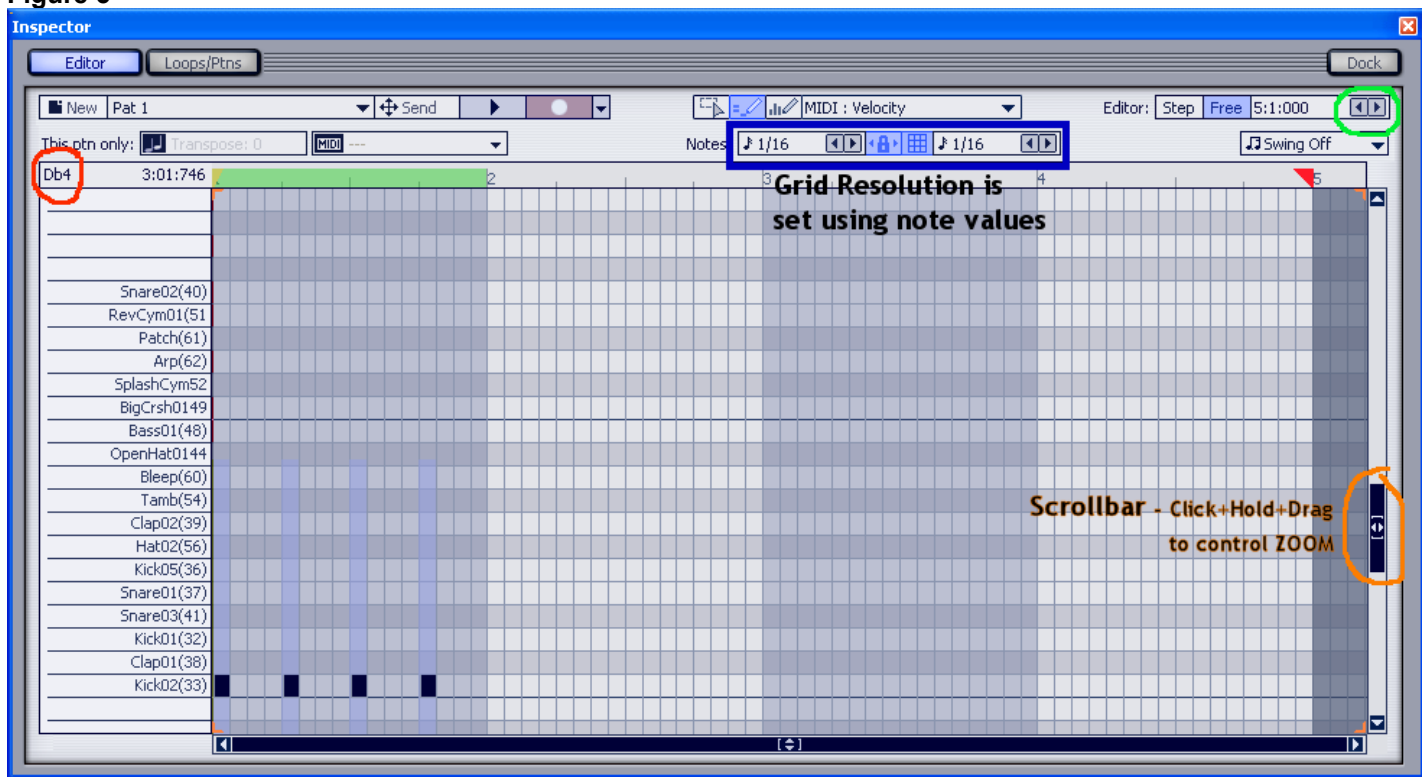
Close Velocity for now. It'll remain the active synth until we add another. Let's open the Editor to program some drum patterns. Click the "Editor" button at the bottom. Alternatively, you could click the Float button, the icon or use the hotkey (Alt+1).
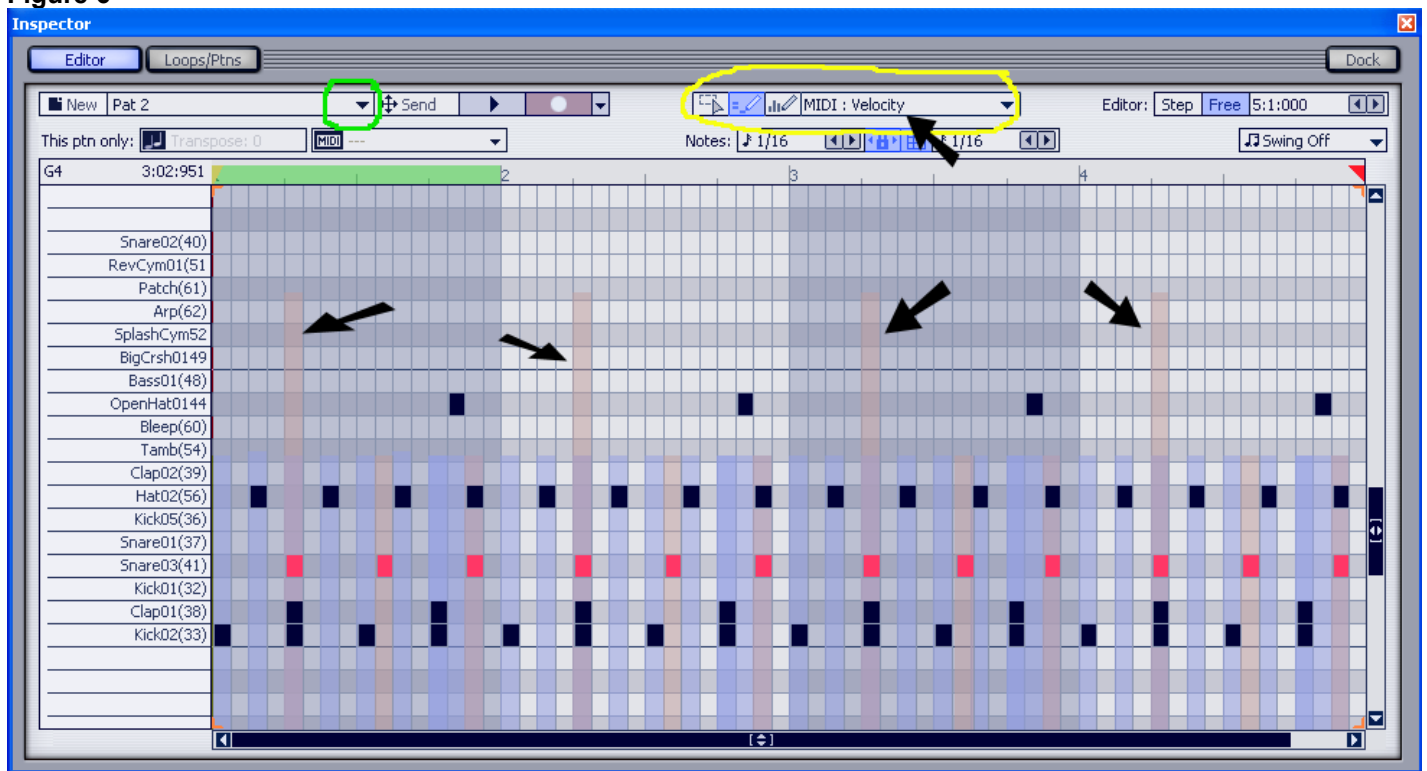
Figure 5

