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NEXT STEP

THE MIX AND MASTER OF AUDIO ENGINEERING

We all perform a bit of audio editing from time to time, be it setting the acoustic solo of our favourite song as our phone's ringtone or creating that "gaayeholud" dance mash-up (including fade effects). What you're doing is something that is part of a broader spectrum – audio engineering. If you enjoy experimenting with audio tracks and want to delve more into this field, keep reading!

What is audio engineering?

Audio engineering involves fine tuning and/or working with the technical angles of sound during the process of recording, mixing and producing. Simply put, audio engineering skills are responsible for the soul soothing, aural desserts you hear in music.

How should you get started?

Although the existence of certified degrees or courses is not necessarily known of in Bangladesh, it is not entirely impossible to learn to master this field. Most are self-taught or have pursued their studies in this field abroad. For those who prefer keeping things affordable, there are numerous online materials to learn from, be it books or tutorials on YouTube that are available for free. However, some quality and certified courses do come with expenses, especially on websites such as Lynda.com, Udemy and Coursera. Financial aid is also available in some of these courses, which often helps gain access to resourceful materials.

Raihan Mahbub Rasha, who is the Founder of Hungry Dog Studio, says it's the era of YouTube and that there is an abundance of resources online to get started. "Download free raw sample sounds of instruments, learn how to mix from YouTube and then try replicating what you hear on your own! This also helps find one's own taste and style of creating sounds."

The most basic equipment include a DAW (Digital Audio Workstation), a MIDI keyboard, some outboard gears (if one can afford), and a lot of patience, as recommended by Rasheeq Rayhan, CEO of The Rock Project Dhaka, which is to begin operations from June. What matters more though

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is the need for regular, focussed practice by means of in-depth learning. "Audio engineering is a very hard skill to master and one can easily get frustrated towards the beginning. It is also difficult to learn on a practical basis without the right equipment," he adds.

Well, if you want to start learning, don't

plan, start working. As I said before, this is the era of YouTube. "I was self-taught from the very beginning using books and tutorials as primary learning materials. I also used to take tips from various local and international sound engineers. I completed an online course on Audio Engineering from the prestigious Berklee College of Music with 100% mark certificate. Although I started it as a hobby, I intend to take it as a profession some day," says Rasheeq.

"The basic software can be Fruity Loops (any version, latest preferred) but if you have the intentions of working professionally then I'd recommend using Cubase, Pro Tools or Logic Pro (Mac users)," recommends Rasha.

The current demand in Bangladesh

Apart from the ubiquitous production houses sprouting up every now and then, the demand for expert and creative sound engineers are quite high. Income ranges vary based on experience and output. Freelancing is always an option, but positions such as recording specialist, mixing and mastering engineer, broadcast engineer at radio stations and TV channels provide a much stable source of satisfactory income.

Communities

When engaged in creative skill building, it is important to receive constructive criticism regarding your work to better develop yourself. There are a number of online platforms



to get feedback, be it Facebook groups or Soundcloud communities. However, it is often advised not to jump to such diverse platforms and initially depend on a trusted, experienced and if possible, professional source. Online platforms tend to have people of all levels of skills and opinions, which may not necessarily help get the constructive criticism that is much needed to begin with.

One can, however, try to follow the different styles and work of local and international professionals in order to better ana-

lyse and understand what it means to get creative with sound. *Sound engineering is another form of art that still hasn't been fully explored and promoted on a mass scale in Bangladesh. It is an important set of creative skills that add the final aura to the music and everyday jingles you listen to. So why not try out a few online materials and see (or hear) what you've got?*

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WANTED: FLAT TO RENT FOR A YOUNG, SINGLE PROFESSIONAL

Defining home is a complex process. Finding a place to call home is even harder. But it's definitely worth it. How do you go out there into the world and find a place to live, for example, if you are in a new area for a job, or you simply want to move out and try out the independent life? Here are some tips that will help you out.



