

# Beat Making on the **MPC2500**

A step-by-step tutorial guide book for  
the Akai MPC2500

Written By **MPC-Tutor**,  
MPC-Samples.com



## **Beat Making On The MPC2500 – Contents In Brief**

### **Preface**

i	How to use this book
---	----------------------

### **Section A - Fundamental Skills 16**

001	Audio Connections	17
002	Understanding MIDI	23
003	Memory & Storage	29
004	Loading Part 1	33
005	Loading Part 2	40
006	Saving	45
007	Naming Samples	55
008	Sampling Sounds	56
009	Understanding Mono & Stereo	61
010	Editing Samples Part 1	62
011	Editing Samples Part 2	67
012	Looping Samples	71
013	Programs	77
014	The Internal Mixer	86
015	Recording Sequences	89
016	Editing Sequences Part 1	99
017	Editing Sequences Part 2	111

### **Section B – Manipulating Drums & Break Beats 119**

018	Filtering & Tuning Samples	120
019	Chopping Samples Part 1	122
020	Chopping Samples Part 2	127
021	Chopping Part 3 – Patched Phrase	132
022	Chopping Part 4 – Stutter Chopping	136
023	Layering Drum Sounds	138
024	Rebuilding Decay Tails on Snares	142

### **Section C – Building Drum Kits & Breaks 144**

025	Emulating Timbre Changes	145
026	Building Drum Kits - Pure Kits	151
027	Building Performance & GM Kits	156
028	Creating Realistic Drum Performances	162
029	Basics of Laying Down a Drum Beat Part 1	164
030	Laying Down a Drum Beat Part 2	168

### **Section D – Advanced Techniques 171**

031	Fitting an Instrument Loop to a Beat	172
032	Understanding Effects	178
033	Effects & Settings	181
034	Sequencing Tricks Part 1	191
035	Sequencing Tricks Part 2	197

036	Multisampling Part 1	201
037	Multisampling Part 2	207
038	Looping Instrument Samples	210
039	16 Levels & Autochromatic Assign	213
040	Using Blue Box	218
041	LFO, Slider & External Sound Manipulation	223
<b>Section E – Building Songs</b>		<b>228</b>
042	Direct Recording	229
043	Sequence Experimentation & Song Mode	233
044	Song Arrangement Ideas	242
045	Recording Your Beats Part 1	247
046	Recording Your Beats Part 2	251
047	Recording Your Beats Part 3	258
048	Compression Part 1	262
049	Compression Part 2	265
<b>Section F – MPC2500 Studio Environments</b>		<b>269</b>
050	Looping Multisamples in Soundforge	270
051	Using Recycle with your MPC2500 Part 1	278
052	Using Recycle with your MPC2500 Part 2	283

# Beat Making on the MPC2500 – Contents In Full

## Preface

i      How to use this book

## Section A - Fundamental Skills **16**

### 001 Audio Connections **17**

- Outgoing audio connections 17
- Connecting to a hi-fi system 17
- Connecting to a studio mixer 18
- Connecting to a DJ mixer 19
- Incoming Audio Connections 20
- Sampling Directly From a CD player 20
- Sampling from a turntable 20
- Sampling from a microphone 21

### 002 Understanding MIDI **23**

- What is MIDI? 23
- Controlling MPC pads with a keyboard 24
- Connecting Synthesisers 25
- Adding Sound Modules 26

### 003 Memory & Storage **29**

- What is Memory? 29
- What is Storage? 29
- Which Memory Card? 30
- Upgrading Ram 30

### 004 Loading Part 1 **33**

- Overview 33
- Viewing the contents of your card 34
- Folder Loading 35
- File Loading 36

### 005 Loading Part 2 **40**

- Manual Disk Transfer 40
- USB Transfer 40
- Emptying Memory Cards 41
- Preparing Your Card 42
- Updating the OS 44

### 006 Saving **45**

- Saving to memory card and hard drive 45
- How to name files and folders 47
- Creating Backups 52
- Saving to internal memory 52