Click in the Editor to create a new (empty) pattern. Notice that the drum kits cells are mapped to the corresponding notes on the left side (the piano roll). You can see which note triggers each kit cell (the red circle in Fig.5) by hovering the mouse over the kit name. Let's zoom in closer to the kits we're working with. Using the scrollbar (orange circle Fig.5) you can re-focus on the area that lets us view only the pertinent info we need…the kits. You are looking at the equivalent of a one-measure pattern that has been divided into 16 equal "chunks" of time. One measure isn't enough for this tutorial so we'll actually spread out some more to work with by adjusting the "pattern length" to 4 measures. The arrows circled in green can add or reduce measures to our pattern. Go ahead and extend it out so we have 4 measures (the pattern length will read 5:1:00…. Don't ask!) By the way, the red flag that shows up before the 5 indicates where your pattern ENDS while the yellow flag indicates the START of your pattern. These can both be dragged to different positions once our pattern is laid out if, say, we wanted to crop the beginning or ending. So, alternatively, you can drag the red flag out further to add measures instead of clicking the arrow in the green-circled region as you just did.

In the blue-boxed region (Fig.5) is the "Step Size" and "Snap Size" menu, which is used to change the grid resolution (or the amount of "chunks" of time displayed in each measure). Let me simply try to explain what *Step* and *Snap* are about, because they're certainly important to know. *Snap size* sets how many blocks there are within a measure which is significant because the more blocks, the more places you can insert notes in a measure. *Step size* is different. If you changed the note value (or Step value) to ¼ then you are working with notes lasting a quarter of a measure while setting the size to ½ means you'd only get 2 notes per measure. So step size is how big the notes will be, while snap size is how those notes will be "quantized" when you drag them or create new notes. Essentially, if your Snap Size is ¼ then dragging a note will move it in increments of ¼ notes regardless of how big the note is (it's step size). Confused? You should be…we're talkin' music theory and we only came here to drop some beats!!! Lets move on!

Now the fun stuff! The Editor is in a mode automatically whereby clicking into the grid enters notes! So let's get a good beat going with the kick drum. The kick happens on beat…(in a trance track there's always 4 beats per measure) so that means we need 4 kicks per measure. Now that we know our grid is resolved to 16 steps per measure (yeah, sorry) we can determine that every fourth block should have a KICK. Fill in the kicks as indicated in Figure 5 by clicking the appropriate blocks. We need to fill up EVERY fourth block with a kick, but we can copy/paste the rest of the kicks in. Click on the name of the kit [Kick02(33)] to select every instance of the kick in our pattern. Then, while holding the *Ctrl* key down, simply select any of the highlighted notes and drag it over to the next measure. "Slip-Editing" is a convenient way of copying, moving, and pasting midi data. Continue slip-editing to fill in all 4 measures with a kick drum on every beat. A good way of creating beats is to audition (playback) your kick beat while you fill in the other cells. That way you can hear what your creating in real-time!

Figure 6

Continue mapping your drums as laid out above in Figure 6. While this is the simplest of patterns (admittedly, I stink at percussion loops) I just wanted to demonstrate some things about how trance beats are commonly laid out. Note that while our kick is always on every beat (four to the floor!), the clap is used on every second beat and something like hi-hats, in this case, is played on the offbeat. Go ahead…make your own *groovy beatz*…I just whipped up something to get your creative juices flowing without having to change the resolutions or note lengths!

