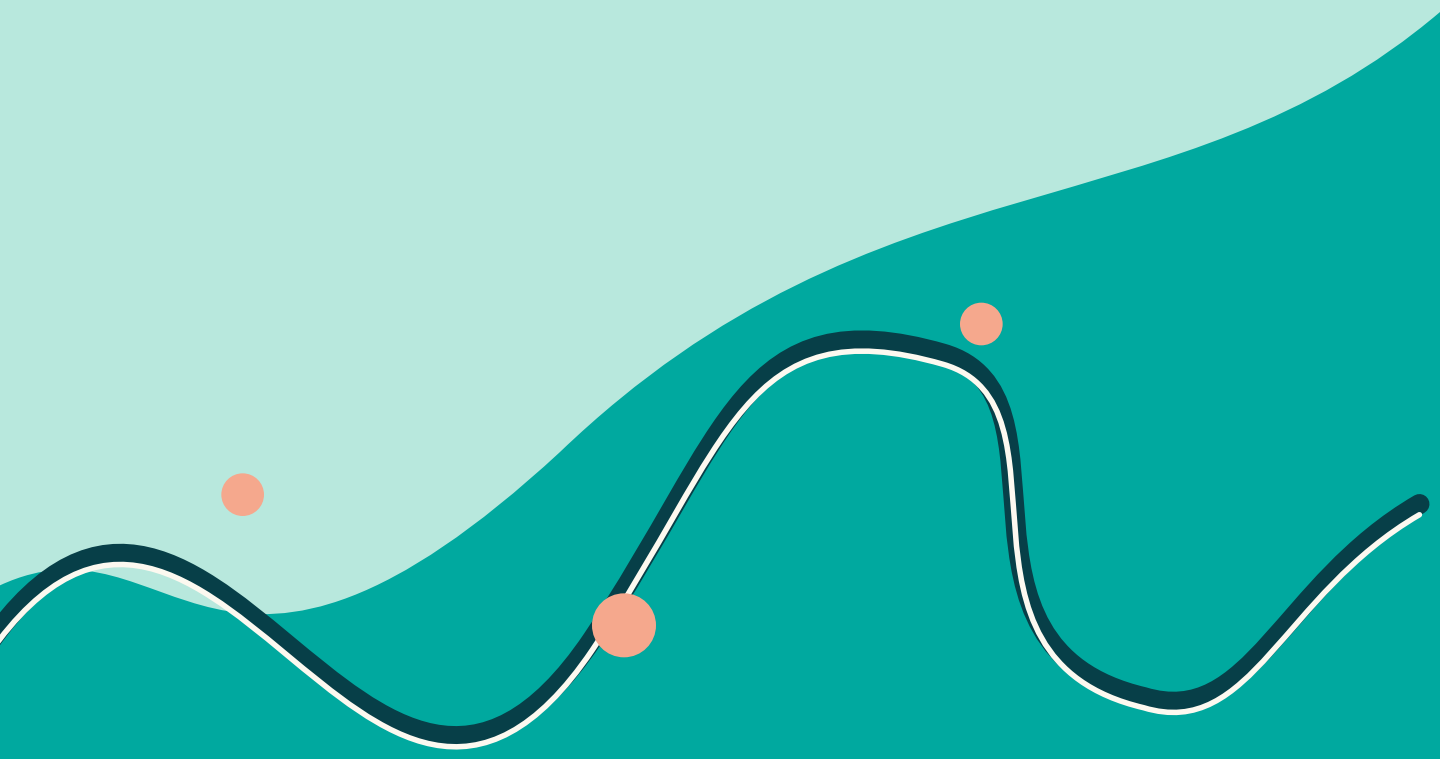
ONE SMALL ATTEMPT. A NEW POSSIBILITY.

From wanting to doing

Find your learning rhythm with AI and Notion.



BRIAN VAN VEEN

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A BOOK TO BEGIN WITH

This is still your story.

I want to go far in music. That is where this book began, although I am still figuring out what the route will look like. There is a lot to learn and no shortage of advice. The question that interests me is how to turn that information into something I can actually do. How does a useful tip lead to an attempt of my own? And how do I keep track of what I tried, so I know where to start next time?

In my own search, I began bringing AI and Notion together. A conversation helped me think through an idea; a place to keep my plan gave me something to return to. I also noticed how many people around me found it difficult to build a learning structure for themselves. This book grew from that interest. It is not a claim that I have found a perfect method. It is a practical approach for you to question, try and adapt.

You do not have to make music to use it. We follow Robin, a fictional beginner in electronic music production, because his small project makes the decisions concrete: what will he practise, what help does he need, and what is worth keeping? Short examples from other fields show how those questions travel. Whatever your subject, I hope the book helps you bring your ambition closer to what you do on an ordinary day. I am still working on that myself.

