

Jammin'

By Eddy Mentzel

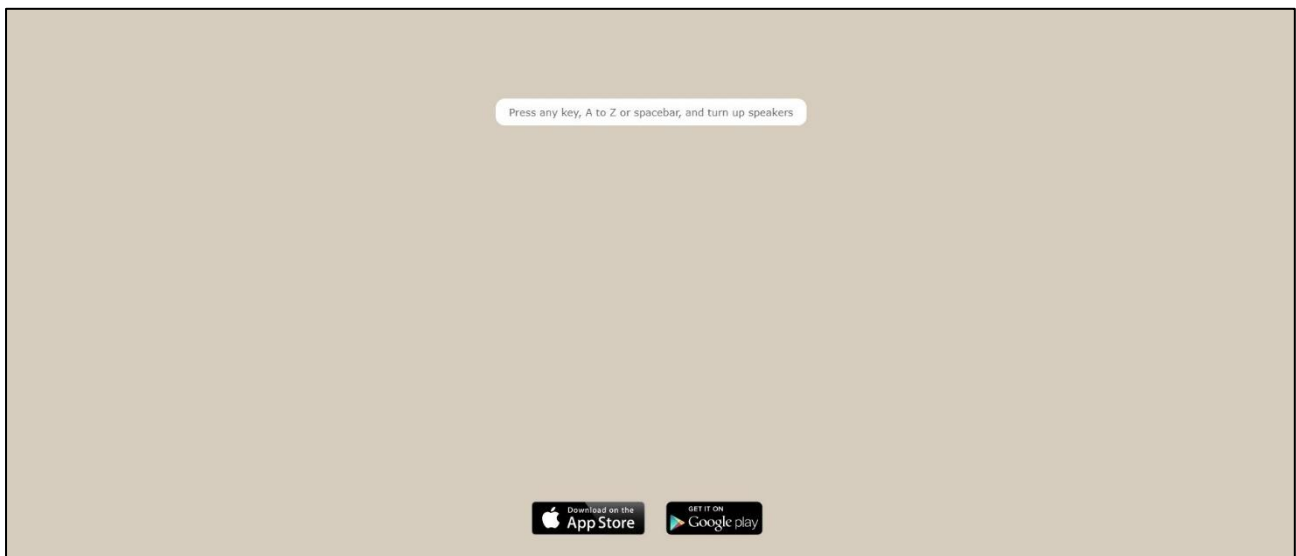
For this session you will need a laptop or tablet which is connected to the internet. Headphone's are advisable but not essential.

Every musician and producer like's a good jam! It's a liberating feeling letting your creativity flow freely and this often leads to the discovery of new patterns and melodies. In fact, countless well-known songs were written or conceived during jam sessions! Experimenting with an instrument or a collection of sounds is not only a great way to increase your song writing skills but also helps with your memory recall, your rhythm and your technical ability. So, it's a really valuable skill to encourage and nurture.

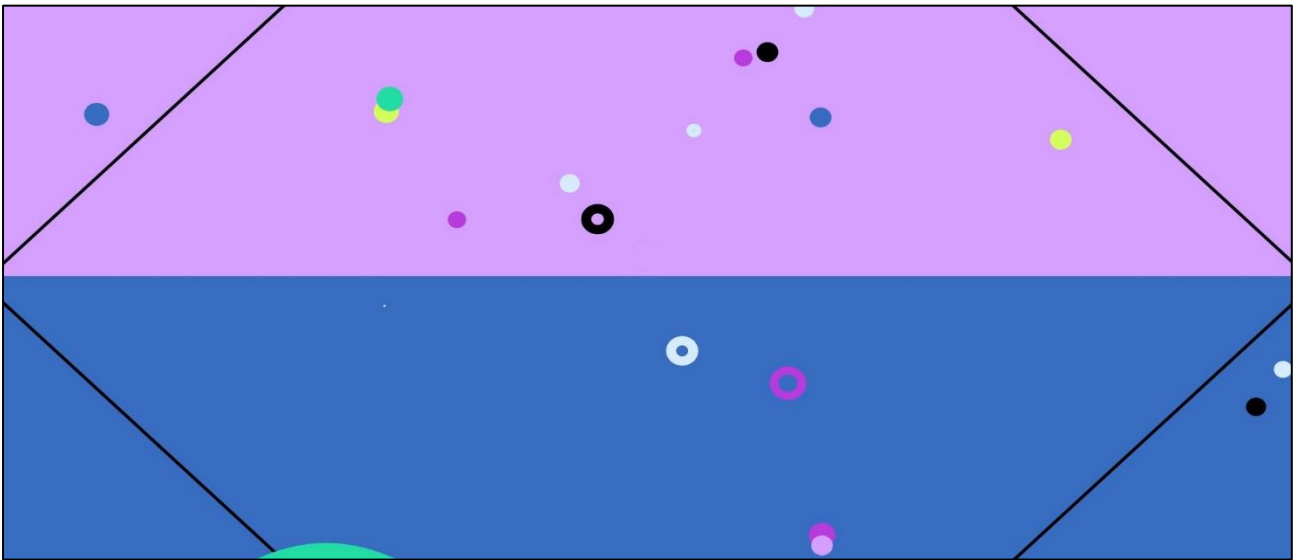
Unfortunately, not everyone has an instrument at home to jam with. There are, however, some great websites you can use to create really cool musical improvisations. And all you need is the laptop or tablet you are reading this on.

