

The Real Roland Tr 808

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Roland TR-808 Rhythm Composer Sound Sample The Roland TR-808 (popularly known as the '808') is, perhaps, the most popular analogue electronic drum machine of all time. Since its debut in 1982, it has been the drum machine used the most by dance, pop, rap, and rhythm and blues artists to produce the drum rhythm tracks for their songs. In recent years, many electronic musical instrument companies (Roland and many others...) and studio engineer types have attempted to capture its timeless sound through the use of sampling. This has however, proven to be an often disappointing endeavour, due to the analogue nature of the '808'. Because the '808' is a truly 'analogue' drum machine, with very many (22 to be exact) knobs for the settings for its drum sounds, sampling the unit often yields sample sets which are too discrete (i.e. too 'static' and too 'limited' in variation) and simply do not do justice to the wide sound range the '808' can produce. As a result, people still, to this day, are in hot pursuit of real '808's, and its U.S. dollar resale value today (\$250 - \$1,000) is often not too far off from its U.S. dollar retail price at its introduction more than a decade ago (\$1,000). I sincerely believe This is the best sounding out of all the 808's out there. I have made major progress in narrowing the difference between owning a real '808' and owning samples of one. When put to proper use, these samples can be considered better than using a real '808'. Unlike a real '808', with these samples one can have the certain drum sounds playing simultaneously that cannot do so on a real '808', (Hand Claps and Maracas, for example.) as well as scale the velocities of the sounds, and even apply grooves and timing to the beat in a manner much more sophisticated and clearly beyond the capabilities of a real '808'. With the right sampler, these '808' samples can, for all practical purposes, make a real '808' obsolete. I feel these samples are of higher quality than those found in current commercial drum machines. I feel these '808' samples are of higher quality than and currently offered by commercial sample vendors. Quite frankly, I feel this is the best overall sound sample set of the TR-808 to date. And best of all, and very unlike many of the 'competing' samples, these samples are ABSOLUTELY FREE! What I have attempted to do is create a high quality sound sample set of the '808' that is so comprehensive in sample range, that even the 'analogue purist' (the types who are actively pursuing real '808's still today...) would be satisfied. I have, through very time

consuming, painstaking sampling and sample editing work, using professional grade equipment, sampled the '808' at five (see 'FILENAME INFO' near the end of this text file...) uniformly spaced positions for each sound modifier knob. ('LEVEL' being the only exception---as I always kept 'LEVEL' at full to maintain the best signal to noise ratio .) As a result, this rather comprehensive '808' sound sample set has the following : 25 Bass Drum sounds 25 Snare Drum sounds 5 Low Tom sounds 5 Mid Tom sounds 5 Hi Tom sounds 5 Low Conga sounds 5 Mid Conga sounds 5 Hi Conga sounds 1 Rim Shot sound 1 Claves sound 1 Hand Clap sound 1 Maracas sound 1 Cow Bell sound 25 Cymbal sounds 5 Open Hi Hat sounds 1 Closed Hi Hat sound ...making for a grand total of 116 sound samples of the Roland TR-808 Rhythm Composer! These samples were taken DIRECTLY from a Roland TR-808 Rhythm Composer (SERIAL NO. 103852). They are NOT samples of samples (i.e. sampled from a recent drum machine, such as the Boss DR-660, Roland R-8, R-8MkII, etc...) In other words, these samples were taken from a REAL TR-808. All samples were recorded from the individual sound outputs (I did NOT use the 'HI' or 'LO' 'LEVEL' 'MASTER OUT'puts!). While being recorded, each sound (on the TR-808) was at highest volume level (with all other volume levels set to the lowest possible setting), and the master volume (on the TR-808) was always at the lowest setting. All samples were made using protocols TDM EACH and EVERY sample is at 16-Bit, 44.1kHz resolution and was CAREFULLY generated, sampled, selected (I recorded many hits of the same sound, and picked the one that I felt best represented the average of that particular sound) and edited.). ===== FILENAME INFO ===== Bass Drum sounds start with 'BD'. Snare Drum sounds start with 'SD'. Low Tom sounds start with 'LT'. Mid Tom sounds start with 'MT'. Hi Tom sounds start with 'HT'. Low Conga sounds start with 'LC'. Mid Conga sounds start with 'MC'. Hi Conga sounds start with 'HC'. Rim Shot sound starts with 'RS'. Claves sounds starts with 'CL'. Hand Clap sound starts with 'CP'. Maracas sound starts with 'MA'. Cowbell sound starts with 'CB'. Cymbal sounds start with 'CY'. Open Hi Hat sounds start with 'OH'. Closed Hi Hat sound starts with 'CH'. These two letter abbreviations which determine what the filename begins with are the exact ones used to abbreviate the sound names on the actual TR-808 instrument select dial. The 'LEVEL' knob does not count as a knob in filenames, as it was always at the maximum setting (to maintain the highest signal to noise ratio.) On the TR-808, each knob involved in the composition/generation/synthesis of a particular drum sound has 11 uniformly spaced position marks on it (the positions on the dials are not numbered, however...and hopefully the synthesis variable they control is linearly distributed with respect to the knob position!) I

consider these 11 marks to be '0' through '10'. Due to the fact that the '0' position and the '10' position are the minimum (most counter-clockwise) and maximum (most clockwise) positions, one may consider '0' to be the minimum setting and '10' to be the maximum setting. I decided to use dial positions '0' (minimum), '2.5', '5.0' (middle), '7.5' and '10.0' (maximum) for my samples. As a result, I decided upon the following naming convention : '00.' would be a file whose first (and only, in this case) knob was set to 0.0 (or the minimum position). '25.' would be a file whose first (and only, in this case) knob was set to 2.5. '50.' would be a file whose first (and only, in this case) knob was set to 5.0 (or the middle position). '75.' would be a file whose first (and only, in this case) knob was set to 7.5. '10.' would be a file whose first (and only, in this case) knob was set to 10.0 (or the maximum position). It does NOT mean the knob was set to 1.0! Example : Low Tom with 'TUNING' knob set to middle position would be 'LT50.'. If the file happened to be a '.WAV' ('WAVE') file, the name would be 'LT50.WAV'. For sounds which had TWO knobs, such as the Bass Drum, Snare Drum, and Cymbal... The naming convention is the same, but with two additional setting position numbers after the first two... Example : Bass Drum with 'TUNING' knob set between the minimum and middle position and 'DECAY' set halfway between the middle and maximum position would be 'BD2575.'. If the file happened to be a '.WAV' ('WAVE') file, the name would be 'BD2575.WAV'. Once again, this naming convention was used for ALL the samples. Tags: 808

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