

[META] Think you have what it takes to collab with me, MixmstrStel? Let's find out. Powered by /r/mashups.

OFFICIAL RULES and FAQ

Introduction:

Let me start by thanking all of you for the support this year and throughout the years on Reddit, SoundCloud, and my other social networks.

In good times and bad, you guys are the best!

That being said, it's time to announce a contest for once, because there hasn't been one on the /r/mashups sub in a while.

Background:

For years, mashups were already a staple of my work. After a couple years, there was a point where A vs. B tracks felt a bit easy. I wanted to do more.

Ever since my Fall Out Boy edit from February 2013, extended edits and extreme mashups became a big part of the tracks I've made and what DJs have used to make song transitions easier, while adding flare to their sets. In essence, these edits and mashups are intended to advance what remix services (Ultimix, X-Mix, Full Tilt, etc) have done even further and add the type of creativity that mashups can provide.

How is an extended edit structured?

A typical extended edit is structured like this (all units in beats, assuming 4/4 time):

Intro Drums (32)

Intro Instrumental (32)

Original Song (verses/choruses)

Break (optional)

Original Song (final verses/choruses)

Outro Instrumental (32)

Outro Drums (32)

Of course, this structure can take on many variations. Extended edits that have “hype” usually have vocals from different tracks over the Intro and Outro instrumental parts, sometimes with rapid-fire sampling. Sometimes the break has vocals. Specific to my style, the break is a A vs. B mashup verse and chorus. Extended edits usually have a drum part layered on top.

If the entries are plentiful and are of high quality and creativity, the structure could end up like this:

Intro drums (32)

Intro Instrumental + Drums + Rapid-fire Mashup Vocals (32)

Mashup (two verses, two choruses, A vs. B)

Middle Break (third mashup verse + chorus, maybe some additions)

Mashup (last chorus, A vs. B)

Outro Instrumental + Drums + Rapid-fire Mashup Vocals (32)

Outro drums (32)

What contest materials will I be provided with, and what do I have to do with them?

You will have the intro, middle break, and outro stems of six different Top 40 tracks. These stems include the instrumental, original, drum parts, FX, and one or two synths/polyphonic stems that I added in for you. Your task is to pick AT LEAST ONE of these sections (intro, middle break, and/or outro) from one of the songs given and add vocals (and possibly other prerecorded samples) on top.

Which tracks are being provided?

- Sia - Chandelier
- Meghan Trainor - Lips Are Movin'
- Maroon 5 - Animals
- Gwen Stefani - Baby Don't Lie
- Calvin Harris feat. Ellie Goulding - Outside
- Kid Ink feat. Usher and Tinashe - Body Language

Keep in mind that official instrumentals may not be available for all the songs provided, so I had to use the closest covers I could. Better versions may be utilized later during the evaluation phase and afterwards.

Where can I download the stems?

Here:

Download full mixes pack, all songs: <http://bit.ly/1y9WshE>

Mirror: bit.ly/1pBC1Ho

Mirror 2: bit.ly/1Flozp5

Download grouped stems pack, all songs: <http://bit.ly/1tC2srP>

Mirror: bit.ly/1vAlHFe

Mirror 2: bit.ly/1zGIKjf

Download all stems pack, all songs: <http://bit.ly/1Cw65d6>

Mirror: bit.ly/1FHsfY6

Mirror 2: bit.ly/1FGPsYy

Download Chandelier Full Mix pack: bit.ly/1yqcpxF

Download Chandelier Grouped Stems pack: bit.ly/1zGCzMd

Download Chandelier All Stems pack: <http://bit.ly/1voEhOe>

Download Lips Are Movin' Full Mix pack: bit.ly/1HPjzkg

Download Lips Are Movin' Grouped Stems pack: bit.ly/1v7pxrK

Download Lips Are Movin' All Stems pack: bit.ly/1v7pjkl

Download Baby Don't Lie Full Mix pack: bit.ly/1B336ay

Download Baby Don't Lie Grouped Stems pack: bit.ly/1tBIZaT

Download Baby Don't Lie All Stems pack: bit.ly/1y9HLeq

Download Animals Full Mix pack: bit.ly/15LXqVB

Download Animals Grouped Stems pack: bit.ly/1FGL23T

Download Animals All Stems pack: bit.ly/1vy2zdn

Download Outside Full Mix pack: bit.ly/1FlcYGr

Mirror for Outside Full Mix pack: <http://bit.ly/1K0FJS3>

Download Outside Grouped Stems pack: bit.ly/1xZPvut

Download Outside All Stems pack: <http://bit.ly/1z5rMek>

Download Body Language Full Mix pack: <http://bit.ly/1yV2kcp>

Download Body Language Grouped Stems pack: <http://bit.ly/1G1AFJX>

Download Body Language All Stems pack: <http://bit.ly/1A2nxk4>

What's the difference between full mixes, grouped stems, and all stems?

