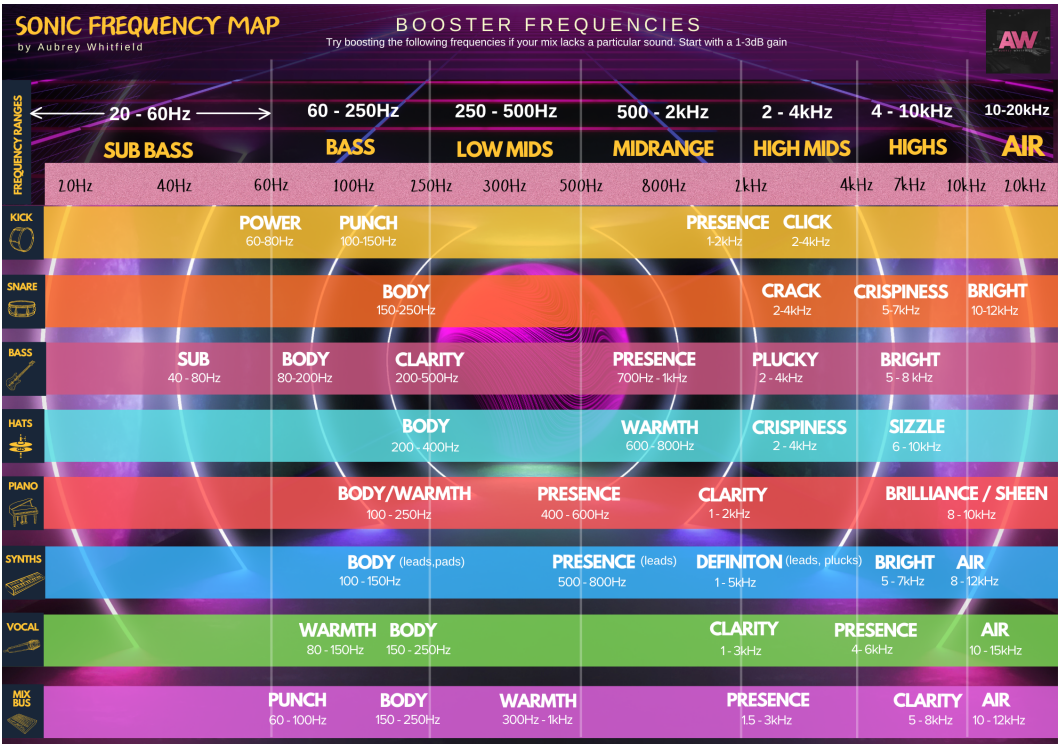


# SONIC FREQUENCY MAP

Sculpt. Enhance. Polish. Achieve tone and clarity in every mix.

## A FRESH WAY TO NAVIGATE THE FREQUENCY SPECTRUM



Congratulations on purchasing the SONIC FREQUENCY MAP! This guide will help you understand how to make the most of the Map so that you can shape your mixes and achieve the sound you want.

For the first time, there is a Map that separates out the frequencies you need to 'boost' and the frequencies you need to 'cut' - meaning there are two Maps for you to use!

Your SONIC FREQUENCY MAP is a beautiful and powerful tool to help you shape your sound and achieve professional-level audio quality. By understanding how to identify and adjust common tonal problems, you'll be able to make more informed EQ decisions, leading to cleaner, more polished mixes. Remember to use your ears, make subtle adjustments, and always test your mix on different listening devices.

You can use the two Maps by saving them as a screensaver on your computer, or by printing them off and having them right in front of you during mixing sessions.

**Let's take a look at how to use the Map effectively so you can get the most out of it:**

## THE FREQUENCY SPECTRUM - WHAT IS IT?

First, a little bit about Equalisation (EQ) and how it can subtly or dramatically alter the sound of individual instruments or whole mixes.

Equalisation (EQ) is the process of adjusting the tonal balance between frequencies on individual instruments, group of instruments or whole mixes. The frequency spectrum is divided into different groups, each with a unique impact on the sound. The SONIC FREQUENCY MAP highlights areas to **boost** or **cut** in order to achieve certain tonal qualities that can improve the sound of your instruments and mixes.

**Below is a breakdown of the different frequency spectrum groups which your SONIC FREQUENCY MAPS are separated into:**

Sub-Bass 20–60 Hz	Adds deep bass energy or can cause muddiness
Bass 60–250 Hz	Controls the fullness and weight of the sound
Low-Mids 250–500 Hz	Affects warmth and body but can also cause boxiness
Midrange 500 Hz–2 kHz	Controls clarity and detail but is prone to bloating due to many instruments occupying this area
High Mids 2 kHz–4 kHz	Affects presence and definition
Highs 4 kHz–10 kHz	Controls brightness
Air 10kHz - 20kHz	Add 'air', breathiness and sizzle

## UNDERSTANDING EQ DESCRIPTIONS IN THE MAP

To get the most out of your SONIC FREQUENCY MAP, it's important to understand some of the terms I've used in it to describe the sound you want to achieve. The Map won't be much use to you if you don't understand what I mean by 'warmth' or 'clarity'!

