

# Mini Reviews

The latest musical bits and pieces racked and rated

## Blue Yeti Pro Mic | £200

[bluemic.com](http://bluemic.com)

**F**or a 'mere' desktop USB mic the Blue Yeti is certainly an imposing beast. Standing some 30cm high and

weighing in at 1kg plus this is way too good for mere podcasting duties.

The Yeti takes connectivity to the next level, packing not only requisite USB socket, but stereo left and right XLR for use with 'proper' systems. There's a headphone socket and amp and such luxuries as a front-mounted 'sneeze-ready' mute button (ideal if you're using this for broadcast) and a

quick and easy mic gain rotary on the back. It even goes so far as supplying four mic patterns catered for via its (impressive) three capsule design. And special mention to one of the stiffest, smoothest most 'pro-feeling' volume knobs we've ever had the pleasure of twisting plus a heavy metal stand that keeps this rock solid.

Setup was a breeze and – like the Samson Meteor Mic before it – it's amazing how liberating it is to record vocals or make samples with an all-in-one, desktop mounted mic such as this. No messing with preamps, stands, leads, interfaces, mixers... Just hit record and do your thing.

Mic quality is warm and deep with a great up-front presence, which is no surprise given that it's twice the price of the more portable Samson Meteor. Plus the full 192/24 capability helps put this in a different class. The best desktop USB we've used with all the Blue mic quality and build we've come to expect. *Daniel Griffiths*

**9/10**



## Blue Aura WS80i speakers | £399

[blueaura.co.uk](http://blueaura.co.uk)

**T**hese luxury active speakers benefit from wireless audio delivered via a small donut shaped USB dongle. USB

also takes care of both power and audio transmission on Mac and PC, but there's also a 3.5mm input on the dongle to jack in other audio sources, though you'll need to have the USB lead plugged in somewhere for power.

The speakers themselves are powered by individual wall warts and have a simple station button that can be pressed to help configure receiver and speaker recognition. The sound

itself is pretty fantastic, with the bass feeling rounded, soft and controlled and the highs and mids, transparent and clear. They are pretty directional, so speaker placement will be very important, but wireless freedom should make that simple. Also in the package is a compact multi-function remote and all the relevant cables. They are certainly at a premium price, but they are beautifully designed and for non-critical listening situations, they sound fantastic. *Chris Barker*

**8/10**

## be.ez LE Reporter Bag | £69

[be-ez.com](http://be-ez.com)

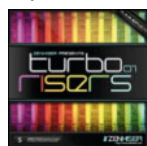
Pictured here is the larger 15" size, but this slick satchel comes in 13" and 11" sizes too. When it comes to the smallest 11" size, the bag started to look a little too much like a lady's handbag, but the larger sizes offer superb transportation for your MacBook Pro or other 13" and 15" laptops. With a strap made from a Nylon car seatbelt material and the rest of the bag coated in a PVC waterproof surface this is a tremendously sturdy bag.

Velcro keeps the front flap fixed and inside a Velcro fixer keeps your precious computer protected. Getting the balance of style and sturdiness isn't always easy, so it's good to see that the be.ez Reporter bag has got it spot on. *Chris Barker*

**9/10**



**Zenhiser Turbo Risers 01** | £17  
loopmasters.com



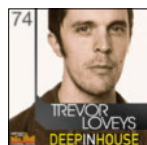
It's amazing the things they can sell you as a sample pack these days. How about 200 brain-blowing, spine-cracking, insanity-producing swoops and crashes that you didn't know you needed, but by God you'll be glad you've got them?

Turbo Risers goes next-level, offering elevators and builds far in excess (and nails-on-blackboard above and beyond) and previous white noise bursts and filters you might already lean on.

Drop a few of these to announce the arrival of your breakdowns and watch the crowd weep with appreciation before being blown flesh from bone. **Daniel Griffiths**

**8/10**

**Trevor Lovey's Deep In House** | £30  
loopmasters.com



Kick back and feel the quality. While some collections go 'cheese-on' to be as nasty as possible

Trevor Lovey's collection is as sweet as it's name implies. This is like being playfully punched with a velvet boxing glove. Funky smooth grooves and warm fat synth bass rule here, with sweet synth stabs and lush electric Rhodes pads. Great ambient vocals and chords will fill your tracks and inspire classy new grooves, and even when the synths do cut loose they do it with sheer class. Just the job for getting a little old school Soul and Jazz into your club tracks. Recommended. **Daniel Griffiths**

