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HOME STUDIOS

From the First Take to the Final Mix

HANSER

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Home Studios

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The Authors

Mag. Lars Arnold Ritter, MBA, M. Sc., is an active university lecturer and is currently pursuing a doctorate in information systems. He conducts research on adult education and digital learning systems and is developing his own learning management system with a focus on effective learning processes in everyday professional life. His work combines didactic clarity with technical systematism and addresses areas where learning must be measurable, motivating, and sustainable. He regularly publishes in peer-reviewed academic journals and consistently brings current research into practice. Under the name “Studienflüsterer,” he accompanies study decisions on social media, contextualizes educational pathways, and translates complex requirements into clear, actionable steps. The focus is on orientation, structure, and practical implementation.

Raik Menzel, M. Sc., is an audio engineer and studio owner. As the founder of NoName Records and operator of the recording studio Grind Audio, he has been guiding productions from recording to the final master for over ten years. He stands for clear decisions in the mix, clean technical execution, and results that translate consistently across different playback sources. In addition to his studio work, he realizes funded music and audio projects with young people and brings professional standards to practical work. He also publishes specialist articles in the field of audio engineering on open-access platforms and advocates for free access to well-founded expert knowledge.

Daniel Müller, M. Sc., is a media and audio expert with more than 20 years of experience in sound engineering, media production, and adult education. He oversees training, develops teaching concepts, writes instructional scripts, and manages several media companies as their director. His work combines production practice in studio, live, and post-production settings with didactic clarity and reliable processes. He conveys technology in a way that works in practice and enables noticeably better results.



The authors thank David Merkl (MSM Studio Group Ltd.) for providing photographs and Heiko Winter for his contribution to the visual material used in this book.

Why This Book Makes You Sound Good

Welcome

This book is for everyone who wants to mix, record, and produce music in a home studio and is looking for a clear, practical guide to do so. You won't get a dusty tome, but a toolbox. We proceed step by step: from the basics through the most important tools to concrete routines you can implement right away. You don't need expensive equipment. You need decisions in the right order, a calm working approach, and ears that get a little sharper every day.



An audio engineer hanging a microphone

Who Is This Book for?

For home studio owners who are studying or planning to study, who know the basics and want to dive deeper in a hands-on way. If you've ever gotten lost in plug-ins instead of making music, you're in the right place. If you want to know how to get reliable results from common means, likewise.

How to Work with This Book

Each chapter begins with a brief introduction, defines the most important terms in plain language, then guides you through the main section with illustrative examples, provides a summary, gives you a short practical exercise, and leads you into the next chapter. Read the chapters and implement individual steps directly in your own session.



Set up a project called “Learning Workbench.” There you try out every instruction and every tip once before using them in real productions.

What You Need for It

An audio program called a DAW (Digital Audio Workstation) of your choice, an audio interface, a pair of decent headphones or small near-field monitors, a microphone for vocals, and a little uninterrupted time. That’s all. Everything else is method.



In the DAW domain there are nearly endless possibilities



It’s not the number of tools that makes you more efficient, but the routine and the clarity of the steps.

What You Can Expect

Here you’ll find clear starting values instead of myths, short mnemonics instead of formulas, and examples from typical shared-apartment rooms. You’ll learn how to achieve a lot with just a few controls, how to find mistakes systematically, how to calibrate your monitoring, and how to prepare recordings so that mixing becomes easier.

The goal is a working environment that is reliable and a workflow that keeps your back free.

How You Measure Success

Not by the number of your plug-ins, but by how rarely you get lost and how reliably your mixes work on phones, headphones, in the car, and on small speakers. If you regularly nod along to the beat at low volume with satisfaction, you're on track.

Your First Step Now

Create a starting project, read the first chapters, and then set up your monitoring and references. From the moment you can monitor reliably, everything else becomes more enjoyable.

The book, just like your work as an engineer, thrives on routine and repetition. That is why certain approaches are intentionally mentioned more than once.



Even though approximate values are given in this book, we advise against copying settings. Instead, try to understand what the audio signal needs. Templates and copying settings will not improve your craft.