

Music 238 Take-Home Quiz 3 RESPONSES

What recording software and/or equipment do you use, and do you have any advice about utilizing it most effectively (like are there typical problems/solutions you've experienced)?

Sound Trap it is an online website you can sign in using your Facebook account, or Gmail account, etc.

Garage Band with an AKAI MPK mini midi keyboard and a simple interface. The typical problems I've faced with this setup is figuring out how to correctly toggle the input/outputs. The common solution to this was making sure that the cables were all fully inserted in the right inputs, especially when I'm using my interface. Sometimes I've caught myself inserting the instrument cable into the secondary slot rather than the first... A silly but common mistake.

I started out using GarageBand because it was free and had a very simple interface. After a couple years of that, I switched to Logic Pro X because it was basically just a more advanced version of GarageBand. To use it effectively, I recommend getting comfortable with using an Audio Interface in order to record your own instruments, and of course having patience. You have to enjoy the struggle at first.

I use Logic Pro X, an audio interface I plug my guitars, bass (or microphone) into, and go directly into my computer. I think the most effective way to use it is tactually, as in to "learn by doing." If I get stuck on a technical matter, I'll simply google "how do I... in Logic?" which usually yields the needed information.

I mainly use Cubase 10.5 to record my projects. I started my song writing journey with a looper pedal back when I was 11 years old. After that I moved on to more advanced loop stations until I switched to Cubase. I don't think it matters at all which DAW you use, as long as you know how to use it. I had no Idea how to use Cubase for over a year, until I started taking classes at my community college. I would recommend taking a class on DAW's and using whatever DAW the teacher uses on. That way you can learn the workflow of that particular DAW.

The recording equipment I use is iphone voice notes. The best way to record a song with vocals is to wear headphones and sing, as your voice is clearer and the background piano tune doesn't drown out the main melody. The biggest problem was my vocals getting overridden by the piano sounds when recording, therefore headphones really help it become clearer.

I use GarageBand when recording by myself and the biggest problem is just being unfamiliar with the software and the best way to get familiar is by using it over and over again.

The recording software I mainly use is GarageBand. In terms of equipment, I typically use a Rode condenser microphone to record vocals and a MIDI keyboard to play and record instrumental parts. As far as typical issues I have encountered with this equipment, I would say I have had the most trouble with the microphone. In order to avoid microphone issues, I would advise other musicians to ensure their input is set to their microphone, and their output is set to their built in speakers (unless they have others they are using).

I am using adobe audition. This is because the audio quality comes out perfectly as recorded, and seems to have a few automatic audio-enhancing features that make things sound clear. Also, this is because I couldn't get other, more musical oriented DAWs to function properly. The best of those run on MAC, and I use PC...Typical problems I might experience is a lack of a way to change the duration of a note, or

change notes easily within a recording. This is honestly a pain in the ass for songwriting, as I constantly change the melody, and therefore have to re-record every section again. This might result with unsynchronized audio, which sounds terrible, so I have to monkey with the audio file just to make it line up. In addition to this, audition does NOT have midi support... All in all, audition is amazing for simple recording and editing, but if you want to add a musical element to that, good luck...Honestly, use another setup if you can. 3/10 for music creation.

I use [Goldwave](#), Ableton, Overture 4 and a bunch of small apps for different specific purposes. I have a basic condenser (electrostatic) mic with XLR cable(which is single channel not stereo btw) with a very basic sound card for recording, or sometimes I just use iPhone. My suggestion is to go to Goldwave or [Audacity](#) and play around with it so you know the basics of sound engineering if you don't know yet, then you can go to ableton or logic which is a little harder. Here is a super detailed guide on Ableton and recording in general:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dza0RKSVLCo&list=PLa9ASr8n5idArGa1uaBExM-I-nO1P959>

If you run into any problems, it'll be a lot easier to Google for answers once you have the fundamentals so at least you know what people are talking about online.

Started out with NCH suites. Did the first project for his course using it. This was actually not wise on my part because I own a Roland fa 08 keyboard.

The recording software I used is Garageband, as long as you can level your sounds, an understanding of effects, and have a decent mic, you can achieve great recording sound. For equipment I used a Scarlett 2i2 interface, an electric guitar, bass guitar, 12 in tube amp and reverb pedal; and a dynamic microphone. To get a more natural analog sound, I had the dynamic microphone mounted on a short mic stand aimed at the speaker of the amp so that I could capture the natural tone of the tube amp; Garageband does have a nice selection of amp simulators, pedals and effects, but I prefer using external equipment as its easily recreatable in a live setting.

I use Ableton DAW and a microphone and interface. The only problem I experience is that Ableton is pretty limited to me such as, I do not have access to it at home.

I use FL Studio and a mic at home. I don't have a studio or anything I just do it at my computer. The best way to learn is definitely to just jump in and mess around with the program to learn. Also watching a lot of videos of people producing with the program helped me learn a lot.