### 007 Naming Samples **55**

- How to name sounds 55
- File naming conventions 55

<b>008</b>	<b>Sampling Sounds</b>	<b>56</b>
	• The sample screen and settings	56
	• Signal to Noise Ratio	57
	• Should I add Effects While Sampling?	59
	• Sampling Your Sound	59
<b>009</b>	<b>Understanding Mono &amp; Stereo</b>	<b>61</b>
	• Mono rules?	61
	• Creating Stereo	61
<b>010</b>	<b>Editing Samples Part 1</b>	<b>62</b>
	• The TRIM screen	62
	• Setting Start & End Points	63
	• Trimming Your Samples	63
	• How Good is the MPC Waveform Display?	65
<b>011</b>	<b>Editing Samples Part 2</b>	<b>67</b>
	• The DISCARD function	67
	• EXTRACT	68
	• DELETE	68
	• SILENCE	68
	• NORMALIZE	68
	• REVERSE	69
	• The Sample Screen Functions	69
<b>012</b>	<b>Looping Samples</b>	<b>71</b>
	• Understanding Loop Points	71
	• Looping Drum Breaks	71
	• The Loop Screen	72
	• Setting Start and End Loop Points	73
	• Checking For Clicks	74
	• Locking the Loop Points	75
	• Auto Loop	75
<b>013</b>	<b>Programs</b>	<b>77</b>
	• Understanding Programs	77
	• Assigning Sounds to A Program	78
	• What Are Banks?	78
	• Changing Program Parameters	79
	• Changing Global Pad Sensitivity	81
	• Filters	82
	• Voice Overlap	83
	• Play Mode	84
	• Copying pad parameters	85
<b>014</b>	<b>The Internal Mixer</b>	<b>86</b>
	• Using the Internal Mixer	86
	• Controlling Multiple Sounds	87
	• Changing Outputs	87
<b>015</b>	<b>Recording Sequences</b>	<b>89</b>
	• Overview	88

	• Changing Tempo With Tap Tempo	90
	• Sequencer Parameters	91
	• Recording a Drum Performance	92
	• Endless Recording	93
	• Erasing Notes	93
	• Note Repeat	94
	• Adding Another Track	94
	• Recording MIDI tracks	95
	• Why Don't The Pad notes run in musical order?	96
	• Recording Mixer Changes	97
	• One Sequence or Many?	98
<b>016</b>	<b>Editing Sequences Part 1</b>	<b>99</b>
	• Changing Notes in Step Edit	99
	• Navigating In Step Edit	101
	• Step Edit Options	102
	• Note Parameters	103
	• Editing Recorded Mixer Settings	104
	• Grid Editing	104
<b>017</b>	<b>Editing Sequences Part 2</b>	<b>111</b>
	• Copy & Paste	111
	• Events	111
	• Bars	113
	• Track Move	115
	• Copying & Deleting	116
	• Inserting Program Changes	117
	<b>Section B – Manipulating Drums &amp; Break Beats</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>018</b>	<b>Filtering &amp; Tuning Samples</b>	<b>120</b>
	• Filtering Kicks	120
	• Tuning Breaks	121
	• Tuning Down Without Dropping Pitch – Vinyl	121
<b>019</b>	<b>Chopping Samples Part 1</b>	<b>122</b>
	• Methods For Chopping Breaks	122
	• Zone/Slice Function Overview	122
	• Adjusting Regions	124
	• Slicing	124
<b>020</b>	<b>Chopping Samples Part 2</b>	<b>127</b>
	• Fixing the End Slice	127
	• Chopping It Further	127
	• Adding More Slices	127
	• Doing It all In 'AUTO'	128
	• Using Only Your Best Samples	130
	• A Word of Warning	131
	• Using Extract To Create Slices	131
<b>021</b>	<b>Chopping Part 3 – Patched Phrase</b>	<b>132</b>
	• Overview	132
	• Calculating BPM	133