To make this easier for you, I have provided a clear description of every term used in both Maps. You will find these description in the 'Glossary of Terms' PDF document which comes with your purchase. Perhaps print the Glossary of Terms and have it by you during your mix session(s).

## HOW TO USE THE MAP EFFECTIVELY

Let's go over how to use your Map step-by-step:

### **STEP 1: Identify the Problem(s) in Your Mix**

Listen to your track carefully. Is there a particular element that sounds off? Does the mix feel muddy, boxy, or harsh or example? Are the vocals clear enough? Is the kick drum punchy and powerful enough? Use the Maps to match the tonal issue you hear (e.g., muddiness, presence) to the recommended frequency range to cut or boost.

### **STEP 2: Make Subtle Adjustments**

Use your EQ to cut or boost the frequencies recommended in the Maps. Start with small adjustments, around 1–3 dB, and listen to how it affects the sound. For problematic frequencies, cutting is usually more effective than boosting as too much boosting can make your mix sound unnatural. However, this is mix dependent so use your best judgment.

### **STEP 3: A/B Testing**

After making adjustments, toggle the EQ on and off to hear the difference. This will help you confirm that your changes are improving the sound without introducing new issues.

### **STEP 4: Fine-Tuning**

Continue refining your EQ settings once you have added other mixing tools such as compression or saturation. Sometimes, multiple cuts or boosts may be necessary in different frequency ranges to fully balance the sound and continual little tweaks are common throughout the whole mix session. Always use your ears to guide your decisions.

### **STEP 5: Save Your Settings**

Once you're happy with the adjustments, save your EQ settings as a preset if your plugin allows. This way, you can easily apply similar changes to future mixes or projects. I do this frequently with vocals so I have the vocal chain of the singers I work with ready to load on the next project.

## **FURTHER TIPS:**

### **Use a High-Pass Filter (low-cut filter)**

For some instruments and vocals, you can use a high-pass filter to remove unnecessary low-end rumble (below 20–100 Hz), which helps clean up the mix. I always put a high-pass filter on all non-bass instruments in the mix to make space for the kick and bass to shine through the mix.

### **Avoid Over-EQing:**

Small, subtle adjustments are more effective than drastic boosts or cuts. Over doing it can make your mix sound artificial or hollow. Often, subtle enhancements lead to the best results.

### **Go Dynamic**

If your EQ plugin has a dynamic EQ feature, try using it on very dynamic and fluid instruments such as vocals, pianos and guitars. Most of the time your static EQ plugin will do the job. But sometimes, you might have a vocalist who sings a particular word in the track a bit too nasally. Rather than cutting away that frequency area and it affecting the entire vocal during the entire mix, with dynamic EQ you can apply a threshold so that the EQ will only cut away (or boost) that problematic frequency area when the trigger volume level is reached - meaning that the rest of the vocal in the track is unaffected. Not all plugins have dynamic EQ enabled though.

I use the FabFilter Pro Q3 for my EQ and dynamic EQ needs. Isotope Ozone's Dynamic EQ is also good for dynamic EQ on busses or whole mixes.

### **Listen on Multiple Devices:**

After making your EQ adjustments, listen to your mix on different devices (headphones, speakers, phone). This ensures your mix sounds good in all environments.

I really hope that you enjoy using the Sonic Frequency Maps! I wish I had something like this when I was learning all about mixing! That's why I created this Map in the first place - to help producers who are learning how to navigate the vast frequency spectrum and all its wonders!

Keep mixing, keep practicing and before you know it, you will know instantly where to go in the frequency spectrum to achieve the sound you want. Until then, lean on my Sonic Frequency Map to give you a little help along the way!

Happy mixing!

*Aubrey*

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## OTHER TOOLS & GUIDES

To further enhance your mixing skills, take a look at my other EQ tools:

### **The Core Frequency Chart:**

The Core Frequency Chart is the first of its kind EQ chart that shows where key instrument groups should sit in the mix, and where frequency clashes are most likely to occur. This enables you to identify where instruments are likely to mask each other in the mix and therefore lead to a lack of definition, clarity and a mushy low end.

Available to instant download is a great Chart to have along The Sonic Frequency Map

**Find out more and purchase here:**

<https://www.aubreywhitfield.com/eqchart>

### **FabFilter Pro Q3 Preset Pack**

If you own Fabfilter's incredible EQ plugin (my go-to for EQing), then check out my preset pack for it! Over 100 ready-to-go presets across a range of different instruments and genres. It also includes the EQ vocal chain of top-selling artists Taylor Swift, RAYE, Teddy Swims and Post Malone. Additionally, there are a number of mix test environment presets! Load up a mix test preset and listen to your mix

as if it was being played in a club, in a car, or on the best monitors in history (the Yamaha NS10s), AirPods and a boombox.

Easy to install and suitable for both Windows and Mac users.

You will need to own the Fabfilter Pro Q3 plugin for the the presets to work.

**Find out more and purchase here:**

<https://www.aubreywhitfield.com/store>

## GOT A QUESTION?

Have you got a question about the Sonic Frequency Map? Then reach out to me at [management@aubreywhitfield.com](mailto:management@aubreywhitfield.com) and lets chat!