Editor Modes

Before we continue much further, I must explain something about Editor in more detail. When you start a new pattern, I mentioned that it was automatically ready for the inputting of midi data (notes). Editor is in "Note Entry" mode by default, but there are two other important modes that you will have to understand to use Editor. The area circled in yellow (Fig.6) shows all three modes that are possible for Editor. We can see that the "notes tool" is selected (the blue light indicator is on) meaning that the default "note entry" mode is engaged. The first mode (left of the "notes tool") is the "Selection tool". If you need to "select" notes you can enter this mode. Clicking the mouse now, and dragging it creates a "lasso" that can select a note or regions of notes. To select notes *without* dragging the mouse you can hold the Ctrl button down while selecting individual notes. Also note, that holding *shift* down while moving data *overrides* the "snap to" function. So instead of moving the notes in *increments* of 1/16 (in this example), you have complete freedom to drag it anywhere in between the grid blocks in an *infinitely variable* way. The last mode (right of the "notes tool") is the "Automation tool". Entering this mode lets us alter how the notes are affected by midi data. (See…midi isn't just about notes…its any signal, note, or bit of information sent to the sequencer). Essentially, it's the same as the "notes tool" only we're not inputting notes, we're inputting a note's *data* (like how loud it will be and how hard we strike it, etc) and *automation*. You can see automation in the Editor pane too…notice the arrows in Figure 6. The Snare kit cell has been automated, in this example, so that the first snare hit of each measure is struck a little harder, creating an accented rhythm. The hardness of the hit is the *Velocity* at which the note is struck. That is why it says "velocity" in the yellow-circled area. You can use the drop down menu there to manipulate all kinds of midi data like volume, pitch bend, panning, as well as other plug-in effects you might have the cell routed through in the Track Inspector (Device Chain Browser). Automation plays a huge part in creating swells and filter sweeps and FX levels in Project5. To toggle through the various *modes* you can hit the "T" key.

By default, the pattern you are working on immediately appears in the Arranger Pane. You can change this behaviour by accessing the drop down menu circled in green in Figure 6. The "Send" button beside the green circle is then used to implement your pattern. Simply click and hold the SEND button and drag it into the Arranger Pane where you want the pattern to go. The drop down menu here also has a handy "duplicate pattern" function. Any time you edit a pattern, all instances of that pattern in Arranger Pane are affected. This may not be what you want to happen, in which case making a duplicate of that pattern gives you a copy of it to edit independently of the other instances.

<u>Working in the Arranger Pane</u>

With your drum loop pattern now in the Arranger Pane we can drag out the pattern to extend it as far as we wish. Draw the pattern out for a number of bars. You'll probably notice that the Arranger's interface has many similarities to the Editor's GUI. The scrollbars work the same way to zoom, and there's an "Automation Tool" as well as a "Selection Tool" here too (red boxout Fig. 7) Also, there's a "Snap to Grid" button beside those tools as in Editor. The blue light is "on" by default indicating that dragging and moving patterns within Arranger will be done in increments of the value assigned in the drop down menu (which in this case is "Measure"). You can also copy and paste in much the same way as we did in Editor. To move patterns up and down you can hold the *Shift* key to ensure that the pattern doesn't move horizontally. To copy patterns up or down you can hold the *Shift* and the *Ctrl* key.
Notice the "now time" indicator which travels through your project as you play it back. (Green circle Fig.7) In the "Options" menu you can alter this behaviour and set either right-click, left-click or both to set the now time in Arranger. In the middle of the red box of Figure 7 we have the looping and selection tools for auditioning/looping specific areas and patterns. The meter to the right of that is the Master Volume which can be adjusted by dragging the bar. The cyan arrow in Figure 7 is pointing to a blank space that is the Master Volume Meter. When the project is playing back, the overall volume will be displayed here. This is useful for monitoring clipping (if the song spikes past 0.0 dB). The last function within the red-boxed area is the CPU meter. It gauges how much of your computer resources are being used up by Project5 in real-time. This is expressed as a percentage, of course. By clicking the CPU meter, you can reset P5's audio engine should you run into any plug-ins that are acting up.
One of the more important hotkeys to remember in Arranger is the "spacebar". It works like the "Play/Stop" button. Try it out… your project will start when you push the Spacebar….and stop when you press it again. In the example in Figure 7 our project is beginning playback at the 11th measure (green circle). If we push the *Spacebar* or click *Play* to begin playback and stop after several measures, we can rewind and playback from the 11th measure again by clicking the *Alt+spacebar*. This is referred to as the "sticky Now Time". When you start playback or move the *Now Time* to any position in Arranger, Project5 remembers that starting position so you can rewind and playback from there with this simple combination hotkey (Ctrl+spacebar). If you make a mistake or don't like your last change, *Ctrl + Z* will undo your last action in Arranger (this works in Editor too). That function is multi-stepped so you can keep undoing the action before that, and before that, etc.

Figure 7
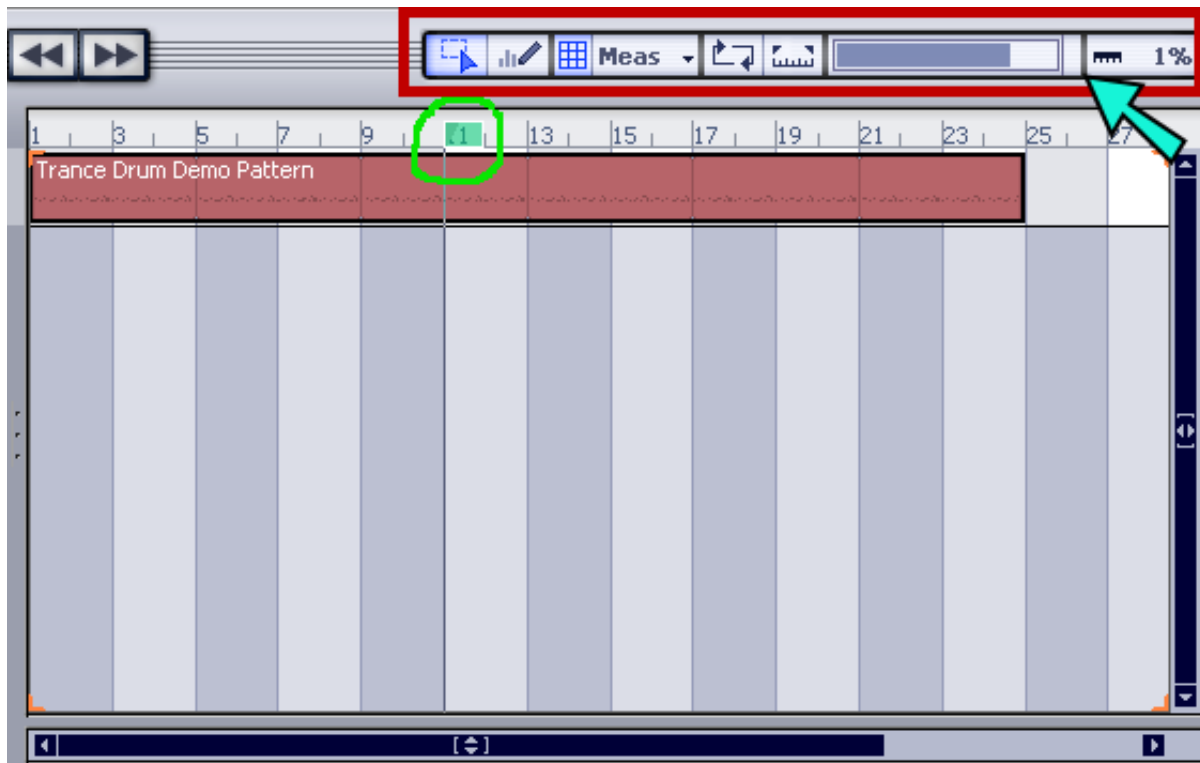
Working in the Device Browser (Track Inspector)