Wouldn't surprise me if I get that question a lot. Here's an explanation:

Full mixes: All stems (original, instrumental, drums, FX, and synths) were rendered together to form one file for a specific portion of a song (intro, outro, or middle break). For example: **CH f EG O MmS O Full Mix Intro.wav** represents the full mix of the intro portion of the song, Outside, by Calvin Harris, featuring Ellie Goulding. No vocals were added to the designated portion--that's for you to fill in!

If you want to save space on your hard drive, I highly recommend you get the full mixes.

Grouped Stems: Stems that fit a specific type (original song, drum stems, FX stems, synth stems/polyphonic stems) were rendered together. There can be up to four in a folder. Here's what each category consists of:

Original, Instrumental, Original reverb/delay tails, etc. = Original Song Stems

Additional drum samples, hihats, tamborine, etc. (no reverb tails) = Drum Stems

Additional bass drum/cymbal Impacts, risers, etc. = FX Stems

Additional synths or polyphonic instruments = Synth Stems (this name may vary)

Grouped stems can be useful for instances where you may not like a synth portion I added, or even the drums I used--you only have to mute them out once for the given type. If you'd like to hear different processing on the grouped stems, you can also do that, too.

You can also use grouped stems in doing instrumental mashups too using the drum and FX stems as a backing beat. For example, in my extreme extended edit for Fancy, I switched from the instrumental of Fancy to a Jam On It sample, Alejandro sample, and others while keeping the drums I added intact. The possibilities are endless!

As an example, **KI f U & T BL MmS Drum Stems Grouped Middle Break.wav** represents the grouped drum stems for the middle break portion of the song, Body Language, by Kid Ink, featuring Usher and Tinashe.

All Stems:

It means exactly what it says--all the stems, sampled or otherwise, that were used in the production of a given portion (reverb/delay tails from the original song are not separated). This includes additional hihats, risers, synths, and other elements that I added.

For example: **M5 A MmS Reverse Wind Stem Outro.wav** represents a reverse wind riser that was used in the outro portion of the song, Animals, by Maroon 5.

What do the filenames mean?

Good question! Filenames for the stems are written in this form:

[Artist Initials] [Title Initials] [Mashup Artist] [Type of Stem] [Portion of song]

For example, the filename for a stem for Meghan Trainor's Lips Are Movin' may look like this:

MT LAM MmS LAM Inst Middle Break.wav

MT - LAM = Meghan Trainor - Lips Are Movin'.

MmS = MixmstrStel, the mashup artist who sponsored this contest.

LAM Inst = Instrumental to Lips Are Movin'.

Middle Break = The middle break section of the song. This could be Intro, Outro, or Middle Break depending on section.

What are the requirements?

- **An entry to this contest includes vocals (and possibly other samples) over a given part.** For example, Joe Schmoe's vocal mix to the All About That Bass intro part counts as ONE entry. Doing the intro, middle break, and outro counts as THREE entries. [I've designated these parts in the SoundCloud comments for convenience.](#)
- You can submit multiple entries for different parts if you have the time to do so, but remember that for a corresponding song and section, please submit your best one!
- **Intros and outros MUST include AT LEAST three additional samples, preferably vocals.** Give me that 15-30 second rapid-fire rush of samples, but keep it cohesive and give the samples a nice common theme! Outros can have the same samples as intros. **If you plan to do them, please don't save them till the last minute, as these are expert-level parts.**
- **Middle breaks can have any number of vocal samples, but you MUST include at least one.** This is usually meant to be an A vs. B mashup, so I don't expect a ton of samples here.
- The quality of your vocal mixing is important but not critical here. If your sampling is creative enough and you are selected as one of the winners, I will help mix and master your vocals and master bus for the extended edits that will be released.
- You are allowed to cut or loop parts of the stems to fit your vocal, but please don't make the intro, outro, or middle break too long. You are not making a full mashup, just partial mashups as part of a larger edit.
- **In additional to mastered (vocal) samples used for your entries, make sure you have the unmastered/unmixed (vocal) samples saved in your DAW of choice so you can render them in WAV or FLAC! Otherwise I can't work with them if you are selected as a winner of the contest.**

So what can and can't I do in an intro or outro? I need examples.