	• Patched Phrase In Action	135
	• Patched Phrase Editing	135
<b>022</b>	<b>Chopping Part 4 – Stutter Chopping</b>	<b>136</b>
	• Overview	136
	• Creating Stuttered Chops	137
<b>023</b>	<b>Layering Drum Sounds</b>	<b>138</b>
	• Layering Drum Sounds	138
	• Changing Parameters	139
	• Resampling Your Outputs	140
	• Filtered & Tuned Layering	141
<b>024</b>	<b>Rebuilding Decay Tails on Snares</b>	<b>142</b>
	• Re-building reverb/decay tails on snares	142
	<b>Section C – Building Drum Kits &amp; Breaks</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>025</b>	<b>Emulating Timbre Changes</b>	<b>145</b>
	• Dynamic Sample Variation	145
	• Using multiple samples	145
	• Creating your own variations	146
	• Timbre variations on one pad	147
	• Utilising Layers	148
	• Using Q-Link sliders	150
<b>026</b>	<b>Building Drum Kits - Pure Kits</b>	<b>151</b>
	Why build kits in a standard layout?	151
	'Pure' Drum Kits	151
	Building the Kit	152
	Filling the Gaps	153
	Making It Stereo	154
<b>027</b>	<b>Building Performance &amp; GM Kits</b>	<b>156</b>
	• Overview	156
	• Building The Kit	157
	• GM Kits	158
<b>028</b>	<b>Creating Realistic Drum Performances</b>	<b>162</b>
	• Real time or step edit?	162
	• Turn Off Full Level	162
	• Using Quantise	162
	• Keep it varied	162
	• Lining Up Samples (or not)	163
	• Drummers and Limbs	163
<b>029</b>	<b>Basics of Laying Down a Drum Beat Part 1</b>	<b>164</b>
	• Overview	154
	• Steps in laying down a beat	154
<b>030</b>	<b>Laying Down a Drum Beat Part 2</b>	<b>168</b>
	• Creating Drum Rolls	168

	• Ghost Notes	169
	• Recreating Grooves From Other Records	170
<b>Section D – Advanced Techniques</b>		<b>171</b>
<b>031 Fitting an Instrument Loop to a Beat</b>		<b>172</b>
	• Overview	172
	• Matching up Grooves	172
	• Matching Tempo by Tuning	173
	• Pitch Shifting	173
	• Time Stretching	174
	• Finding Pitch/Key	175
	• Major or Minor?	176
	• Patched Phrase	176
	• Chopping both Loops	177
	• Hints on Improving Tempo Matching	177
<b>032 Understanding Effects</b>		<b>178</b>
	• Understanding Effect Controls	178
	• Master Effects	180
	• Saving Effect Sets	180
<b>033 Effects &amp; Settings</b>		<b>181</b>
	• 'Jazzing Up' Rhodes	181
	• Tremolo	182
	• Flying Pan	183
	• Combining Effects	183
	• Chorus	184
	• Flanger	184
	• Delay	185
	• Reverb	186
	• Bit Grunger	186
	• 4 Band EQ	187
	• Compressor	188
	• Changing Effects Via Step Edit	189
	• Getting Around Limitations	189
	• Master Effects	190
<b>034 Sequencing Tricks Part 1</b>		<b>191</b>
	• Boosting The Bottom End of a Loop	191
	• Filter Sweeps	191
	• Changing Sequencer Resolution	195
	• Creating Delay Effects With Your Sequencer	195
<b>035 Sequencing Tricks Part 2</b>		<b>197</b>
	• Echoes	197
	• Turntable Stops	197
	• Fade Back	198
	• Putting It All Together	198
<b>036 Multisampling Part 1</b>		<b>201</b>
	• How Do We Multisamples	201
	• A Sub Bass Program	201