We now have our first drumloop for our trance masterpiece, albeit pretty limp sounding and lackluster. That's because we've only done half the work on it! Creating the beat is only part of how to get a great percussion track. Now we must apply effects (FX) and work on the first stage of mixing. Once other tracks and instruments are added, we'll have to re-mix some of the settings again. This is a constant law of trance production…the more "stuff" you add, the more times you'll be coming back to the Track Inspector to change the mix.

I'll introduce you to some *freebie* FX plug-ins that are actually _very good!!_ To go further in this tutorial you'll have to save your project and close P5 so you can download and add these FX plug-ins to your roster.
Here's the link:

http://www.kjaerhusaudio.com/classic-series.php   **(download ALL of them!)**

While you're at it, go to the link below and get this free plug-in too, you won't be disappointed:

http://www.luxonix.com/home/en/products-lfx1310.html

Figure 8
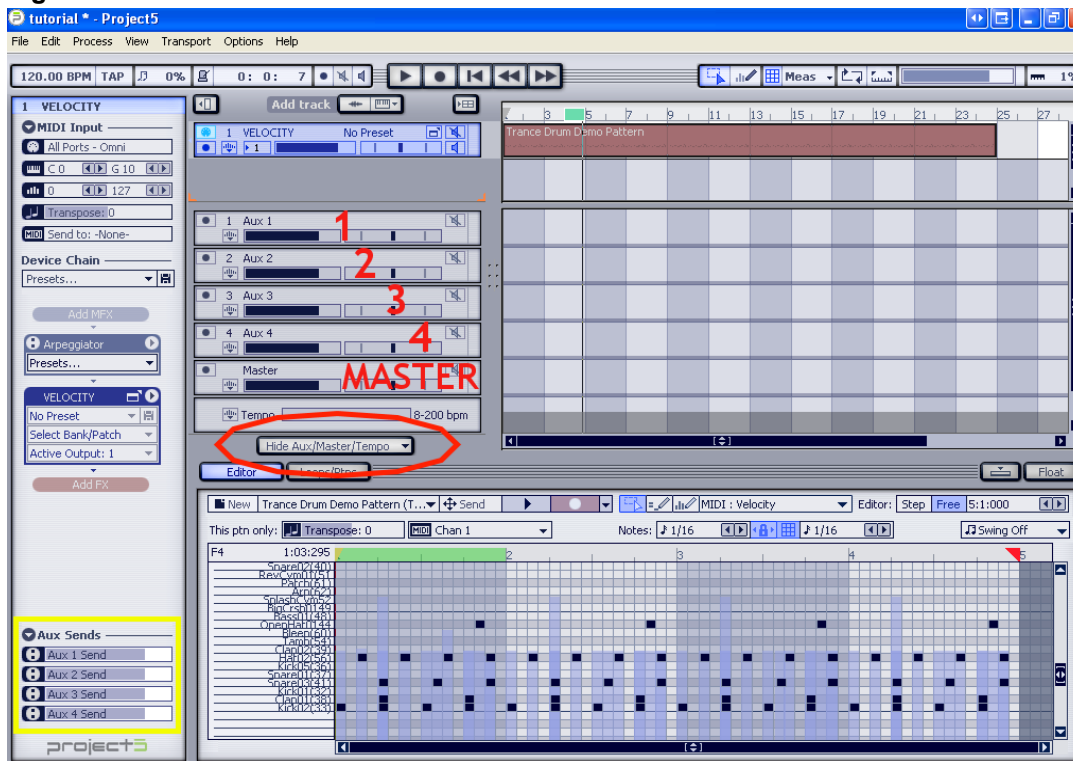
In looking at your project as a whole, we need to set some global parameters that affect every track. This is done in the Master Channel. We can also set up some effects (we have up to 4 auxiliary buses to be precise) that we can route any or all tracks through. Things we should consider applying to the whole project are effects like a limiter and a multi-band compressor. Maybe even some equalization. Things we can set up on the 4 AUX busses might be a gentle reverb, a tempo delay or echo, a flanger or phaser effect… any effect that we might happen to use on more than just one track should get applied to an Aux Bus. But remember, we only have 4. We can, however, stack or "chain" multiple effects in the busses so that the tracks are routed through them one after the other.