1. Be informed and inform

Let your peers and colleagues know that you are looking for a house. Bring it up in conversations – you never know who might be able to help you out. Also, it means that whenever they find a suitable spot, or somewhat of a suitable spot, they will give you a 'heads up'. Try to keep an ear out for any sort of information that might help you, like which place has the most suitable transport system or which area has many vacancies. Rely on your family and contacts. Ask those who live nearby to assist you or to find suitable places.

2. Form or join a group of friends who are interested in being your flatmate, or are searching for a house

These are the people who will have ample information that will be necessary for you, and these are the people who will help you out. This may open a whole other range of options for you, such as getting a more expensive and aesthetically pleasing flat.

3. Don't be afraid to say 'NO!' to some options

If you aren't feeling it, if your instincts are saying no, say no. Remember, you have to live here for

a substantial period of time, and if something about the place doesn't suit your tastes, it isn't the place for you. There will be other options.

4. List down your priorities and remember that money isn't the only factor

Yes, we would all like an affordable place, but at the end of the day, find a place that is worth the rent. Consider the distance from work, the availability of transport, the general environment of the area, and also, availability of nearby bazaars. Consider the type of work your job will need you to do, for example, if you need to be there early or on time, distance will be important, or if you need to visit lots of different places, ease of transport will be important.

5. If you are a girl, be prepared to face a whole lot of discrimination and extra steps

It's hard enough to find a place to live alone or to live with your friends, but if you are a girl, you have to go through some extra steps. You have to convince a bunch of people and then some more about getting your place, and consider a whole lot of extra aspects as well. You have to face more no's and it will feel like finding a place is impossible. Don't

give up. The world is progressing and will be ready for your steps.

6. Start early and plan beforehand

It's best if you start this hunt beforehand to give yourself sufficient time to examine all your options and find the best match. You need to find a place to live you will like, and if time is a pressurising issue, you can't do that. It will save you the worry and let you search for the ideal spot. It's best if you start at least a month before work begins so you are well settled before starting your job.

7. Remember that there are no fixed steps or processes

You can go out on the streets or you can search for places online. You can choose to live with your work buddies or you can choose to live alone, with another family or in a flat. You can start by simply moving into a place temporarily and then finding out a more permanent place or fix a permanent place before work begins. Just keep notice of what is right for you and make a well calculated decision.

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Making a DIFFERENCE

Bangladesh is rapidly moving towards middle income status by 2021. Our businesses definitely offer immense opportunities for the growing economy and this diversity needs a stage for the stories untold. See Bangladesh make its mark on the global map as Making a Difference brings you our proudest success stories from across the country.

4 WEBSITES WHERE YOU CAN LEARN AUDIO ENGINEERING

Coursera

Coursera has a four-course specialisation in music production from Berklee College of music. This specialisation will give you the knowledge and tools you need to record and produce professional sounding music.

You start off by developing your identity, vision, and intention as an artist and producer. Next you will learn the technical aspects of music production, including how sound is translated into audio signals, recording techniques, and effects such as reverb, delay, and compression. The course also teaches you how

to use the industry standard Digital Audio Workstation (DAW), Pro Tools, to create professional recordings, and quizzes you on the knowledge and tools you gained.

Berklee

Berklee Online separately offers a wider range of 12-week music production courses where you can pick up renowned mixing, mastering, and music production techniques using Pro Tools, Reason, Ableton Live, Cubase, SONAR, Logic, and more. Berklee's offerings are comprehensive, covering everything from beginner level music production with Ableton Live to Film Scoring 101.

Lynda

Lynda has over 270 audio and music training courses and tutorials. Their expert-led audio tutorials show how to record and mix songs, make beats, play and

customise software instruments, and use popular music production and sound engineering software like Avid Pro Tools, Logic Pro, Ableton Live, and more.

With beginner, intermediate, and advanced level courses, there's something for anyone anywhere on the learning curve, whether you want to polish your old tricks or pick up new ones from scratch.

Udemy

At Udemy, you can lift off your music career with courses that teach you how to play instruments, use software, apply techniques, and make productions. Both paid and free lectures really get down to the nitty-gritties with individual lectures that are usually under ten minutes. Plus, who doesn't want to learn how to become a great DJ and be the life of the party?