Brian van Veen

CONTENTS

Your route through this book

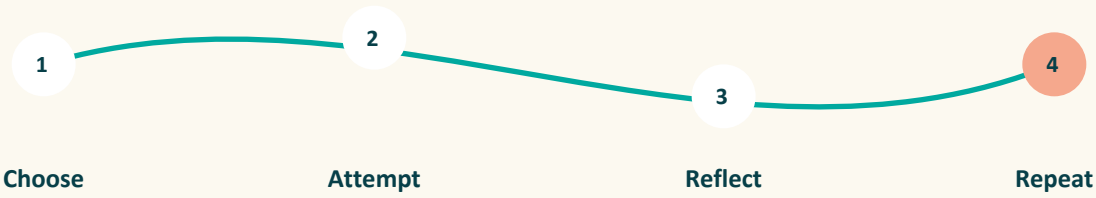
01	Stop collecting. Start trying.	5
02	Turn a conversation into a next step	8
03	Let AI build your workspace	14
04	From understanding to trying	22
05	Keep a trail you can follow	27
06	Find a rhythm you can return to	30
07	Choose help that earns its place	35
08	Let your system grow with you	38
	How this book was made	41
A	Manual Notion setup	45
B	Programming code	50

Start with the route guide on page 7. AI builds and updates; you practise and choose. The appendices are optional references.

Read. Try. Return.

Read with something you want to learn in mind. We start by choosing a direction and making a small attempt, then build a simple workspace to support practice and reflection. Robin's project runs through the chapters: he wants to develop an eight-bar loop into a 45-60-second instrumental sketch over four weeks, with three 25-minute sessions each week. That is a fictional example, not a benchmark for your pace or the time you should have available.

The example uses ChatGPT with GPT-6 Astra for the conversation and Notion for the workspace. Available models, tools and permissions vary. If a suitable connection is unavailable, you can transfer the text yourself. You do not have to complete a form on every page or finish the book before starting. When you see an exercise worth trying, put the book down and try it. Return with what you noticed. The prompts are conversation starters, not scripts to follow unquestioningly.



Robin is a fictional beginner. The screenshots show a real, separately built Notion demo with example data. They are not evidence of learning outcomes or an executed GPT-6 Astra session.

TURN INTEREST INTO A FIRST STEP

01 Stop collecting. Start trying.

Robin opens a video about electronic music production. Half an hour later, he has saved three tutorials, but his own loop sounds exactly the same. He has more information and no clearer idea of what to do next. This book follows our fictional beginner as he changes that, starting with a simple decision: what does he want to learn to finish?

What do you want to be able to do?

Collecting feels good. You discover ideas, notice possibilities and imagine what you could make. The problem begins when each new resource postpones your first attempt. Robin recognises the names of effects and instruments, yet keeps replaying the same eight bars in his music software. He is interested and willing to learn. What he needs is a question that helps him explore the loop in front of him, instead of abandoning it for another unfinished idea.

His question becomes: how can I turn this loop into a short instrumental sketch with a beginning and an ending? He gives himself four weeks to develop his eight bars into a sketch lasting 45-60 seconds. He is not aiming for a professional release in a month. He is choosing a manageable outcome: something he can finish, listen to and discuss while still working towards a much bigger musical ambition.

Your goal does not need to sound impressive. It needs to mean something to you. Perhaps you want to hold a short conversation in another language, finish a melody or cook a meal without checking every step. Picture the situation, then ask what you want to be able to do in it. Your reason makes the goal worth pursuing; a specific action gives you somewhere to start. You can work out the rest along the way.

Save a starting point

Before making a plan, Robin saves his drum loop as it sounds now: eight bars with a kick, other drums and a hi-hat pattern. He lets it play without touching any controls. The repetition feels flat, although he cannot yet say what would help. He keeps this version as his starting point. Later, he will be able to listen back to it instead of relying on a vague memory of how things used to sound.

That first version is not a verdict on his talent. It gives him something specific to explore. Robin writes a few plain sentences: he chose the pattern by feel, has changed little since, and wonders whether different accents would affect the groove. Now he has a more useful question than 'How do I get better?' For another skill, the starting point might be a paragraph you wrote, a dish you made or a conversation you recorded.

Robin decides to change only the velocity of a few hi-hat notes: how strongly each note is triggered. Timing, samples and tempo stay the same, and he leaves the other drums untouched. He saves versions A and B so he can switch between them. He is not trying to prove that B is better. He wants to hear what this one change does, then decide which version comes closer to the feel he wants.

Make room for one attempt

Robin can make room for three 25-minute sessions a week. That is his chosen schedule, not a minimum everyone needs to meet. Each session should leave time to start, try something and save the result. For now, making and comparing the two loop versions is enough. He does not need a curriculum covering every production technique. He knows which notes he will change and which settings he will leave alone.

A small exercise does not shrink your ambition. It makes working towards it possible on an ordinary day. Sometimes the task will not fit the time you expected to have. You can reduce its scope or choose another moment. Stay honest about what you did. Saving a tutorial can be preparation, but it is not the same activity as listening to and adjusting your own music. That distinction helps you choose between seeking more explanation and making another attempt.

Information now has a job to do. Instead of looking for everything a producer ought to know, Robin seeks help with a question that came from his own work. In the next chapter, he uses ChatGPT to make that question clearer and choose an exercise he can actually complete. He brings three useful things: a goal, the time he has available and something he has already tried. You can bring the same things, whatever you want to learn.