I'm losing you, so lets open your project again and actually put this into action. Click the *Hide Aux /Master* button as shown in the red-circled portion in Figure 8. This brings up the four Aux Channels for FX and the Master Channel too. You can rename these to something more appropriate once you add effects...and you should. The 4 Aux Busses are the same busses shown in the AUX SENDS (yellow box in Fig.8). When you rename them, it is reflected in the AUX SENDS as well.

Click the Master Channel strip (as indicated in red Fig.8) to access the master channel. The Track Inspector now looks empty, because there is nothing applied to the Master Channel yet. In the Track Inspector, click the "Add FX" button to bring up a menu of all your FX plug-ins. Choose the "Classic Limiter". (This will essentially boost all signals to a maximum level while inhibiting clipping). Lets add another effect to make a chain. This time add Classic Compressor.

Figure 9

Now we have a simple chain of effects on the Master Aux (as shown in the yellow circled area Fig.9) We need to change the settings of our compressor so open the "property page" by clicking the left icon that's circled in red in Figure 9. The other icon allows for a quick access to the main properties of the chosen effect. In the Compressor's property page, change it from the default "Vocal" preset to the "Premastering" preset. Then close the Compressor. You can turn effects on or off by clicking the green bypass button in the top left corner of each FX box in the Track Inspector. (Yeah, the little green circles in Figure 9). One nice thing about chains is that you can copy and paste the FX like patterns into other Auxes if you wish. Or drag them and move them. Why would you wanna drag them? Lets examine our Master Channel setup as it appears in Figure 9. All tracks will route through the limiter and then through the compressor. I mentioned that limiting maximizes the overall volume of the track. Compressors ultimately flatten and smooth a track by squishing the high peaks of a track down to a lower setting. In my mind (and most other producers' minds) the compression should be done prior to limiting. So…

Drag the Compressor to a place above (before) the limiter in the chain. If you have a decent "multi-band" compressor that would be even better in place of this Kjaerhus Classic Compressor, as multi-bands compress differently throughout the spectrum of the mix.

Let's add an FX plug-in to the AUX #1. Click onto the Aux 1 track strip and click "Add FX" again. Assign P5's Studioverb reverb effect to the Aux. Open this FX the same way you did the compressor and choose the "Snare, tight" preset. Don't forget to double click the label AUX 1 in the track strip to rename it. Lets call it "reverb". Once you're familiar with this game, you'll be assigning FX to the other AUXes as well. For simplicity's sake, lets pave ahead.

Now we'll begin working on our drum pattern's mix.

Click the "Velocity" track strip in the track pane and press "j" to open up the Velocity synth module. (Just showing you an alternative way of opening the synth besides clicking the icon I showed you in the orange circle in Figure 3).

Let's look at thickening our poor kick drum now…it sounds pathetic, right? Needs more "oomph". To work on routing FX for the kick drum cell alone we have to change it's routing output (channel). Right now, all the kits are set to "**m**" (which just means channel # 1, remember?). Lets click the "m" and drag it upwards to assign it to 2.

We've now given VELOCITY multiple outputs. We can only see the first output, until we click and drag the "output channel selector" (circled red here) to 2. But wait. Its still greyed out meaning it isn't "on" yet. So now double click that 2 to light 'er up!
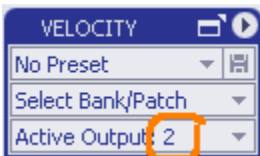
Now your active output is highlighted blue with the rest of the track strip and the Device Chain Browser pane also reflects that you have switched to # 2 output. (orange circle at left). It's a good idea to bring the level of output 2 down to about –10.0 dB. (Why? Its an arbitrary number and could end up changing a dozen times, but realize that *ALL* the tracks in this project will be competing to be heard and we can't have them all at 0.0 dB or it'll clip for sure!)

The Aux Sends at the bottom of the Track Inspector (Device Chain Browser) now shows that the first *aux send* is called reverb! Handy! Let's enable some of that reverb in our KICK. We have to enable the AUX by clicking the circle with the two dots (this thing…).

(wow…look. It's now that familiar looking green circle!) Now bring the level of that AUX down to about –10.0 dB so the reverb doesn't overpower our kick sound. Remember, that any change you make to the Aux Sends ONLY affects the setting for that track output…not the whole project.

Next we can add FX at the "track level". Let's add one of my favourites! The Luxonic LFX-1310 plug-in. Click the "Add FX" in the Track Inspector and browse to "LFX-1310". Choose preset # 41, "Frontier". If you open the FX property page you'll notice that this preset is a combination RMS Peak Compressor and a 3-band Equalizer. Don't touch the Compressor, but alter your bass and mids to look something like below. I've increased the bass, and decreased the

high frequencies so there's a more pronounced "whooomp" in the low-end of our kick. Go ahead … hit the spacebar to audition our pattern now! While it's playing, just toggle the *bypass switch* on and off on the *LFX-1310 effect* to hear the difference between the dry and wet kick drum. Nice eh!?

But it's still not quite the great trance kick we need for a *floorfilla*! Here's an idea…lets add another kick sample to layer the sound. The idea is to find a kick with a really tightly pronounced attack with our sample that has a nice pumpy bottom-end. In our Velocity kit you'll notice we already have another kick loaded in cell #2, namely Kick01(32). We may as well use that one, although ordinarily this takes some time to find the perfect match. It'll do. Lets layer it to our first sample by assigning the same key trigger to it as in the first sample (C-3). Once they both have the same midi trigger, they will BOTH sound in unison when you playback the pattern. Yikes…that doesn't sound too good. While the project is playing, hit the 2nd cell (to make it active in the "Sample Layers" field) and tweak the "TUNE" knob to find a good mix for this new kick sample (somewhere around –250 sounds really good to me, but you may like the harmonics at a higher setting). You may also need to bring the volume level of the kit cell down a tad too to make it gel properly (the blue bar in the *kit cell* controls the volume, if you recall).

