

Erica Synths – Sample Drum

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Using Erica Synths Sample Drum for Dense, Hyper-Complex Percussion and Polyrhythms

As a eurorack modular musician seeking intricate, evolving, and polyrhythmic percussion, the Erica Synths Sample Drum is a powerful weapon in your rack. Here's how you can leverage its capabilities for uniquely percussive, evolving, and complex rhythms.

1. Sample as a Percussion Voice

- **Load Diverse Percussion Samples:** Prepare a microSD card with individual drum hits, found sounds, granular noises, and chopped breaks.
- **Manual and Automated Sample Slicing:** Import loops or complex hits, use auto/manual slicing to split into tiny fractions (up to 32 slices per sample), and trigger slices independently.
- **Alter Tuning & Envelope:** Use per-sample tuning (1V/oct capable), attack/hold/decay envelopes, and shape morphing for punch or snap. Pitching samples far from their original range can create whole new percussion sounds.

2. Complex Rhythms and Polyrhythms

- **Dual Channels:** Take advantage of two independent sample voices—load distinct percussive sets or the same loop cut differently for immediate phase shifting and polymetric interplay.
- **Individual Trigger Inputs:** Patch disparate or odd-timed trigger/gate patterns (from euclidean sequencers, clock dividers/multipliers, or logic modules) into the two TRIG inputs for polyrhythmic layers.
- **CV-Controllable Slicing:** Assign a CV input to “SLICE: INDEX” and feed it a complex sequence or LFO synced to a different clock for shifting slice selection—now each hit can play a different fraction of a sample at non-repeating intervals.

3. Advanced Modulation for Hyper Complexity

- **Freely Assignable CV Inputs:**
 - **Assign to MODE, SAMPLE, or SLICE Index:** Use sequencers, function generators, random voltages, or rhythmic sources to change playback direction, select samples, or shift slices per step.
 - **Automate Envelope/FX Parameters:** Assign CVs to envelope shape, level, or FX parameters for constantly morphing percussive texture.
- **Use 1V/Oct for Chromatic Slicing:** When using 1V/oct scaling, sequencer pitches can select specific slices; this can act like a “step-sequenced retrigger” to create melodic percussion or ultra-chopped breakbeats.

4. Live Performance Techniques

- **Instant Parameter Morphing:** Map key sonic parameters (e.g. TUNE, LEVEL, FX depth) to the front-panel encoders for tactile morphing during a performance.

- **Preset Recall:** Prepare “projects” with unusual sample, slice, and routing setups per track—instant recall enables radical change-ups for evolving arrangements.
- **Dedicated Performance Mode:** The “PERFORM” menu displays both voices, with all mappings readily tweakable.

5. Making It Unique, Punchy, Percussive

- **Exaggerate Envelope Shapes:** Use “SHORT” or “RELATIVE” envelope modes, set decay for quick cut-off (punch), experiment with logarithmic/exponential curve bias for sharper transients.
- **Use Effects Creatively:**
 - **Bitcrush, Fold, and Drive** for electronic grit and aggression.
 - **Dynamic Filtering (CV-controlled HP/LP)** to carve each hit and add movement.
 - **Rapid FX Morphing:** Assign CV to FX TYPE or MIX, morphing between clean and effected states per beat.
- **Record/Resample Percussion:** Record percussion pieces or external percussion performances right into the module, then slice, manipulate, and resequence the fragments at will.

6. Advanced Patch Ideas

- **Feedback Resampling:** Route module output back into the input (with VCAs/attenuators), record self-sampled glitches, then trigger slices for digital stutter/IDM percussion.
- **Modulate Playback AND Slicing:** Combine fast triggers, constantly shifting CV slice selection, and real-time parameter morphing for aliasing, retriggered, and polyrhythmic chaos.
- **Probability/Logic-Based Triggers:** Use random gates or probability-based rhythms as triggers to break up regularity and push complexity.

7. Example Patch: Hyper-Polyrhythmic Drum Machine

1. **Ch.1:** Load a breakbeat, slice into 8, CV2 input assigned to “SLICE: INDEX,” driven by a sequenced LFO set to 5-step pattern.
2. **Ch.2:** Load single-hit percussions (kick, snare, hat), set up non-standard trigger patterns (e.g., 7/8 from one sequencer, 4/4 from another).
3. **CV assignment:** Use random stepped voltages to modulate FX parameter or sample pitch for “every hit is different” feel.
4. **Both outputs into stereo mixer:** Process with compression for further punch, or feedback to Sample Drum input for resampling.

8. General Tips

- **Mix Samples of Different Lengths/Rhythms:** Layer micro-samples over loops.
- **Use Left/Right Sample Sides:** Convert stereo loops to mono, use different sides for subtle or drastic variation.
- **Exploit Project Recall:** Chain together several performance projects to transform grooves in an instant.

Reference:

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