I usually use logic or fl studios. I've never been good with technology and music, so I usually will write a song on the piano or on the guitar, the classic way, and have someone help with the technological side of it. I like to use different synths to transform a basic piano melody into something that sounds unique. I like the lullaby vibe. I feel like it's my sound.

I know a studio engineer with a personal set-up. He uses Pro-Tools, and provides a sound-proofed booth. With microphones, one typical problem I've had is distorting vocal quality thanks to imbalanced volumes. If you're a vocalist, microphone presence is huge. When using your voice at high volumes or while expressing anger, be aware of your position in relation to the microphone. The louder/angrier you get, the farther you want to lean away from the microphone.

What creative process do you follow to get your ideas documented?

Creating the lyrics first then work my way to the adding of the essential instrumental component. I also based everything around the inspiration of life events and having a night sleep something that clicks.

Typically, I only create when I feel like I'm 100% willing to build off of initial concepts. For example, I'll usually start with one riff and then build upon that with other melodies or additions. After practicing and writing things down for awhile, I'm usually able to record bits of songs and then splice them together and toggle their tone to match the song. This is usually the most tedious part of my process and where I reach a point of frustration.

I try not to force any ideas, so if I have a base idea float through my head I try to write it down or record a voice memo. From that point on, I try to suck as much juice as possible from that idea and then I move on and go back whenever I get new ideas to add onto it. I try to have all of my ideas either written or recorded on my phone fully fleshed out until I start producing it on the DAW.

It's basically "whatever works." Sometimes I'll record what I improvise while playing to a metronome, sometimes I'll set up structured drum beats to write along to, sometimes I'll have a specific inspiration that influences what I'm writing. It all depends... I think the most important thing is to regularly carve out focused time with the necessary tools to let the process unfold.

I almost always start off with a chord progression I like. Then I either loop it on a pedal or record it in Cubase. Sometimes I transpose the guitar chords into midi data and play around with different piano and keyboard patches. I usually just keep stacking ideas on top of each other then I pick which parts I like the best. If I'm feeling lazy I'll write the whole song to the one progression but sometimes I'll try to write out a second part outside of the DAW and then record it in later. I'll try and develop the idea. I usually move on from a project after about a week which I know is bad. I just get bored of a song after a while and want to move on to something new but this prevents me from fully developing or finishing my songs.

I don't set the time to make my ideas. I think about it randomly throughout the day. I like documenting lyrics on my phone's notes feature whenever I get inspired. Moreover, whenever i think of a tune I record it on my phone's voice memos and collectively put this together when I get the time.

Whenever I have a new idea Ill record it in my voice memos.

Creative processes that I follow to get my ideas documented are messing around with different instrumental sounds, whether it be digital or not, and depending on if I want to add more, finding other sounds that will coalign with the way I want the end result to be. After finding a sound, I usually start writing melodies that may fit with the emotion of a song and test different lyrics before placing them with the sound.

First, I usually begin writing a song or musical idea by just playing the piano/keyboard or guitar and singing along, then I record whatever I came up with on my phone. Then, I will usually write out the lyrics on a piece of paper and write the chords on top of the lyrics as they come.

1. First off, I choose a key. With that, I listen to a bunch of music in that key, to get a feel for how it can sound.
2. Choose a bpm to make sure everything is in tempo.
3. After, I list the notes of that scale, and the chord progression along with it.
4. I pick up the guitar, and play each chord a few times to get a feel for how each one sounds. I record a file with all these chords on it, and splice that in audition as individual sections. This helps in changing the song chords tremendously.
5. Sit down and play around with the chords to find a good accompaniment. This is a rough draft, mainly meant as a guideline as I fill in the actual melody. These chords can change if I find it is too big of a jump to cross or it just doesn't make sense anymore, given the pace of the melody and last note written.
6. Find the tonic note on the guitar, and start playing around until I find a melody that can work as a motif.
7. Modify that motif to move along the chord progression, making changes to the accompaniment as needed.
8. If the motif is sounding repetitive, change it up too.

If you are good at performing, then I'd suggest do a short recording to file your idea so they don't get lost, then you can figure out how to work on it later, if you are good at noting scores, then again, jot it down on [Musescore](#) or [Overture](#). I usually do one of the two; don't use more advanced programs to do this unless you're very good at it! Just get the idea down and production can follow when you're ready.

What I've been doing so far is learning how to utilize my available technology by experimenting with sounds that are already on the device.

Typically I follow a layered approach when being creative. I'll start with one element: harmony, rhythm, melody and or lyric and build upon it.

When I make music (vocally) I feel out a beat and kinda freestyle to it. Then add lyrics I like out of that freestyle.

Usually I'll have a melody or lyrics that are stuck in my head and I try to make them into a full song just based off the concept. Sometimes I also lay down the chords or a beat before starting on the melody and lyrics. It usually depends on what's in my head at the time.

