

# Roland HD-1 drumkit | £499

Could it be time to stop bashing the keys for rhythm tracks? **Chris Barker** paradiddles his way to paradise

## WHAT IS IT?

Entry-level electronic drumkit

## CONTACT

Who: Roland UK  
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## HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Compact set-up
- 2 Flexible with MIDI out
- 3 Great value

## SPECS

### Drum Configuration

Kick pedal, snare, hi-hat, hi-hat pedal, tom x 3, crash, ride

### Drumkits

Ten different kits

### Controls

Drumkit button x 5, Variation button, Metronome button, Volume knob, Tempo knob

### Connectors

Output jack (stereo miniature phone type), headphone jack (stereo miniature phone type), mix in jack (stereo miniature phone type), MIDI Out connector (5-pin DIN type), trigger cable connector (DB-25 type), output jack can be connected with headphones.

### Power Supply

DC 9V

**R**oland V-Drums have been around for a while now and have made their mark as one of the most popular

electronic drum solutions. But they've been something of a luxury for the home studio. Roland's new offering is their cheapest V-Drum-style kit ever, aptly tagged V-Drums Lite. Opening the huge box reveals a simple set-up with only a few nuts and bolts to tighten before you're ready to rock.

Well, that's if you have drumsticks and something to sit on, as there's no drum stool or sticks. Although this kit is great value, I'm sure most people would have paid a few quid more to have a 'complete' set, but Roland have the

extras available as a separate add-on pack for an additional cost. In pictures, the kit isn't done justice – it's really well built and the bizarre looking 'pedals-built-in-to-the-frame' actually work brilliantly. The amount of space this kit takes up is amazingly small – I had mine set up in my small studio and it took up practically the same space as an extra studio chair.

As a neighbour-friendly bonus, this is probably the world's quietest electric drumkit, so whacking around for an hour won't sound like a box of wooden spoons being emptied on to the dining room table. The pads are responsive and bounce fairly realistically, and the luxury of the quality V-Drum mesh snare

is brilliant and is the set's winning feature. The brain of the kit is a small affair with six buttons that operate tidily with the push of a drumstick. The built-in sounds aren't anything to shout about – they're obviously aimed at beginners, with ten varying kits from straight acoustic to 808-style and beatbox sounds. But Roland have tucked a MIDI output on the side so you can also jack into another drum box and trigger alternative sounds.

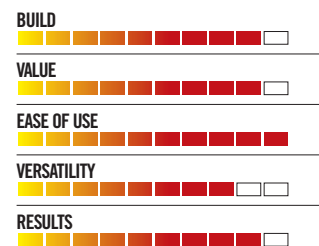
This kit comes into its own when it's triggering a tidy set of sounds. It isn't long before you get used to having it around for programming MIDI and it becomes a useful alternative trigger for samples and all sorts of weird and wonderful sounds.

But as a strict drumkit there are a few gripes, the first one being the hi-hat pedal control. The pedals themselves feel great and the cymbal-style pad is also fine, it's just the sensitivity between open and closed hats that can get annoying. Sometimes minor pedal movements trigger larger than expected reactions. But with some careful MIDI tweaking in an electronic kit-orientated drum ROMpler such as BFD, this can be improved slightly. It makes control between open and closed actions more usable. The other minor annoyance is easily forgivable. The compromise for such a compact kit is that adjustments are limited and the pads are small, so accuracy can be a problem until you get used to rolling your way around the kit.

Overall this kit is brilliant value for money – having the real mesh snare makes it one of the best value kits on the market and really should be checked out if you're looking at starting drumming or wanting a compact studio kit. It has to be said that having a real kit for triggering MIDI drums has made making music not only more exciting and fun, but also much more intuitive and flexible than trying to bash out beats using a controller keyboard. **FM**



## FutureMusic VERDICT



This is a great way to start drumming, and a superb studio tool that won't upset the neighbours.