	• MIDI notes and the MPC	203
	• Tuning	204
	• Controlling Note Length	204
	• Controlling Decay	205
<b>037</b>	<b>Multisampling Part 2</b>	<b>207</b>
	• Overview	207
	• Converting a loop into a multisample program	207
	• Monophonic Multisampling	208
<b>038</b>	<b>Looping Instrument Samples</b>	<b>210</b>
	• Overview	210
	• Extending note length with looping	211
	• Creating a drone	212
<b>039</b>	<b>16 Levels &amp; Autochromatic Assign</b>	<b>213</b>
	• Overview	213
	• Practical usage of 16 levels	213
	• 16 levels & Patched Phrase	215
	• Autochromatic Assign	215
<b>040</b>	<b>Using Blue Box</b>	<b>218</b>
	• Downloading	218
	• First Steps	218
	• Musical samples	220
	• Chromatic Programs	220
<b>041</b>	<b>LFO, Slider &amp; External Sound Manipulation</b>	<b>223</b>
	• LFO Overview	223
	• Tremolo Effect	223
	• Mimicking Vibrato	223
	• Creating Bass Lines with LFO	224
	• Real Time Controls	226
	• Q Link Sliders	226
	• Manipulation of External Sounds – Input Thru	227
	<b>Section E – Building Songs</b>	<b>228</b>
<b>042</b>	<b>Direct Recording</b>	<b>229</b>
	• Preparation	229
	• Using the Footswitch	231
	• Saving the Sample	231
<b>043</b>	<b>Sequence Experimentation &amp; Song Mode</b>	<b>233</b>
	• Track Mutes	233
	• Recording Track Mutes	235
	• Sequence Experimentation	236
	• Continuous Sample Track	237
	• Song Mode	238
	• Converting Songs to Sequences	240
<b>044</b>	<b>Song Arrangement Ideas</b>	<b>242</b>
	• Overview	242

	• A List of Arrangement Ideas and Techniques	242
<b>045</b>	<b>Recording Your Beats Part 1</b>	<b>247</b>
	• Overview	247
	• Recording a Rough Demo	248
	• Going To A Studio	249
	• Doing It All Yourself	250
	• A Mixture	250
<b>046</b>	<b>Recording Your Beats Part 2</b>	<b>251</b>
	• What Is A Multi Tracker?	251
	• Synching & MIDI	252
	• MPC as Slave With MIDI Clock	253
	• Mono & Stereo Instruments	255
<b>047</b>	<b>Recording Your Beats Part 3</b>	<b>258</b>
	• Using Effects While Tracking	258
	• Dry Recording	258
	• Wet Recording	258
	• Using the MPC Outputs	259
	• Multitracking to a Standard Mixer	259
	• Recording Via A Mixer	259
	• Assigning Outputs	260
<b>048</b>	<b>Compression Part 1</b>	<b>262</b>
	• What is a Compressor?	262
	• Types of Compressor	262
	• Compressor Controls	262
	• Graphical Representation	263
	• What Can Compression Do For My Music?	264
<b>049</b>	<b>Compression Part 2</b>	<b>265</b>
	• Hooking it up	265
	• Limiting a Signal	265
	• Compressing a Vocal	266
	• Smoothing Out a Bass Line	266
	• Adding Punch to Guitars	266
	• Increasing Guitar Sustain	266
	• Compressing Snares	267
	• Cymbals	267
	• Compression as an Aux Effect	267
	• Suggested Settings	267
	<b>Section F – MPC2500 Studio Environments</b>	<b>269</b>
<b>050</b>	<b>Looping Multisamples in Soundforge</b>	<b>270</b>
	• Background	270
	• Getting Started	270
	• Setting the Loop	272
	• Adding Loop Markers	274
	• Crossfade Looping	276
	• Limitations	277

<b>051</b>	<b>Using Recycle with your MPC2500 Part 1</b>	<b>278</b>
	• Overview	278
	• Getting Started	278
	• Slicing Your Beat	278
	• Previewing Your Slices	279
	• Adding a Slice Point	279
	• Envelope Settings	279
	• Exporting Your Slices	280
<b>052</b>	<b>Using Recycle with your MPC2500 Part 2</b>	<b>283</b>
	• Background	283
	• Blank.pgm – a recap	284
	• Assigning Slices – Method 1	285
	• Fixing the Open Hat	285
	• Assigning Slices – Method 2	285
	• Changing the Tempo	286