I feel like I always have music flowing in my head 24/7 and I write a bunch of lyrics about how I'm feeling, or I even embody someone else's feelings to write. Then, I apply a melody to those lyrics depending on how they feel to me.

Usually I have a whiteboard of ideas and narrow them down based on the vibe of a chosen instrumental (YouTube is a gold mine). Afterwards I focus on just enough ideas to put together a chorus, then develop the verses and rest of the song based on the established ideas. This can include repeating sections of the chorus like a refrain.

What do you do when you hit a block in the process (something like *writer's block*), and/or what do you do for inspiration?

I take a day or two to come up something. I probably also try listening to other music and come up with some ideas from that without simply copying from the person.

Typically I'll ask for help from other people/musicians. I've found that my best collaborations have helped me develop some of the most progressive techniques and concepts that I continue to use today.

I try to stop for a while and get lost in something else, usually without the idea of the song in my head at all. Sometimes I'll watch a movie or listen to an album I like, just to refresh my brain. If I'm lost on what to do with specific parts of songs that I have already started, I tend to take walks or replay the songs over and over and just hum parts or play with melodies to see if I can come up with anything I like.

I usually get inspired by listening to a variety of music, reading, or any other kind of exposure to art. If I get stuck, taking a break, getting some exercise, or some kind of physical activity to shift my energy will help. Other times I'll simply run through scales/exercises to keep my chops in shape so that when inspiration comes back I won't be hindered by feeling "rusty."

I think the most important thing is to realize that writer's block is part of the writing process. Sometimes things just don't click, and you can't blame yourself for that. I feel like I've been in a writing rut for over a year but I know that things move in waves so eventually things will start clicking again. When I have writers block I just try to find something that inspires me, whether that be a movie, a painting, or another song. I try to experience more things in my life so that I'll have more material to write about.

I like listening to artist's who are known to be great lyricists such as Billie Eilish or Julia Micheals. Moreover, I like reading poetry as it helps me think more creatively.

I get writer's block often but I think that's normal and I'll go outside for inspiration. Usually I just let it flow and not try to force anything when I haven't written in a while.

When I hit a block in the process I usually take a step back and do something to relax or else I get frustrated and want to quit. As well, I will test out different instruments to see how the rhythm may sound different on one versus the other or I simply listen to different types of songs and get influenced by them. Other than that, I'd say to be patient with your work.

If I am feeling blocked, I try to remind myself to not be afraid to try new things. Sometimes I get blocked because I am worried I am not doing something right or maybe I will not like what I come up with. Therefore, I try to remind myself that in the creative process these things do not matter, and no one will know, but me, what I tried and whether it was good or not. If I am feeling so blocked that I am feeling frustrated, then I tell myself to try again the next day or after a night of good sleep.

Step away from the computer and setup, listen to some music while taking a walk to clear the mind. Honestly, it's super frustrating when my ideas take a long time to test because of inexperience with the guitar. This is the majority of the time sink involved with MY process, at least. Messing up a section results in a do-over, and re-playing a section 30 times because you fat-fingered a note does not feel very encouraging. When frustration takes over, I remind myself that the actual goal is to learn music, how it works, and frustration is all part of the process. Taking my mind off of the song is the best relief, however.

I will listen to music or watch a movie, read stories etc. Not to draw reference, but to let the flood gate of emotions out. I find inspiration very easy to come by when I am full of emotions, and it's really easy to be full of emotions for me if I do these things. Find your own emotional triggers, and I trust you'll feel more creative as well!...Eat or sleep for mental reset if you're feeling stressed. Go for a long and mindless walk if you are just blank - a lot of ideas came to me on the road, especially on the way home from school actually come to think of it. Let your mind free-flow and react to the environment. It has worked well for me too.

When I hit a block, and with the learning curve being so high, I've hit many, I just put the project down for a while. What I do for inspiration is listen to the many talented artists out there and find lines, riffs, musical progressions, sounds, and go from there.

When running into a block, I believe the best solution is to work your way through the block. This might involve doing research on a particular topic, making a structured chart of your project or listening to other music for inspiration.

When I hit a block I usually try to change the key of the song to freshen it up, and if I can't think of anything to write on that specific song, I'll make a new song and work on that instead. I tend to come back to a lot of my songs after a while, and sometimes I drop them completely. I also listen to the song a lot when I'm not busy to brainstorm things that I can do to the song.

I honestly just stop when I get frustrated. There's nothing that can really help me be inspired, it kind of just happens, and when it doesn't, it doesn't, so I just stop, because forced music is usually not that good to me. For inspiration, I liked to work with others, and bounce ideas off of people. I would say my best songs have been collaborations.

When I hit a block, I look for something boring to do like wash dishes. It's when I'm bored that my brain wanders off the most. For inspiration, I think of anything from a pleasing to a traumatic event, and allow the resulting emotions to provide the vibe for which I search.