So, let's get **Jammin!**

To do: Open <https://patatap.com/> in your browser on your tablet or laptop. If you have problems using the link, search for '**Patatap**' on Google and open the top result. You will be taken to a site that looks like this:

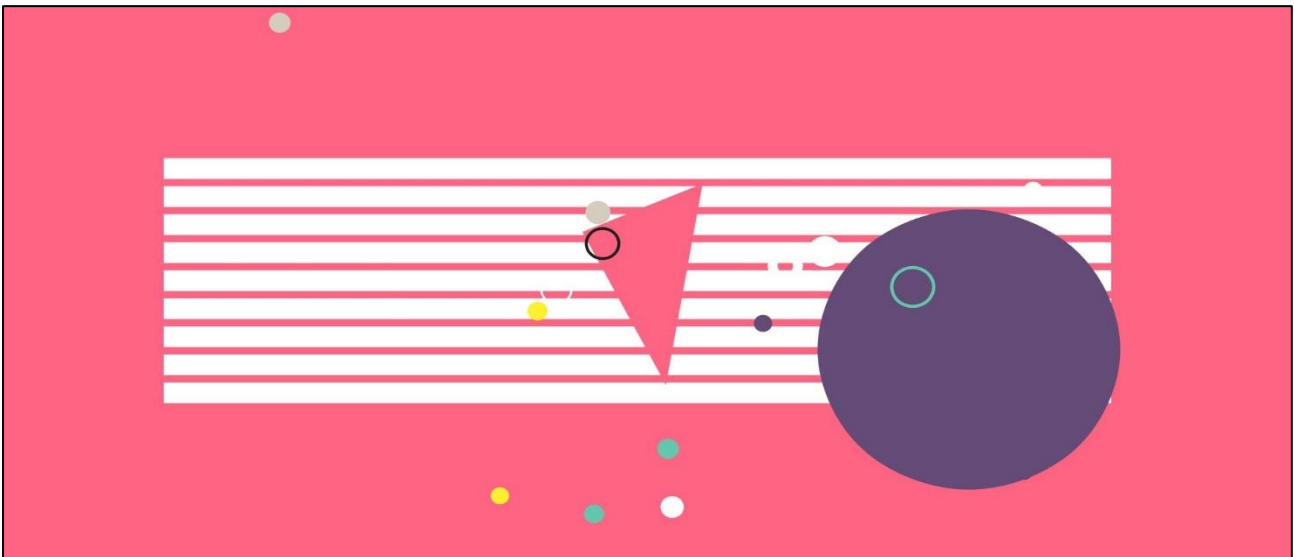


You will be taken to a website that looks like the image above. **Patatap** is a really simple way to improvise, using the letters A to Z on your keyboard to trigger a musical sound. Pressing each letter will play a different sound, ranging from single drum hits to more complex musical samples. Plus, every time the sound plays it is accompanied by a cool, retro animation.



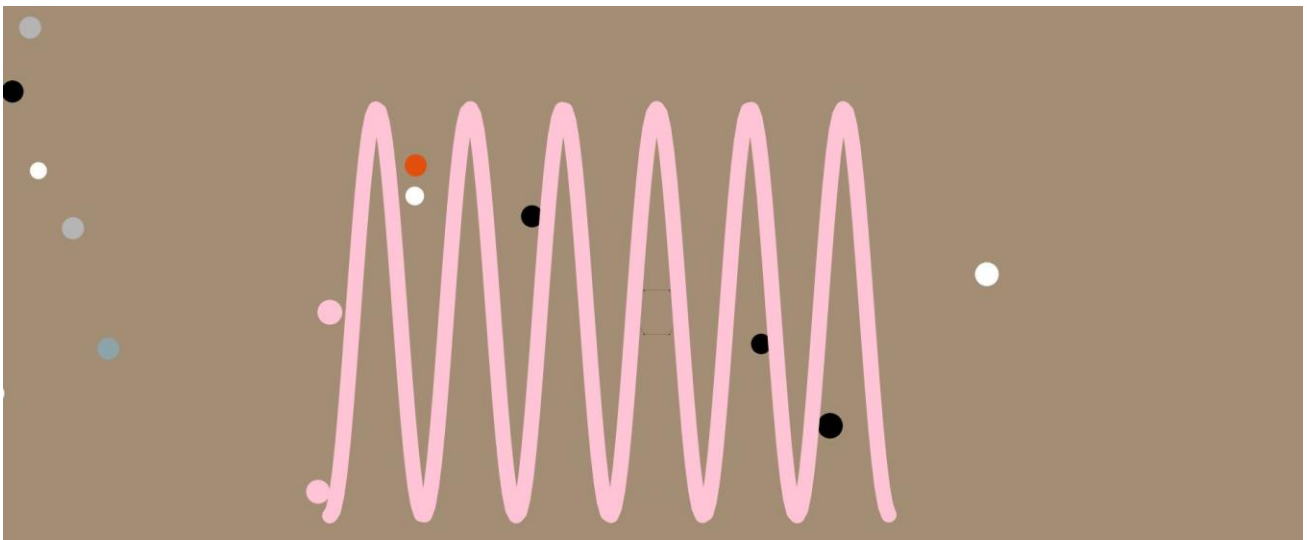
To do: Press each letter across the top line of your keyboard to listen to the sounds, then choose one you would like to use in your improvisation. Do the same for the second and third line of letters, choosing sounds that work musically alongside your other selections.