For intros and outros, here are some examples of what I'm looking for and what I'm not, from various remix services:

- 1) [Here's one I "don't" like. The Fatman Scoop sample has little to do with the song, and less than three samples. See 0:06-0:23.](#)
- 2) [This one for "This Is How We Do" is warmer: the samples follow a theme, but 1\) less than three samples and 2\) samples are OOK](#)
- 3) [This one for Break The Rules sounds great, with more than three samples used.](#) It's not brilliant, as it doesn't stick to a theme.
- 4) [Now this one for La La La I'd consider impressive.](#) More than three samples, a consistent theme by word association, and goes above and beyond with creative scratching and pitch transposition! I don't expect anyone to do something like this.

A lot of what I'm looking for in intros and outros is captured in my extended edits [on SoundCloud](#).

What about middle breaks--how should they be made?

The middle break is intended to be a simple 1 vs 1 or A vs. B mashup verse and chorus, but you can add more samples to spice it up. Just remember to make sure there's a clear distinction between the verse and chorus.

When must entries be submitted by?

By January 4th, 2015 at 11:00 PM Eastern time, after which voting will take place.

NEW! You can submit during the voting phase, but you will not be able to receive the expert feedback you've come to expect until evaluation.

Can my entries be flagged by SoundCloud?

Since you are not posting the original track, it is highly unlikely that the automatic content system will flag your track but I don't make any guarantees.

How should I send in my entries?

Please direct message me a downloadable link to a **PRIVATE** track on any platform (SoundCloud, hearthis.at, Mega, wherever). Do **NOT** make your submissions public. Do **NOT** post your entry in the Reddit thread. If I can Google them, your entry **MAY** be disqualified.

In particular, you can send a private message to my SoundCloud account, [MixmstrStel 2](#), send an e-mail to [mixmstrstel\[at\]gmail\[dot\]com](mailto:mixmstrstel[at]gmail[dot]com), or send a message to [stel1234](#) on Reddit. You can also direct message me on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#), both addressed to MixmstrStel.

What are the phases of the contest and how will winners be determined?

There are three phases:

Submission (Nov 30 - Jan 4), Voting (Jan 5 - Jan 10, TBA), Evaluation (Jan 11 - Jan 18 TBA), and Final decision (Jan 19, TBA).

During the submission phase you can ask me any questions you have in the Reddit thread and direct message your submission on Reddit and my other social networks (SoundCloud, Facebook, Twitter, etc). **Do NOT make your submissions public.**

Please submit your entries by January 4th at 11:00 PM Eastern time, after which voting will take place. You can submit afterwards, but you will not be able to receive my expert feedback until afterwards.

During the voting phase, **the entries will be posted to Reddit, of which will be anonymized and arranged at random.** You will NOT know who submitted which edit without listening to them. **Do NOT tell people which entry yours is.**

You will have until January 10th at 11:00 pm to vote (tentative). The top voted tracks get higher priority in the evaluation phase.

During the evaluation phase, I will look at your entries and **evaluate them on a number of factors, not limited to cohesiveness, creativity, familiarity of samples, and availability of studio or decent quality parts.** If I feel the part you made has potential, you could be selected as a winning entry.

After all entries have been looked at and utilized in tracks, I will compile and select the entries I feel are usable for the sampling I want to accomplish for each Top 40 song, ask for and obtain the unmastered samples you added, and fit all the best ones in the track as appropriate. There may be multiple entries selected for the same parts. After I finish creating the tracks, I will make

a final decision on which entries were worthy enough to win the contest, i.e. get included in the full tracks created with your names credited. Because there are multiple parts and multiple entries allowed, there can be multiple winners. **Keep in mind that getting the most votes makes it more likely to win, and does not make it automatic.**

What do I win if I get selected?

For now it's bragging rights that you're a part of one of my releases, presented to 7000+ followers on SoundCloud and many other followers on my other social networks. You might even get some blog attention, too. If the releases that come out of this contest are top-notch, they could be a part of the next "Mastered!" mashup bundle I will release in late January or early February. I may also invite you for more projects in the future and continue to do these kind of contests.

When the entries are compiled and used, what would a sample track sound like?

Here's an example of a fully constructed extended edit similar to what would come out of your entries with an intro, outro, and middle break for [Ariana Grande's Problem, which was recently posted on Reddit](#). I don't expect this level of sampling, but surprise me!

The tempo of some of the Top 40 songs in the stems are different than their originals. What are their BPMs?

Glad you asked:

- Sia - Chandelier: 97 BPM (sped up from 87 BPM)
 - Meghan Trainor - Lips Are Movin': 139 BPM
 - Maroon 5 - Animals: 104 BPM (sped up from 95 BPM)
 - Gwen Stefani - Baby Don't Lie: 105 BPM (sped up from 100 BPM)
 - Calvin Harris feat. Ellie Goulding - Outside: 128 BPM
 - Kid Ink feat. Usher and Tinashe - Body Language: 108 BPM (sped up from 99 BPM)
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What if I don't like the drums or FX you added and I get distracted?

