



Charting Guide

Making a Chart Pack

Recommended Precursors:

- Knowledge of the process for making a standalone XDRV chart

This article mostly contains recommendations and advice, rather than formal instruction. Feel free to take the information here with a grain of salt.



Creating a chart pack for XDRV is a goal of many XDRV charters, and for good reason! In any games which support them, chart packs offer a more cohesive experience than standalone charts. Chart packs allow charters to combine music, art, patterns, and mods purposefully, with the potential for quality rivaling base game content. It can be tempting for many custom charters to jump into creating a chart pack early on because of this. While conceptualizing and even gathering necessary materials for a chart pack is relatively easy, the process of creating a full chart pack is far less so. Chart packs in any rhythm game, including XDRV, require a large amount of involvement and commitment from all contributors. Therefore, it's important to gauge when you (and any potential collaborators) are ready to take on the challenge of making a chart pack.

Starting your Chart Pack

As stated above, the first part of creating a chart pack is determining if you are ready to create a chart pack. An important part of this is determining what your goals are. Are you charting for lower and upper difficulties, or are you only doing HY and EX charts? Are your charts going to have elaborate mods, simple lighting events, or no mods whatsoever? Is there a specific style of patterning that you want to utilize in your

charts, or are you varying the style per song? Are you aiming for the whole chart pack to receive leaderboards? How many songs do you want to include in the chart pack? As the first part of making a chart pack is largely conceptual, it's important to think about these questions early on.

From the answers to these questions, you can determine if you are reasonably ready to commit to a chart pack by checking one single factor:

Have I successfully accomplished all of my goals for the chart pack in solo charts?

If the answer to this question is yes, then you are probably ready to take on a chart pack. If the answer is no, then I recommend you strive to do these goals with an individual chart before committing to a chart pack. For example, if you want to make a full-difficulty chart pack with mods and leaderboards, it is highly recommended that you have one solo chart that covers 3 or more difficulties, has mods, and received leaderboards.

Another question you can consider prior to committing to a chart pack is:

Have I created enough solo charts to have a solid grasp on the chart-making process?

Whether or not you read all of the articles within this guide, the best way to learn the rules of XDRV charting is to make XDRV charts. If you want to make a chart pack with 6 charts and have only done 1 solo chart, you may want to consider familiarizing yourself with the charting process via 1 or 2 more solo charts. Neither this or the previous consideration are hard rules, but they are attempting to keep your best interests in mind: avoiding overcommitment too early on.

Approach for Collab Chart Packs

Very similar factors can be considered for chart packs where multiple people are contributing. For all participating charters, you can check to see if they have achieved in a solo chart the goals of their planned contribution. Out of fairness, you may want to hold each person to the same standard, especially if all charts in your collab chart pack have the same goals.

The Chart Pack Process

If you've decided that you are ready to begin creating a chart pack, then your first step will be to finish conceptualization. You should put together a list of songs, some basic metadata, and the number of separate difficulties that you intend to make per song. It is okay to change your song selection, difficulty spread, or any other elements of your chart pack concepts later, that is totally fine! This is just a means of keeping all of your plans in one place.

Once you have done this, you will likely need to reach out to artists to receive permission to use any songs that general permissions do not exist for. This could take some time, so it is ideal if you have included at least one song (if not more) in your chart pack with general permissions. That way, if you are waiting for some time, you can still start working on the content of the pack. If you fail to get general permissions for any songs, you may want to switch one of your song selections. If you will need to get a lot of song permissions, you should allot yourself a good amount of time to do this—potentially as much as a few months.

From here, your step is to create the actual game content—charts and mods. The experience of creating a standalone chart is practically the same as creating one chart for a larger pack, except for any consistencies between charts that may influence your design decisions. With that said, a lot of work will be required for the entire chart pack, so one of the most important things to remember is to pace yourself.

Pacing Yourself

There are a number of different means of pacing yourself through the creation of a chart pack. If you pace yourself well, you'll be able to move through chart pack development in a way that feels rewarding and healthy. If not, you may experience burnout or demotivation, resulting in large delays. Here are some good practices:

- *Stagger the components that you tackle.* For instance, if you want to do EX diffs and mods for all charts in your pack, it is recommended that you don't do a pass for EX and a pass for mods. Alternate between the two tasks throughout your development of the chart pack to avoid tiring of either.
- *Don't feel bad for taking breaks.* It is completely normal to distance yourself from a creative process in order to breathe. Taking a break has the added benefit

of refreshing your perspective on what you have already made, allowing for better clean-up and polish.

- *Don't feel guilty for pushing back planned or stated deadlines.* It is understood that charters have a life outside of making charts. If you need to give yourself more time, do that. Giving yourself that time is crucial to seeing the full potential of the chart. Alternatively, consider not creating deadlines for yourself.
- *Feel free to incorporate other creative elements into your chart pack.* If you want to create promotional images, folder banners, jacket art edits, or any other elements, you can intersperse these tasks between chart creation.



Types of Chart Packs

There are a variety of different chart packs that you can make for XDRV. While no formal definition exists for the types of chart packs, this list includes a few types of chart packs that are common in XDRV and other rhythm games. In no way are these categories firm or independent; a chart pack can easily fit into multiple or no categories. These categories are not being created for common use; rather, they are intended to give charters interested in making a chart pack a sense of direction.

Base-Game Style

A chart pack of this type is intended to match the quality and style of XDRV's base-game content in a number of ways. Besides for purposeful exceptions, all charts in the pack are controller-friendly, have multiple difficulties, and use an appropriate amount of mods. The charts in these packs, as they meet the general guidelines, aim to receive leaderboards as well. Examples: TBSHG

Challenge Pack

A chart pack of this type will stick to 1-2 high difficulties for each song included, only using HY, EX, and potentially OV difficulties. The difficulty floor of all charts is 12/13, while the average difficulty is around 14. Challenge packs may or may not include mods and may or may not be controller-friendly; regardless, the goal of charts in the pack is to provide experienced players with unique challenges.

Beginner Pack

A chart pack of this type will provide a full set of difficulties for each song included. The difficulty ceiling of high-difficulty charts is 11/12, while their average difficulty is around 11. Beginner packs may or may not include mods, but they are more likely to be controller-friendly in order to accommodate more playstyles. The goal of charts in the pack is to provide new players with approachable custom charts.

Modchart Pack

A chart pack of this type attempts to create powerful and tricky mods for each song included. Typically, each chart has a singular, upper difficulty. Despite having only one difficulty per song, each chart requires a lot of meticulous planning and consideration, making this type of chart pack uniquely challenging to create.



This article is not meant to dissuade charters from committing to or actually creating a chart pack. However, it's important to remember that making a chart pack is a much bigger commitment than one might initially expect. If you want to make a chart pack, but feel underprepared, that is totally normal! Your best bet would be to do a few standalone charts of a similar style to what you want your chart pack to contain. Through this process, you will build the experience and confidence necessary to take on a larger project. For when you do commit to a chart pack, I wish you the best of luck!