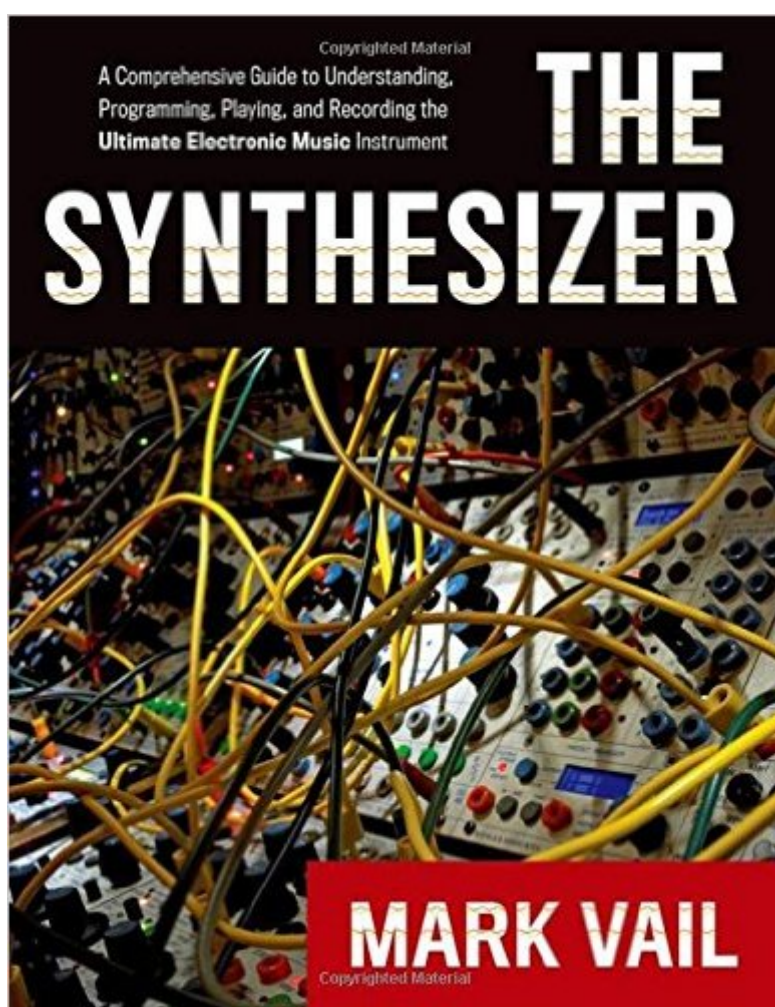


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# The Synthesizer: A Comprehensive Guide To Understanding, Programming, Playing, And Recording The Ultimate Electronic Music Instrument



## Synopsis

Electronic music instruments weren't called synthesizers until the 1950s, but their lineage began in 1919 with Russian inventor Lev Sergeyevich Termen's development of the Etherphone, now known as the Theremin. From that point, synthesizers have undergone a remarkable evolution from prohibitively large mid-century models confined to university laboratories to the development of musical synthesis software that runs on tablet computers and portable media devices. Throughout its history, the synthesizer has always been at the forefront of technology for the arts. In *The Synthesizer: A Comprehensive Guide to Understanding, Programming, Playing, and Recording the Ultimate Electronic Music Instrument*, veteran music technology journalist, educator, and performer Mark Vail tells the complete story of the synthesizer: the origins of the many forms the instrument takes; crucial advancements in sound generation, musical control, and composition made with instruments that may have become best sellers or gone entirely unnoticed; and the basics and intricacies of acoustics and synthesized sound. Vail also describes how to successfully select, program, and play a synthesizer; what alternative controllers exist for creating electronic music; and how to stay focused and productive when faced with a room full of instruments. This one-stop reference guide on all things synthesizer also offers tips on encouraging creativity, layering sounds, performance, composing and recording for film and television, and much more.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

All the reviews I've read on this site are spot on. The subtitle is rather inaccurate. Hopefully this was

not Mark's choice but an over enthusiastic, clueless subordinate in the hierarchy of the publishing company. And even though there are no colour photos, it's synth-pr0n at its finest. The early history of synths in the 20th century are especially well researched and written. If you've enjoyed his previous book "Analog Days", you will most likely be the target audience for this one as well. "The Synthesizer" is a great overview of the synth world as it stands in 2012-2013. It covers analog and digital, as well as computer based VST's and softsynths. It's very light on the recording side of things, and offers little to no details on the programming side. I've been involved in the modular world of synthesizers since 1977, and I can open up this book to any page and learn something I had not yet known. I do wonder how this book will hold up in 10 years time. How much is the synth world going to change by 2024? Probably quite a bit. So buy it now if you're going to get the most out of it. :) A personal note, when I was reading the parts about soft-synths, my eyes started glazing over and my stomach heaved a little. I understand why these are mentioned in such detail, as that's where the world of synthesis has branched out to, it's just me... I can't stand that shiite. :) Fortunately there's plenty of info about the real world of synthesizers, both analog and digital. I also understand that it's only 432 pages and therefore can't go into great detail about each manufacturer. That being said, I did feel at times that Mark was glossing over rather commonly known details of company troubles.

I have always had a fascination with sound timbre. As a young boy in early high school music class (1971) we were taken to the Adelaide University Music Department and I saw for the first time a Moog synthesizer. This thing was four boxes just filled with a matrix of 1/4 inch jack holes and an amp. On the back of the door were about 40 jack leads all draped over a clothes hook. The Professor of Music there took us through some of the sounds that this "thing" could make; various noises like white and pink, stuff like that. This particular "instrument" at that time cost the same as a house???? To a young boy this was an amazing amount of money but I was impressed by the noises this instrument could make too. Fast forward about 45 years.... I'm now retired and once again engaging in my passion for music and sounds. Of course synthesizers have come a LONG way since I was a boy and the instruments are now amazingly affordable and sound good too. As an interest, I'm immersing myself in, "all things "Synth"", so I bought a copy of this book from .com due to it's subject matter. This book is paper back and the pages are made of something akin to high quality "newspaper" paper. This is good because the pages don't gloss reflected light when you're trying to read it. There are many black and white images of the people important in the Synth industry like Bob Moog etc. and pictures of some of the most amazing Synths that you're ever going

to see. Some of these things were worth \$500,000 thirty years ago !!!! Consider how much they would be worth today??? One of these pictured synths is patched up with what looks to be about \$10000 worth of patch cables alone.

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