Make an EP in 30 Days
Ableton Course

Day 5

Create & Organize your presets, gather sounds

Too Many Choices lead to overwhelm & procrastination.

Ableton gives you a wealth of choices. It's your job to pick the ones you are actually going to use & ignore the rest.

Pick Wisely

Listen to DJ mixes in your style & make a list of common sounds that make up the style. Then find a few presets in Ableton that are in the ballpark.

Listen for Kicks, Drums, Bass, Pads, Atmospherics, Lead sounds etc. Don't listen for "cool" sounds, listen only for sounds that fit your style. You may need to tweak the sounds a bit.

If your music style doesn't fall in the "DJ mix" category. Just create a playlist in your style of music & take notes on things you find in common or that peaks you interest.
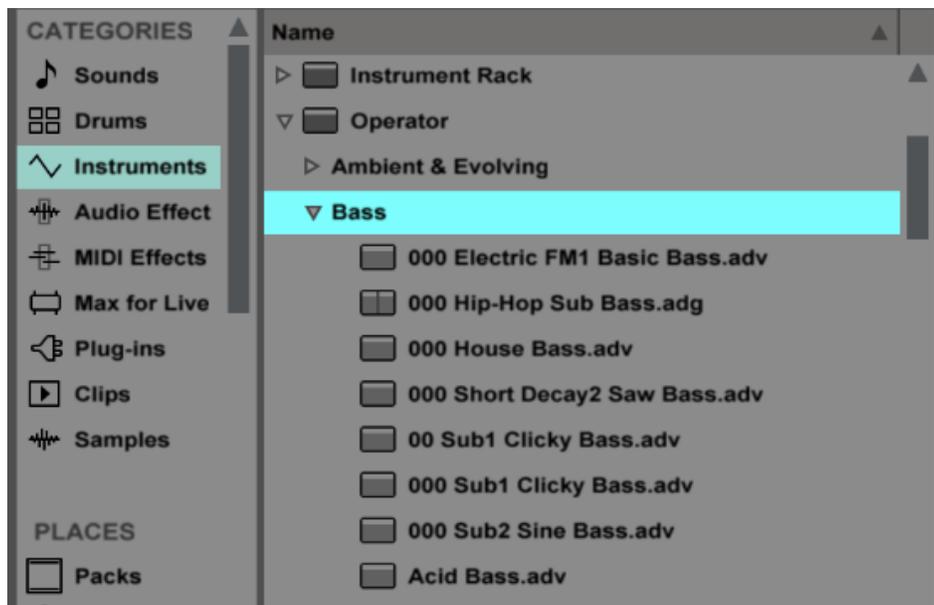
Some sounds will require added effects to get the sound you want. Make sure to group everything & save it all as an instrument rack.

(pc) Control g
(Mac) Command g

Arrange Presets

For easy access to your presets put "000" in front of the name of the preset. By doing this, your presets will always show up on top.

Gathering Sounds

Presets may get you close on several sounds, but you'll still be missing some. For this you'll want to look into samples & loops from various sources. You can google free samples, or look into paid samples for specific genres.

Also highly recommended is Splice.com, which is a very new & innovative way to build your sample library.

You can also sample sounds from other songs. The clean sounds are usually in the intros & outros. Ableton makes this pretty easy.

1. Simply highlight the sample

2. hit [command e] to cut out the individual sound

 3. [command j] to consolidate that sample.

When you have sounds that are ready to go, fewer choices & easy access, you'll be able to work much more quickly

Homework

1.   Homework: take a screenshot of your instrument presets (with 000 in front).

2.   Pick 10 samples (not any more) for each drum sound(kick, snare, clap, hi hat, open hi hat, shaker, crash & a hand full of percussion sounds). Create 1 Drum Rack for each & save as a new preset.