Download the grouped stems and only use the ones marked "[Title] Stems Grouped", where [Title] is the abbreviation for the titled track. For example: BL Stems Grouped represents only the original and instrumental parts of the song, Body Language.

What if I don't like the volume of a few of the drum or FX parts?

Download the packs marked "All Stems", where you can turn down each add'l part, whether it be a drum loop, hihat, cymbal, or riser.

Need inspiration?

Check out the extended edits I've made on my [MixmstrStel 2](#) SoundCloud account as well as many of the remix services on [The Source For Music](#).

Do you have any tips for completing the entries?

Of course! I can already see the questions coming in, especially for how to make proper intros and outros. Here are a few:

- You've probably noticed that tag editing is difficult to do with WAV files. If you need a software that will help you do them effectively, get yourself a copy of IDTE-ID3 Tag Editor. Mp3Tag will NOT work here, and iTunes may be ineffective.
 - Because additional drums were added, often sampled from other songs, some of the original Top 40 songs were sped up to the tempo of the drum samples to give them more of a club feel. **Do not rely completely on the tempo for the original songs—that's why it's one of the FAQs.**
 - I highly encourage you to use the stems I give you to their fullest potential. For example, you can create mini instrumental mashups using the grouped drums and FX stems I provide. You can even mute the drums for one measure and bring them back in using the FX I provide. The possibilities are endless!
 - If you plan to use a DJ software like Traktor, Virtual DJ, or Serato to mix in the vocals or other samples for this contest, you might want to record your routine without FX plugins first and then do it with plugins for the entries you submit. That way you have unmastered and mastered entries prepared.
 - DAWs like Audacity and Pro Tools have effects (ex. Audiosuite) that are NOT real-time, by design. In other words, once you apply the effects to a given part, they are considered **destructive edits** and you have to hit Undo to get back the previous audio waveform. Because of this, you are advised to **use real-time plugins wherever possible and either save a separate copy of your work before applying destructive edits with non-real-time effects or duplicate each channel where the destructive edits will be applied so you have an unmixed and mixed copy handy.**
 - Structure is important. Make sure the verse you use in an A vs. B makes sense as a verse and the chorus for an A vs. B makes sense as a chorus.
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But dang, it's so hard to create intros and outros with three additional samples in a 15-30 second period! I'm so lost.

You've come to the right place. I can't help too much with finding samples in this tutorial, as many are on a case-by-case basis (either Google or acapellas4u.co.uk). But I can help with proper construction and sample quality that separates the men from the boys:

- Try not to use **clicked hype samples** unless you really feel they are necessary and add to the original track. This includes Fatman Scoop drops, Pitbull drops, and various stock airhorn and siren effects.
- If you get stuck, start by brainstorming a possible theme for your intro or outro. In doing so, first listen to the original song, looking for words or phrases that are common to other songs around the same tempo and in the same key. If you can't find any, think of other words or phrases that are common to create a theme or chain. Then listen to other songs and look for such words or phrases. This is called **word association**. This can be a difficult skill to master, but with a lot of practice and experience with songs, you will be an expert at this in no time.
- Example of word association: When I did my edit for Eminem's The Monster, I remembered that Mary J Blige's Family Affair was in the same key and had the word "party" in it ("Everybody just **party** with me"). That led me to then use System Of A Down's BYOB, which had the lyric "**Everybody's** going to the **party** have a real **good time**" and was in similar key. Good time? Yes that's right Owl City and Carly Rae Jepsen's "Good Time" is also in close relative key, too: "Let's go have a **good ti-ime**". Follow a similar process, and you'll get out of this writer's block.
- You don't have to follow a theme in the entire intro/outro, but it helps to have combos where the lyrics flow like the example I gave.
- Since you have to include **AT LEAST three samples** in your intros and outros, it helps to give each sample some elbow room. In particular, if you plan to overlap samples, it helps to separate them in space (ex. one vocal center, the other slight right or left).
- If you're still stuck, **take a break and don't be discouraged**. Extended edits with hyped intros and outros can be difficult and have taken days, even weeks, to get ideas for. Don't procrastinate and expect to come up with these intros and outros instantly. If it hasn't worked for me, it probably won't work for you.
- If I haven't said it already, have fun! Let your imagination go wild. If you really can't do an intro, maybe fall back and do an A vs. B with multiple samples. There's always a possibility I can find that special connection that's needed for the intro.

Final Words:

I wish you all good luck in completing those entries.

Because of the two-tier difficulty system imposed (easy A vs. B middle break, rapid-fire sampling for the intros and outros), this contest suits both those starting out and experienced veterans alike.

If you have any questions, feel free to post them in the Reddit thread. Thanks again!