

Deco 1103: Sound Design and Sonification

Assignment 1: Functional Sound Design

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The auditory alerts I created were for use in a car to convey information to the driver whilst operating the vehicle. All of these sounds were created using the Vacuum plug-in for Pro Tools Le, the use of EQ and Reverb effects were used in some of the tracks.

Alert 1 – Seat Belt Indicator

The function of this sound is to alert the driver upon starting the car's engine that they or one of their passengers is not wearing a seatbelt. The purpose of this sound is important as not wearing a seatbelt is against the law. Drivers may not always be aware of whether or not their passengers are wearing a seatbelt, or they themselves may forget and it is the role of this sound to remind them to buckle up. The sound is a mid to high range pitch with a moderate to fast tempo.

Alert 2 – Low Petrol Indicator

The purpose of this alert is to tell the driver that the car is nearly out of petrol and that they should refill it immediately. As this alert can occur when someone is driving the car possibly in situations of high concentration, it is important that the alert conveys meaning without frightening or scaring the driver which could hinder their ability to safely control the vehicle. My design for this sound uses three short notes of the same pitch grouped together at a fast beat. These notes are then repeated again 3 seconds later, thus alerting the driver to the problem without adversely affecting their driving.

Alert 3 – Reverse Parking Sensor

This alert is used when the driver is reversing the vehicle to convey how they are from the car behind. The simulation shows how the alarm would sound as a driver reversing slowly comes closer and closer to the car behind. This sound provides the driver with audible information adding to the visuals provided by a rear view mirror. The sound allows them to make better judgements and aids in the parking of their car. The time between the sounds shortens as the rear of the car comes nearer an object. The alert contains notes of two different pitches one lower than the other although as the car becomes too close to another vehicle there is no change in pitch and when a collision is imminent the alarm is one constant sound.

Alert 4 – Headlight indicator

This sound is used to indicate to the driver after they have taken the keys from the ignition that they have left their headlights on. This is an important alert because if a driver were to leave the headlights of their car on without the engine running the car's battery would run flat, which would result in the driver being unable to restart the car. This alert contains noticeable changes in pitch between three notes, of which are looped. The pace of the alert conveys a sense of urgency whilst suggesting that there isn't any imminent danger to the driver or the car.

Alert 5 – Security Alarm

This sound shows that the security alarm has been triggered indicating to the driver so one is potentially trying to steal their car. This sound is important in protecting the owner from theft and discouraging potential thieves. The sound displays an immediate sense of urgency that requires the owner's urgent attention. This is conveyed through the alarms speed and changes in pitch.