Please note: you can choose a new collection of sounds by pressing the space bar. This will replace all of the sounds, played by pressing the letters A to Z, with completely new ones. There are 7 sound sets to choose from.



To do: Now it's time to start creating a pattern. Arrange your letters into a basic sequence and then repeat it. You could even try spelling a word. For my example I am using the letters Q, D and N. The sequence I am playing is **DQQN**, which I am then repeating rhythmically. Don't forget, you can press a letter more than once in your sequence.

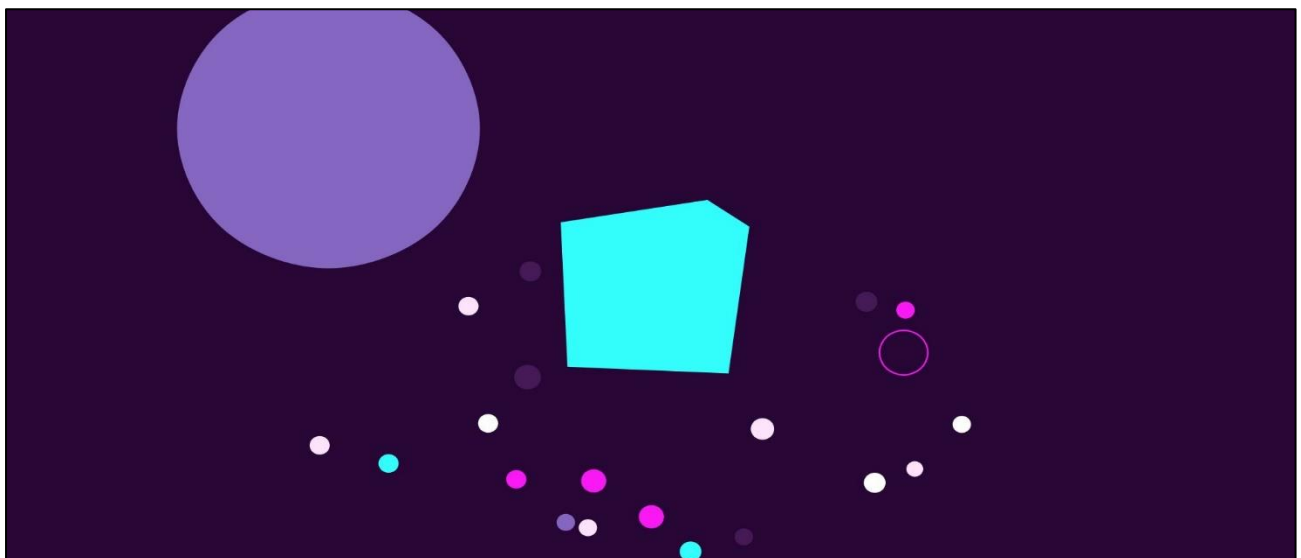
A quick reminder: Be sure to keep the tempo (speed) the same as you repeat your sequence. Rhythm is an important part of improvising, especially if you are playing alongside other musicians.



To do: Now you have mastered playing one sample at a time let's try playing two or more. After all, layering sounds is a great way of creating more complexity in a track. Choose two letters that sound great when pressed simultaneously. You can now incorporate those into a new or existing pattern. My example is set out below.

Beat 1	Beat 2	Beat 3	Beat 4
K	G	G	H
M			N

A quick tip: *pauses in-between sounds are also part of the rhythm. So, keep them consistent every time you repeat the pattern.*



The more you play around the more competent you will become at creating cool patterns, ever increasing in complexity and ability level. The only limit then is your memory for remembering the order and combinations of letters. If you do find it difficult to keep track of your sequences you could always create a quick table, as I did earlier, to help you remember the patterns you create.

'Jammin' in this way is great fun! It also increases your musical competency and stimulates your creative mind. Both of which are incredibly powerful tools for taking your music making to the next level.