

Digitech iPB-10 Pedalboard | £499

Are Digitech counting their eggs with the iPB-10?

Martin Delaney treads lightly on this futuristic pedal

Guitar pedalboard that uses an iPad to edit and organise amps and effects

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- 1** Gig-worthy metal construction
- 2** Huge library of amps, cabinets, and effects
- 3** If the iPad app crashes, the iPB keeps going!

System requirements
Connections: 1/4" guitar input, 1/4" amp loop with ground lift, 1/4" effects loop, stereo 1/4" line out, stereo XLR outputs with ground lift, 3.5mm headphone out, footswitch control, USB port for audio streaming (no data connection to computer)
Controls: Amp loop in/out switch, Effect loop in/out switch, Bank up/down switches, 5 tone select switches, 5 effect on/off switches, 1 assignable expression/volume pedal

Dimensions:
495 x 273 x 95mm
Weight:
5.2kg

make them work. The monster iOS guitar rig du jour, though, must be Digitech's iPB-10, which has all the foot control and output connections a guitarist needs – just add an iPad 1 or 2, loaded with Digitech's free iPB Nexus app, and you're good to go!

The serious intent of this board is displayed by the rear panel connections: guitar input, amp loop with ground lift switch, effects loop, stereo line output, output level control, XLR outputs with ground lift switch, 3.5mm headphone out, external footswitch in, and a USB audio connection... that's weird about the pesky little 3.5mm jack though – it doesn't feel right for a hefty rig like this.

Before loading the iPad and connecting to the short built-in sync cable, it's recommended to disable bluetooth, WiFi, and quit all other apps.

The iPB-Nexus app is required to load and configure amps and effects, to manage presets, and to make assignments for the hardware switches. There's room for up to 10 pedals in each patch, although only five are visible at once. There's a huge amount of virtual gear available, with 87 pedals, including emulations of hardware from Boss, Dunlop, Ibanez, Lexicon and MXR. There's also a tuner, activated by holding down the preset footswitch. I got badly sidetracked with the great selection of pitch effects, including Digitech's own Whammv.

Beyond effects, there are 54 amps and 26 speaker cabinets available, including examples based on amps by Fender, Hiwatt, Marshall, Matchless and Soldano. There's no limit to how many customised presets you can save within the app, but there's no apparent way to archive them off the app.

Because it's the hardware that's producing the audio, the iPB-10 should really be compared with other amp modelling hardware, rather than apps like Amplitube. My opinion is that the pedal simulations are very good, while the amp and cab modelling are adequate for practice and demos. Overall, everything sounded better as soon as the iPB-10's amps were disabled, and it was routed through a Tech 21 amp modelling pedal, then into a guitar combo on a clean setting.

You might not use the iPB-10 for critical recordings, but it's good enough, and versatile enough, with that huge effect library, for demos and live gigs... as long as the app is stable (it dropped off the screen a few times). It doesn't make economic sense to buy an iPad specifically to use this, but if you already have an iPad, it's an affordable way to get an incredibly flexible, crazy looking, pedalboard. **FM**

BUILD

VALUE

EASE OF USE

VERSATILITY

RESULTS

It might seem gimmicky, but the iPB-10 makes sense and it's easily solid enough to use live.