Now we be jammin'! Not bad for a quick demo if I say so myself!

I'd like to demonstrate one more cool feature in the Track Pane. Its called Layers. Firstly, open up Editor again and click "NEW" so we can start a new pattern. Copy the pattern I've done below in Figure 9 using the Tamb(54) sample. Its just one measure. Now Right-Click the word Velocity on the track strip and choose "Create Layer". This gives you another "layer" of the Velocity track. Nothing's changed, but now we can add this new pattern to this new layer. Essentially it is a nice way of avoiding clutter. Layers are a real charm in Velocity and other multi-output synths where you are dealing with multiple patterns. Send this new tambourine pattern to this second layer and drag it out to match the 1st pattern.

Figure 9
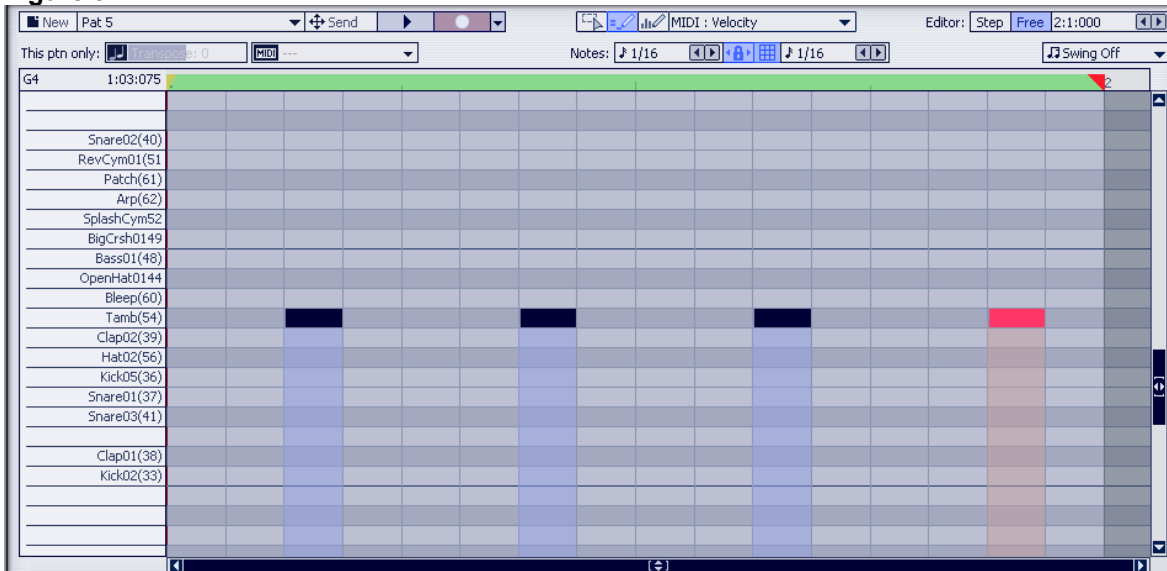
Take some time to tweak the other levels in your drum kit cells. I've lowered the volume in my tambourines and adjusted that snare a bit too. Your ears are the best judge of what sounds right. If you're feeling confident, go ahead and insert some effects or reverbs on the other kits we've used.

Automation (or what puts the PRO in producer)

Here's a facet of Project5 where I could write volumes of material and only scratch the surface. Indeed, this is an area I'll never be able to master as well as I'd like to. Automation requires a knack and a talent for hearing "what's not there yet" and it is the masterful craft of applying non-musical ideas that affect your project more than musical ideas could. Automation *makes* your track…and often automations are never heard. You've heard stuff and said, "I dunno what it is, but that song just doesn't sound pro to me."   Guaranteed, its because there's not enough automation within the song. Automation is what keeps things interesting.

What is it? Musical swells, dynamics, sweeps, filtering effects, panning, pitch bending, etc. the list goes on and on. Knowing what to apply, and where and how to apply it is an acquired skill. I can't teach you that.
All I can do is show you how to automate such things in P5…so here we go.

Let's start by inserting a new track. In the track pane load up the Dimension synth. Again, bring the volume of that synth down to about –10.0 dB. (we don't wanna wake the baby!) Let's choose the first preset in the Trance & Lead section (Acid Blip). Now, in the Track Inspector lets enable the Arpeggiator by clicking the enable/bypass icon. Then, in the preset box in Arpeggiator, choose LOAD PRESET > Rhythms > Arpesque> 01-15 > 04a (this loads one of P5's many preset arps). Alternatively, you can experiment with the various "shapes" rather than choosing Rhythms.
Let's record a pattern live, rather than program it in Editor as we did for the drums.

Figure 10
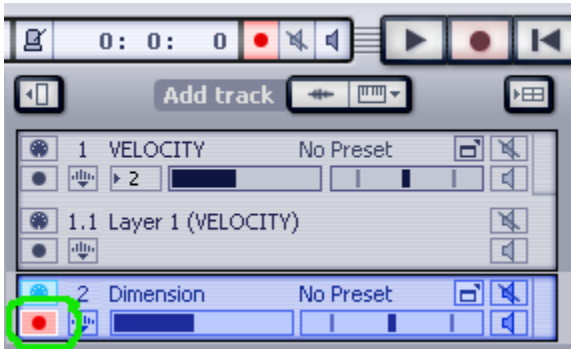
Click the "arm" button in the Dimension track (the green-circled icon in Figure 10). This lights the record button in the status bar up top and the record button in the transport controls begins blinking, indicating that it is "armed" and waiting. To record into the Arranger Pane, you must first click the "blinking" record button in the transport controls (or hit "R").
I'm assuming you have a keyboard and are all set for one-finger fame! Hit "R" and your drums will start playing back…your recording your synth track!! Don't just sit there! JAM!

