

Anchors and Torq

Why Anchor?

Using the Anchor feature with Torq 2.0 allows you to use features and accomplish workflows that are unique to Torq 2.0. Most DJ's have at one time been forced to ride the platter (or mouse) on a track that has fluctuations in tempo, or speeds up over time. This natural fluctuation is inevitable when the recording was not quantized by a computer. Unfortunately, while this may be un-noticeable when listening to the track by itself, it presents a problem when trying to match the tempo to another track. Anchors, in a nutshell allow you to lock (or shall I say, "Anchor") the phase grid of a track that has an unsteady tempo to the beat of the song. After a track has been anchored, you can effectively sync the track in Torq in various ways.



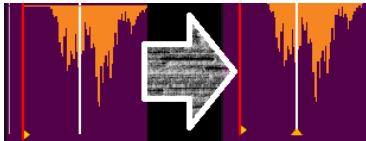
This tutorial will walk you through how to anchor a track and effectively use anchored tracks in a mix with Torq 2.0. If you want to learn the difference between a Claw Anchor and Grapnel Anchor, please read this tutorial instead: http://www.anchoring.com/article_info.php?articles_id=4.

Anchoring a track with the mouse

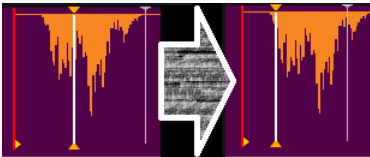
Using the mouse is a good way to learn the basics of anchoring. It also may be the only option when you're on the go and you didn't bring a MIDI controller or your decks with you.

In a nutshell, there are 3 main actions that can be accomplished with the mouse:

1. Turning a phase grid line into an anchor by double clicking it.

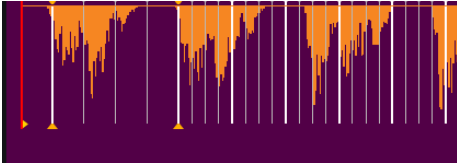


2. Moving an anchor by dragging it with the mouse.




3. Adjusting the unanchored rest of a track by clicking on a non anchored phased grid line and moving it. In the example below, I grabbed one of the phase grid lines to the right of the 2nd anchor marker and moved it left, compressing the rest of the track. I'll explain why this can be

useful later.



Let's put our 3 maneuvers to use now. If you're following along, now would be a good time to pick a track to anchor. Classic rock songs are usually good candidates for anchoring, since they're rarely recorded to a click track. Now, perform the following steps.

1. *Load the track into a deck.* I prefer deck B or C in 2 deck mode, as it gives you more real-estate to work with.
2. *Play the track and click the deck's BPM readout to tap the tempo of the song.* You don't have to get it perfect, but you should be close. We do this before going into anchor mode, because the BPM readout behavior changes when in anchor mode. More on that later.
3. *Enable Anchor mode by clicking on the  icon on the Torq 2.0 toolbar.* Torq's waveform view is now purple, indicating that Torq is in Anchor Edit mode.
4. *Click on the 1st phasegrid downbeat (downbeats are the thick lines) and move it to the downbeat of the song, and then double-click the downbeat to place an anchor.* We're all set to move methodically from the beginning to the end of the song.
5. *Find the next measure's downbeat either visually or by playing the song and watching where the waveform's downbeat passes over the now line (reminder: the "Now Line" is the vertical yellow line at the center of the main waveform window).*
6. *Once you've confirmed where the downbeat is, drag the next thick phase grid line to the downbeat.* Observe that the rest of the phase grid "accordions." If you're BPM is accurate, you will notice that the phase grid will line up with the waveform transients (or beats) further to the right as well.
7. *Double-click the downbeat to place an anchor to lock it in place.* Depending on how loose the tempo is, this can be place anywhere from one measure to a half dozen away.
8. *Play the track or grab between the anchors to move the song further along and repeat steps 4-6 until the song is completed.*

Along the way, experiment with the distance between anchors – you can always add more between afterwards to tighten up the grid. Try to avoid placing them so far apart that you accidentally lose your place in the song, or make the common mistake of placing an anchor to squeeze an extra measure on the song – thereby changing the timing dramatically in that area. Again mistakes can be easily undone by deleting the offending anchor, and simply backing up to the last place where you've got it right.

Using Vinyl/CDJs or MIDI platter wheels to Anchor

With the help of either external control or a MIDI controller such as the Xponent, it is possible to set up Anchors more quickly than with just the mouse. The added advantage with using a physical wheel is that it acts as a scrub wheel, allowing you to quickly move through the song.

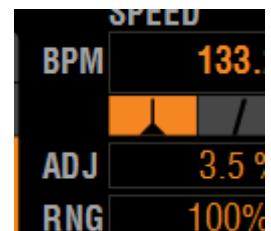
When using external control or a MIDI controller, jumping to the mouse can slow you down. That's why I map the trigger place to either a MIDI controller, or something large on the keyboard, like the spacebar if no MIDI controller is available. This can be accomplished by right clicking on the BPM display and then pressing the key or MIDI controller.

After this is done, anchor warping could be done like this:

1. *Load the track into a deck.* I prefer deck B or C in 2 deck mode, as it gives you more real-estate to work with.
2. *Play the track and click the deck's BPM readout or press the mapped key/button to tap the tempo of the song.* Again, you don't have to get it perfect, but you should be close. This should be done while not in anchor mode
3. *Scrub using the external control Vinyl/CD or MIDI platter to the a few bars forward in the song, find the downbeat and drop an anchor by pressing the mapped key/button.* If the correct phase grid line is not the closest to the downbeat, correct it by dragging it with the mouse. Otherwise, the wrong phase marker will be anchored.
4. Repeat step 3 until the rest of the track is anchored.

What to do with Anchored tracks

Now that you have an anchored track or two, there are two main ways that an anchored track can be used – at its original tempo and phase, or flattened to a locked tempo. If the anchored track is not synced to another deck or is the sync master, the flatten button will allow you to switch between these two states. Flattening a track is useful when you mix tracks with some tempo fluctuation just as you would mix tempo perfect music. Using unflattened tracks allow you to do more interesting mixes, such as have the rest of the synced decks follow the drastic tempo changes of an anchored song. Experiment and you will find even more ways that anchored tracks can be fitted into your DJ sets



Vince