**9/10**

**Prime Loops Platinum Dubstep** | £16  
primeloops.com



It's not just about the bass y'know. That said, this pack of textbook Dubstep ammo features 101 busses that would form the

distinctive genre-accurate heart of any in-vogue wobble-fest. Back up with some of the amazingly fat synth chords and warm, evolving pads and you've got instant Radio-1-ready credibility. That said there's plenty here that would be at home in a Tech House or Electro set, samples being alternately massive and dirty then nagging and shrill. Chop up and re-arrange some of the pads here and you'll get some great Ambient backdrops too.

Similarly the beats are pretty versatile. While the tempos are suitably half-stepping the sounds and one shots themselves would be at home in a wide range of modern styles. Slick. **Chris Barker**

**8/10**

**Perception Cinemascope** | £80  
timespace.com



A soundtrack designer's dream come true. A weighty set of impossible-to-duplicate hits and atmospheres, every one of which sound like it's lifted straight from a Hollywood blockbuster. It's almost too easy to sling these loops and one shots together and have the next nail-biting thriller on your hands. A light smattering of current Dubstep and Techno influenced (mangled) rhythm tracks nicely rounds off the pack and gives this the 2011 edge it needs. Pricey, but amazing.

**Will Seelig**

**9/10**

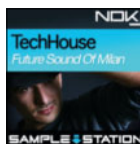
**SM101 Club Kicks** | £10  
soundstosample.com



Behind every slamming club track is a slamming kick drum and this simple, laser-accurate £10 pack delivers 101 of the very best. Why waste days sampling and EQing kicks when new imprint SM101 have done the hard work for you. Ready for a wealth of club tasks from House to Dubstep this collection is ceaselessly varied and – quite literally – kicking. An essential buy. **Chris Barker**

**10/10**

**NDKJ: Tech House: Future Sound of Milan** | £20  
soundstosample.com

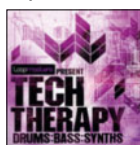


Bizarre, funky and captivating, this niche collection scores top marks for originality, being at turns 'hands aloft' funky yet

Trance-inducingly hypnotic. Big 'party' drum and percussion loops lock with bass-heavy loops designed to make your track like no other. Original. **Chris Barker**

**7/10**

**Tech Therapy** | £30  
loopmasters.com



The accent here is in violently funky chopped beats where tiny, indistinguishable micro samples flicker and dance over widescreen throbbing beats. There's loops that test the limits of swing and groove and some incredible filter effects that turn the stereo soundfield inside out.

At one stroke ruthlessly hi-tech, then at the next Tribal and dangerous, it's a great snap-shot of the scene and an ideal jumping-off point for anyone looking to make state of the art 2011 club tracks.

**Daniel Griffiths**

**8/10**

# PRIME LOOPS

WE'RE IN THE MIX

Prime Loops provide award-winning sound libraries, fresh in-tune with the evolving music scene. We are an extremely passionate team of engineers, sound designers & DJs, hailing from London, UK



## PLATINUM DUBSTEP

Get ready to leave those bad-tipped warm-up gigs in the 2nd room for good! With Prime Loops' latest sound smasher "Platinum Dubstep" you're all set to invade, conquer and rule the main stage arena ranks that make the big crowds go absolutely nuts!

**£19.95**



## SOUTHSIDE KINGS

Do you have what it takes to be the King of the Southside? With this tricked out ride full of mighty loops, sounds and FX from the trusted House of Prime Loops, you have all the tools you will ever need to reign supreme and make every hood your personal Southside!

**£14.95**



## RAVESTEP

Crank the speakers up to eleven, turn up the strobe lights and push the smoke button until there's no more sense of space and time: This is "Ravestep" - Prime Loops' latest groundshaking dance floor innovation, fusing together deep and hard-knocking Dubstep flavours with all-out, energetic Rave vibes!

**£19.95**



## URBAN DANCE FREAKZ

With this eccentric sound thriller you're guaranteed to get the dance crowd go crunk and the urban section get their glowsticks out! Turning any bash into a full-blown Warehouse rave "Urban Dance Freakz" is here to stay until the break of dawn.

**£17.95**

**FutureMusic**

Readers get **15% Discount**  
with discount code **FM15**

[www.primeloops.com](http://www.primeloops.com)