

# How Does Technology Affect Music?



Technology affects music by changing how music is made, distributed and subjectively experienced by the listener. Home recording software and the Internet allow artists to reach worldwide audiences without recording contracts. As technology progresses, amateur and professional engineers use new tools to shape the sound of recorded music.

Thanks to increasingly powerful personal computers, ordinary people can record slick, professional-sounding songs on their own. In fact, the rapid development of home recording has helped drive many traditional recording studios out of business.

Sampling is another digital technology that has had a tremendous impact on music. Starting in the 1980s, artists sampled bits and pieces of pre-existing recordings and incorporated these pieces into new songs. Cutting-edge digital keyboards now use samples to provide players with sounds that are extremely authentic. Sampling has become so sophisticated that it is now difficult for listeners to differentiate sampled orchestras from real-life orchestral recordings.

As technology improves, more and more recording engineers use tools such as equalization and compression to further reduce the dynamic range of recordings. In other words, quiet sections become louder and loud sections are toned down. Typically, highly compressed songs sound subjectively louder to listeners. Though some believe compression makes songs sound punchier, others bemoan modern hit recordings as flat or lacking in dynamics.