

Dean Hendy



"Being able to hear a click or loop is just as important as the choice of sounds or subdivisions"

level
Beginner

Click Friendly – Part VII

Wrapping up his series on playing with a click, Dean makes sure you can hear what's going on

In this series, we have looked at some different ways of using a click which hopefully has helped you with problems you may have had and given you some idea's of how to use them.

When thinking about working with a click, getting a really good metronome or similar is very important, but if you're in the studio or playing live, you also need to think about getting a decent set of headphones or in-ear monitors to make sure that you can hear the click clearly. Being able to hear a click or loop is just as important as the choice of sounds or subdivisions, and the sound of a click can often be ear-piercing and thoroughly off-putting if listened to through a bad set of headphones. Often cheaper headphones won't be able handle the EQ of the click unless you have the click sent to a separate EQ system, which although useful, as you can control your own personal level and equalisation, can be ultimately more expensive than getting good-quality phones or in-ears in the first place.

While both headphones and in-ear monitors work perfectly well in either studio or live situations, many players actually prefer to use in-ears for live shows and headphones for studio work. This is for a number of reasons:

- **Aesthetics:** In-ear monitors look a lot more discreet on-stage than large headphones, which isn't a concern in the studio.
- **Comfort:** In-ears are much lighter for on-stage use, where you will probably be a lot more animated than in the studio, and traditional headphones can have a habit of slipping off your head when used live.

With both options, there are a few different areas to think about:

IN-EAR MONITORS

When using in-ears, it's preferable to spend a little more money and get a pair that are moulded. This means that a cast is taken of the shape of your ear and the monitors are made to be the same shape so that they fit perfectly. This also means that they also act as noise defenders, cutting down outside noise so that your hearing is protected when on a noisy stage.

HEADPHONES

There are a few different options when it comes to headphones, the most common being: open, closed and isolation:

- **Open (back):** these are generic types of 'off the shelf' headphones, usually quite small and lightweight, and allow all surrounding noise to be heard clearly. Not a great option when working to a click.
- **Closed (back):** these are normally a little larger and cover the whole ear. Although they offer a lot more outside noise reduction than open phones, they still allow an amount of outside noise to spill into the sound they produce.
- **Isolation:** the best option for working with a click as they cut out a large portion of outside noise leaving you the sounds that you choose only. Similarly they will not allow for any click sound to bleed out of the headphones, which in the studio can often be a problem, as this is then heard and recorded by the drum mics.

Another consideration when deciding between the two can be cost: in-ear monitors, while ultimately being the better option, can be slightly more expensive than headphones, although if looked after should last a long time, and are well worth the extra investment if you regularly play with a click.

That's it for this series on getting you up to speed with working to a click. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to send them through. Starting next issue, we're going to be looking at the available sounds you can get out of each aspect of your kit, and how you can easily achieve them.



Dean Hendy

Dean is an in-demand professional session player and clinician with countless musicals, theatre shows, orchestral concerts and thousands of gigs to his name. Regularly performing with artists as diverse as

Jason Donovan and Liam Madison, Dean also teaches in his native Lincoln as well as providing workshops and demonstrations at drum events up and down the country. Dean proudly endorses Gatton Drum

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