



Zoom G1 £54

With a generous selection of effects and features, the G1 brings the latest guitar technology to an even wider audience *by Adrian Clark*

In issue 279 we looked at the G9.2tt, the big cheese of Zoom's latest range which retails for £329 – so here's the opposite end of the scale. Akin to previous Zoom successes such as the 505, the G1 uses a two-switch layout and simplified patch editing to give easy access to a surprisingly sophisticated range of features.

Light and small enough to fit in a coat pocket, the G1 is ideally sized for taking along to an impromptu jam. It runs on four AA batteries or a nine-volt DC adaptor (not supplied) and has an input, an output and a jack for an optional expression pedal/footswitch. The output is stereo and doubles as a headphone jack, but you can use it in mono with a standard guitar lead.

Along with the dual footswitches, the control panel also features two rotary controls and a number of pushbuttons. If you've previously avoided multi-effects units because of their complexity, this could be a good entry point for you; the G1's operating system is very simple. For standard use (play mode) just set the left-hand control to 'play', set the master volume with the right-hand control and use the

Just about every common guitar style is covered by the factory presets, and there's a few surprising additions which make for a pleasant change from the old favourites

footswitches to scroll through the patches. There are 40 preset patches, arranged in four banks of ten, and another 40 memory slots for your own custom sounds. For a quicker way of moving through the patches, use the Bank Up/Tap pushbutton.

For practice purposes, the G1 features a simple drum machine. This can be operated in play mode, using the Play/Stop pushbutton, but to access the full range of options, the left-hand knob has a Rhythm setting. Here, you can choose from 40 rhythm patterns (including a range of musical styles and a simple metronome click), select tempos between 40-250bpm and adjust the volume of the rhythm function. There's also a tuner, accessed

by pressing the two footswitches simultaneously.

The other positions on the left-hand control are used for editing the effect modules. There are a total of 54 effects, divided into eight modules; you can only use one effect at a time from each module, but all eight modules can run simultaneously. To edit a patch, you just select the appropriate module with the left-hand control and adjust the setting with the right-hand control. The only time this system becomes fiddly is when you're adjusting the EQ settings; because of the design, you have to keep switching back and forth between the lo, mid and hi bands. Only a tiny niggle, though!

SOUNDS: The implementation of cabinet modelling varies throughout the new Zoom range. The flagship G9.2tt is, not surprisingly, the most sophisticated, with a dedicated cabinet and microphone module, while the G2.1u has both live and recording versions of each patch. Even the little G1 can be fine-tuned for live or studio use, though; the dual ZNR (Zoom Noise Reduction) and amp module can be set →

The rivals

DigiTech RP50	£59
Yamaha Magicstomp	£169
Korg AX10G	£115

In terms of value for money, the G1's nearest rival is DigiTech's RP50, which has a similar two-switch layout. At these prices, though, you have to expect a few compromises in terms of features and the user interface. Above the £100 mark, the options open up considerably, with Korg's entry-level unit and the compact Magicstomp offering a surprising range of features. Sadly, however, the latter is being discontinued.

ZOOM G1 £54

EFFECTS CD TRACKS 10 & 11



The G1 features preset rhythm patterns for jamming



ZOOM G1

PRICE: £54
ORIGIN: China
TYPE: Compact multi-effects unit
FEATURES: Built-in rhythm function and tuner. Simple-but-flexible interface
EFFECTS: 54, divided into eight modules (comp/EFX, drive, EQ, ZNR, amp, modulation, delay, reverb)
PATCHES: 40 preset, 40 user
MIDI: No
CONNECTIONS: In, out, footswitch
MIDI: No
POWER: DC adaptor (not included) or four x AA batteries
EXT. CONTROLLERS: An additional footswitch switches effects banks and specifies tempo for the rhythm patterns; an additional expression pedal can alter specific parameters in real time or be used as a volume controller
OPTIONS: For sturdier metal casing and a more sophisticated interface, the next models in the range are the G2.1u (£129) and G2 (£79)
Exclusive Distribution
 01462 481148
www.zoom.co.jp

ZOOM G1	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
<p>■ WE LIKED Clear and easy to use; surprising range of sounds for the price</p> <p>■ WE DISLIKED A couple of operations are fiddly as a result of the compact format</p>	



The G1 also features a tuner – activated by pressing both footswitches

Zoom has always been good to people taking their first steps in guitar technology, and the G1 is certainly the best low-budget unit they've released so far

→ to provide noise reduction both with or without cabinet simulation, and there are three cabinet settings.
 The G1 has a good range of sounds, considering the price. Our only real criticism of the unit is that the output level is quite low compared with most other modelling/effects units in the

market; this seems to depend on the specific type of effects being used, though. Just about every common guitar style is covered by the factory presets, and there's a few surprising additions on offer here which certainly make for a pleasant change from the old favourites. For example, when was

the last time you saw Adrian Belew and David Lindley patches on a multi-effects unit?
 As we've found on other products in the past, having only linear up/down access to patches can be quite limiting, especially if you like to switch sounds several times for each song. Zoom has included a useful feature on the G1: when the unit is in 'pre-select' mode, you can scroll to the next patch in advance, while still hearing the previous patch. The new patch is only activated when you hit both footswitches together.

Verdict

Zoom has always been good to people taking their first steps in guitar technology, and the G1 is certainly their best low-budget unit yet. The plastic casing doesn't look particularly robust, but it feels surprisingly solid; if you need a greater sense of security, the G2 and G2.1 both have metal casings. Also, the simple user interface isn't entirely perfect, but it works, and you can't complain at this price. Life for the beginning guitarist seems to be getting better and better; it's certainly getting cheaper. Maybe Zoom should change its name to Macmillan, since you've never had it so good! 📺

Zoom G1

Guitarist RATING ★★★★★