Okay…once you've got something you like hit the spacebar to stop the session. Unarm your track and open the Editor. Voila! There's your pattern you've just recorded. Notice that where the drum kit cells were listed in the first pattern, you've got a piano roll instead. Handy! You can edit and delete and make any changes to your pattern that you need to here in the Editor. Here's the rather uninspired 4 measure pattern that I came up with:
Figure 11
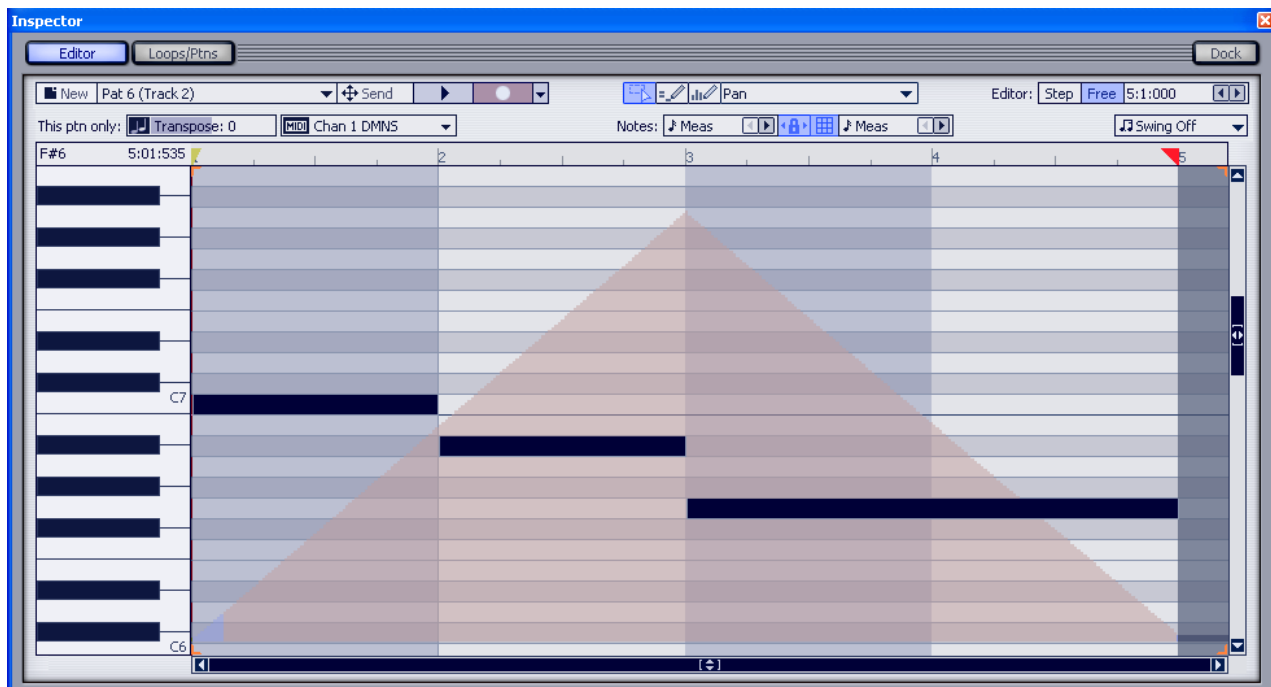
Now insert your pattern by dragging the Send button to the Dimension track in Arranger. Lets give this track some reverb. In the Aux Sends region at the bottom of the Track Inspector (Device Chain Browser) enable the first Aux Send (which should read: reverb send). Feel free to add some track effects now that you know how.

Now we'll get into automating our track.

In Editor, with the Dimension pattern still loaded, click the Automation Tool and in the drop down choose Outputs > Pan. Now, any inputting within the Editor results in panning automation. Enter some panning data across your pattern as I have in Figure 11 above. To get straight lines like that you'll have to hold the *Shift* key down while drawing. The bottom of the Editor represents full pan left while the top of the Editor is full right. To pan center, you would draw in the center. By looking at my automation you should be able to determine that it pans from left to right and returns to the left. To erase any automation data you can right-click and 'scrub' the area you want erased.

Another way we could have done this was by automating the "pan" controls in the Dimension track strip.


Right-click on the "panning" indicator and choose "Latch Pan in…[your pattern name]" would set up Editor for you to start drawing your automation. Still another way is to choose the "Midi Remote Control" (as pictured here) which opens a menu where you can assign a midi controller (like a knob on your keyboard) the task of automating "pan" data. If you set up your knob for this task, it's assumed you'll be arming the track and recording the automation as the project plays back.

Let's add some more automation to this track, only this time I'll show you yet another way to automate in P5.
Click the Dimension synth track in the Track Pane to ensure it is the active track. Press "T" to enter Automation mode (or click the Automation Tool at the top of the Arranger Pane).

Figure 12
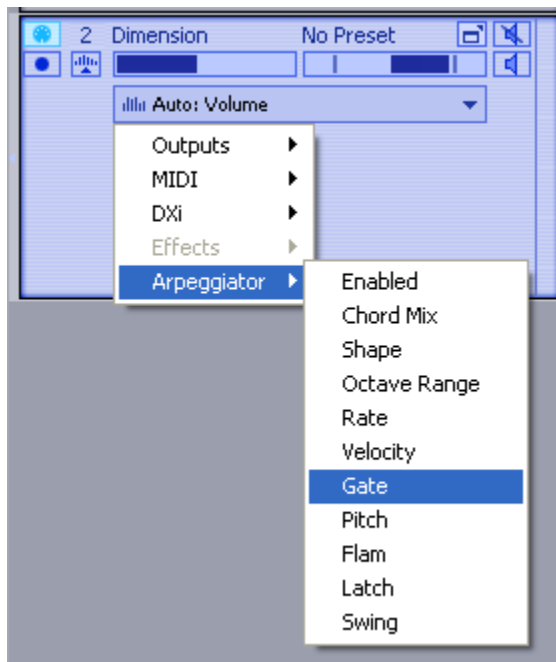
In the Automation drop down box in Dimension's now-expanded track strip choose Arpeggiator > Gate as in Figure 12. You'll notice that there are a vast number of parameters that we can automate! Choosing "Outputs" gives us control over the Volume, Pan, Width, Mute, Phase options…while MIDI gives us a whole slew of CC numbers which relate to the MIDI standards. Choosing DXi allows us to access specific knobs and sliders on the synth we're using. Things like filter cutoff knobs and modulation wheels. Indeed, we've only had a glimpse of the thousands of tweakable automable parameters that are now yours to explore and master!

