

## **Some EQ ideas to play with.**

### **Synopsis**

**Here are some useful frequency areas for you to start playing with.**

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# Useful Frequencies to start playing with.

Bass Guitar	Bottom at 50-80 Hz Attack 700Hz; Snap at 2.5Hz
Kick Drum	Bottom at 80-100Hz; hollowness at 400Hz; crack at 2.5- 5kHz
Snare	Fatness at 120-240Hz; Boing at 900Hz; crispness at 5kHz; Snap at 10kHz.
Toms	Fullness at 240 – 500Hz; attack 5-7kHz
Floor Tom	Fullness at 80 – 120Hz; attack 5 kHz
Hi Hat and Cymbals	Clang at 200Hz; Sparkle at 8 – 10KHz
Electric Guitar	Fullness at 200 – 500Hz; Presence at 1.5 - 2.5kHz
Acoustic Guitar	Fullness at 80Hz;Body at 240Hz, Presence at 2 – 5KHz
Organ	Fullness at 80Hz;Body at 240Hz, Presence at 2 – 5KHz
Piano	Fullness at 80Hz;Body at 240Hz, Presence at 2 – 5KHz; Honkey-tonk 2.5kHz
Horns	Fullness at 120 - 240Hz; Piercing at 5kHz
Voice	Fullness at 120Hz;Boominess at 240Hz; Presence at 5KHz
Strings	Fullness at 240Hz; Scratchiness at 7 – 10KHz
Conga	Ring at 200Hz; slap at 5kHz

These frequency ideas have been around for a long time. They are just a guide. Remember to “play” and try for your-self. You will see that there are some fairly common areas. Also remember that there are no “Truths”, however here are some commonly accepted thoughts:

If it sounds muddy, cut some at 250Hz. If it sounds honky, cut some at 500Hz.

Cut if you're trying to make things sound better. Don't always think of boosting.

Boost if you're trying to make things sound different. Be careful how much you boost. Don't “mask” other instruments.

You can't boost something that's not there in the first place. Get things right at source.

Try to remember the frequencies that you are working with and remember the sound they effect. Remember that EQ. is gain, so watch levels.

It is useful to use a tone generator (often used for lining up levels and checking frequency responses; you will find one in most software these days), check out and recognise the different frequencies.

Some people like to think of painting with sound. The frequency areas are like colours. In fact colours are frequencies of light.

If we paint a picture that is predominantly one colour, it may not let the other colours shine. However we might do this for effect. Learning about light and photography can be useful. Do you want the background to be light or dark.

Here are some useful frequencies set in Octaves like a Graphic Equaliser. Some people find them easier to visualise this way.

31Hz - Rumble, "chest"; 63 Hz - Bottom; 125Hz - Boom, thump, warmth

250Hz - Fullness or mud; 500Hz – Honk; 1KHz – Whack; 2KHz – Crunch;

4KHz – Edge; 8KHz - Sibilance, definition, "ouch!"; 16 KHz – Air

Words are subjective and sometimes clumsy of course. One person's “Edge” is another person's “Precipice”.

To train the ears try out Dave Moulton's “Golden Ears”.

<http://www.kiqproductions.com>

Remember to give yourself time to “play and experiment”. It is not only fun and good learning, but will help you do your “life's work” another day.