

07 USE TIME- AND PITCH-STRETCHING

Any mid-level or better DAW will support time- and pitch-stretching of audio. They have different names: Flex Time and Pitch in Logic, Hitpoints in Cubase, and so on. Time-stretching is useful to make a clip fit the tempo of your project regardless of its original speed. Spend a little time properly editing its start and end points (since your DAW will work on clip length rather than waveform) and you should be able to snap it to a bar marker to fit it to the project. Alternatively, stretch audio without worrying about snapping to create some special effects, such as extreme slowdowns. Tempo-stretching can be done without affecting pitch, and the reverse is also true. Change the pitch of audio and you can conform it to your project key, duplicate a part to create harmonies and process a clip differently through your mixer.

08 RENDER DOWN AND DUPLICATE PARTS

When you work on digital audio, edits that you make are generally nondestructive, and that means you can usually go back to any step and undo it. Sometimes, though, certain kinds of edit are only possible on a real audio clip and not on one that's being effected. Effects are generated in real time and therefore you couldn't, for example, slice up a delayed clip because the software would analyse the source clip, not the sound of the delays since they were still virtual. The way around this is to simply bounce (not freeze) a copy of an audio part down either by exporting and re-importing it or by printing it to a new track internally. Then, any slice analysis is performed on the effected file, which will look very different to the original. Since you have copies of both you can keep the original too and decide which one to use for what purpose.

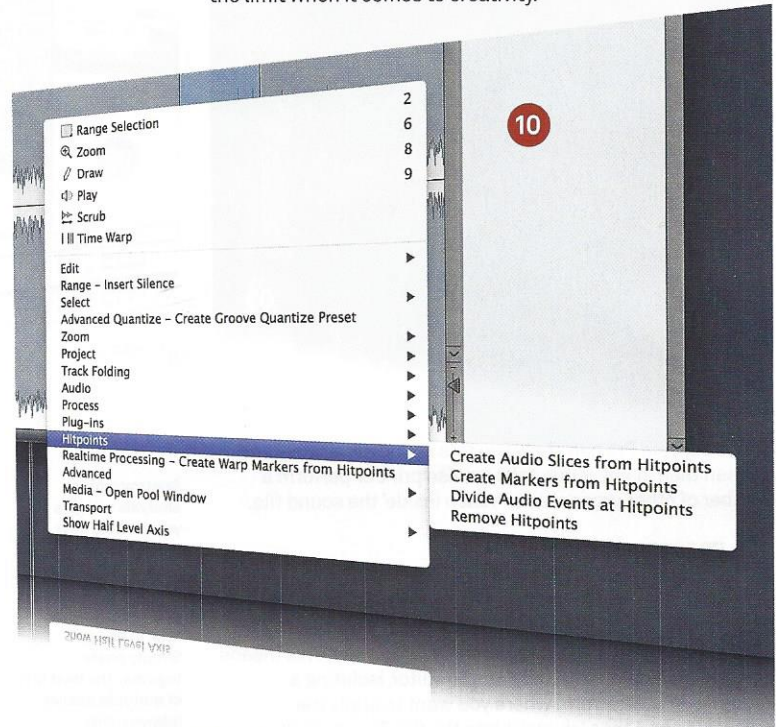
09 USE SPECIAL FX PLUG-INS

You'll probably be aware of regular plug-ins such as EQ, compressors and reverbs, but there are quite a few effects out there that are capable of much more extreme sound processing. There was a time when to get cut-up effects you basically had to physically cut up all your audio parts and process them through tons of effects. Now it's much simpler with effects such as Turnado, BreakTweaker or Stutter Edit. These multi-effects simulate complex edits and processing, but instead of taking hours to work on they can be performed with a couple of clicks. You can take fairly ordinary-sounding

Quickly create presets with groove extraction tool (above).

Make sure you fully explore your plug-in folder and take advantage of the more 'out there' effects (below).

source audio and quickly turn it into something much more exciting, cut up and dynamic. Since it's an effect, everything remains virtual until you choose to bounce down, so the sky is the limit when it comes to creativity.



This means you shouldn't get any nasty clipping caused by clashing waveforms

10 EXTRACT GROOVE

Many DAWs will enable you to extract the groove from either a MIDI or an audio part, store this as a quantization preset and then apply this to another part. So you can impose your own groove maps onto recorded or sampled audio parts using this technique to change their feel. Software such as Melodyne and Cubase also lets you extract pitch data to MIDI; so, for example, you can analyse a vocal take and create a MIDI-triggered duplicate.

11 CHEAT USING COPY AND PASTE

Sometimes you will find that your recordings have some performance errors in them and there's no opportunity to do any retakes to fix them, perhaps because the performer is no longer available. A good way to patch over such errors is to identify similar or identical passages in a take that were performed correctly and then isolate, cut out and copy and paste these into the location of the incorrect part. This takes more skill than you might think, since there may be small variations in timing or feel between the part you're pasting in and the time segment you're pasting into. But with some careful nudging and perhaps even a little slicing and groove quantization of the audio, you can usually make it fit in, and if you do the job seamlessly nobody will ever know the difference.

12 SNAP-TO-ZERO CROSSINGS

Many DAWs have a 'snap to zero crossings' option that you can turn on when editing audio waveforms. This works independently of your main application snap settings and ensures that a cut is not made at a point in the waveform where signal exists, but rather where the level is zero. This means that when you edit two parts together you shouldn't get any nasty clipping caused by clashing waveforms.