Once you've chosen "Gate", with the cursor (now a pencil tool) draw in some automation in the region under your Dimension pattern. When you're done, make sure you click the Automation Tool at the top to collapse the tracks back to normal (and it will automatically return you to the Selection Tool mode.

I hope you can understand the power of P5 when it comes to automations. This is only the simplest of demonstrations to convey it in the easiest of terms.

One Last Goodie! (Synchron 32)

Let's add one final track to this masterpiece! I'd like to show you one more tool that I feel is under-utilized in Project5. It's called Synchron32 and since version 1.5 and the improved step editor mode in Editor, people have largely ignored this gem.

In the Tracker Pane, open a new synth…lets use PSYN. Choose the preset patch B033: BASS House Thing (and for crying out loud…please turn the level down to about –10.0dB.)
While we're at it lets add an FX to this track too…Click Add FX and choose P5's Mod Filter (oh…it's a bad boy!) Use the "Sweep, Med." preset on this one.

Now we're ready for the "secret weapon". In the Device Chain Browser (Track Inspector) choose ADD MFX (that means Midi FX) and pick SYNCHRON32.

Open the page property by clicking the expand button on it. I'm not going to explain all the GUI for Synchron, but as you can see it's a basic step editor with a lot of features like flam and legato, Midi out capabilities, pitch bend and poly mode for more than one note per step if you want.

If you've copied my patterns note for note up until now, then the arp I've constructed at the left will sound alright when we add it to our project. Synchron starts up all ready to make a 32 measure (32 step count) arpeggio…I've dropped the step count to 16. It will automatically assign it to Bank A1. You can create more sequences and assign them to A2 and A3 and on and on…

Once you've created your sequence in Synchron 32 head back to the Arranger Pane and right-click into the PSYN track. Then choose "Project5 Synchron 32 > A1 as below. Drag the Synchron pattern out now to match the rest of the project. Note that it has a "T" under the pattern name. That stands for Trigger, as it is a midi pattern that is "triggered".
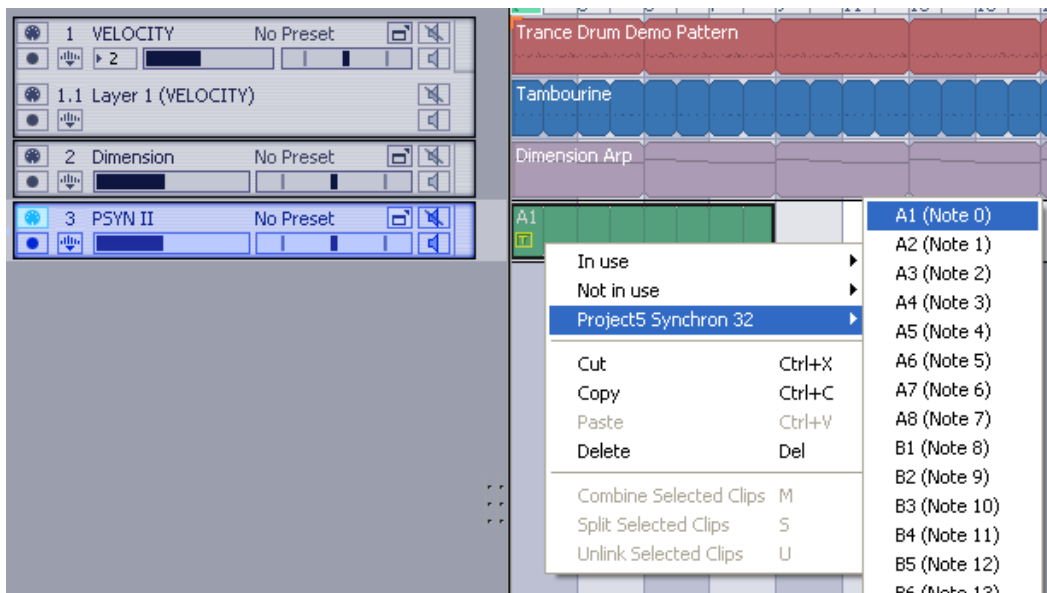
<u>Wrap Up</u>

So now you've got an instant "floorfilla" trance hit on your hands! Okay, maybe not. What do you expect for only 3 instruments. Hey…if it was that easy, it wouldn't take me 2 months to produce one song!
I hope you can appreciate that this is merely covering the surface of Project5. This may not be as deep in functionality as other applications like Sonar or Cubase or ProTools. It's a different animal though. This program is meant to inspire you and let you create music fluidly and efficiently.

I will likely be revising this tutorial and adding on as time permits. I've likely omitted several essential points and if I've made a glaring mistake please let me know so I can correct it. Or if you have any other questions feel free to contact me by email. My website is www.digital-aura.ca and my contact info is there.

Its also a good idea to hit up the kind folks at the P5 forums at www.project5.com . For now, enjoy P5 and don't forget to post your music so we can all hear it!

- Digital Aura