

T-REX TONEBUG OVERDRIVE & REVERB £95 & £135  
EFFECTS



PHOTOGRAPHY BY PHILIP SOWELS

## T-Rex ToneBug Overdrive & ToneBug Reverb £95 & £135

T-Rex squares up to the credit crunch with some new, more affordable stompboxes *by Trevor Curwen*

**D**enmark-based T-Rex has been making high-quality stompboxes for quite some time now, many of which grace the pedalboards of the famous. But while fame and the wealth that comes with it isn't a prerequisite for owning one of these pedals, it certainly helps as they aren't exactly cheap. Responding to the fact

that the high price tag may have been off-putting for some, and that some of its pedals are quite complex, T-Rex has introduced a new range of more affordable pedals – the ToneBug series. The company describes them as “great-sounding pared-down pedals”. The aim appears to be to make easy-to-use pedals with fewer features than the

top-end pedals, but without compromising tone. The first two ToneBugs offer Overdrive and Reverb respectively.

With an appealing metal body featuring nicely curved edges, the two pedals feel solid and robust underfoot. Power comes from a 9V battery tucked away in an easily accessed compartment, with a hinged

### The Rivals

Several other companies offer both overdrive and reverb pedals in their ranges. The **BOSS** range of Compact pedals is the obvious place to look, with a pair of overdrives – **OD-3** (£85) and **SD-1** (£55) – plus the **RV-5** reverb (£139). **DigiTech**'s Hardwire series offers the **CM2 Tube Overdrive** (£99) and the **RV7 Stereo Reverb** (£149), while it's less expensive X-Series has the Tone Driver overdrive pedal (£65) and the Digiverb (£95). **Line 6**'s ToneCore range utilises digital modelling and has the **Crunchtone** overdrive (£58) and the **Verbzilla** (£136).



If these first two offerings are anything to go by, the ToneBug series pedals could become solid favourites with many players

plastic lid recessed into the rubber of the pedal base. Should you wish to run a ToneBug from a power adaptor, there's a standard socket situated between the input and output jacks on the front side. Both pedals accept either a 9V or a 12V supply, so the ToneBugs will help you make the most of your available outlets if you're using something like T-Rex's own Fuel Tank or a Voodoo Lab Pedal Power 2. Controls are located in a recessed area at the top of the pedal and consist of chrome knobs with single black marker spots, which are clearly visible against the brushed aluminium backplate.

### Sounds

The Overdrive has gain, tone and level knobs and can go from a level that's fine to use as a clean boost, through to a crunchy valve-like overdrive. This isn't too saturated, but will complement a clean amp, or add some extra punch to a dirty one without compromising the core tone. Letting your own tone come through is no problem either, as the tone control ushers in quite subtle changes until the very last segment of its travel, at which point you can dial in some biting treble should you need it.

The Reverb pedal offers a choice of two reverb types,

pedal is going to exactly reproduce the electro-mechanical complexity and depth of a real Accutronics spring reverb, the likes of which you'd find in a Fender amp. But this one comes close, and is well worth an audition for those of you who want reverb, but lack that facility in your particular amp of choice.

### Verdict

If these first two offerings are anything to go by, the ToneBug series pedals could well become solid favourites with many players – they're not too expensive, rugged enough to take abuse and they sound great. The Overdrive enters an already overcrowded market but is a viable contender there for its no-nonsense, light-to-mid-gain core tone and appeal. The Reverb stands slightly at odds from the market, rooted in welcome simplicity for guitarists' everyday needs, instead of offering endless options for recording and mixing tasks that six stringers don't need. Good stuff. **G**

### The Bottom Line

**We liked:** Sound quality; pleasing design; simplicity of the Reverb pedal

**We dislike:** Battery changing is a bit fiddly

**Guitarist says:** Good sound quality in affordable, solidly-built pedals



### T-Rex ToneBugs

**ORIGIN:** Denmark

**PRICE:** Overdrive £95; Reverb £135

**CONNECTIONS:** 6.4mm jack input and output

**CONTROLS:** Overdrive – level, gain, tone; Reverb – decay, depth, modern/spring

**POWER:** 9V battery, 9V/12V external DC power

**BATTERY LIFE:** Overdrive 12-16 hours; Reverb 0.5-1 hours

**DIMENSIONS:** 120 (d) x 78 (w) x 60mm (h)

**WEIGHT (kg/lb):** Overdrive 0.403/0.888; Reverb 0.404/0.890

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### Test results

<b>Build quality</b>	★★★★★
<b>Features</b>	★★★★☆
<b>Sound</b>	★★★★☆
<b>Value for money</b>	★★★★☆

**GUITARIST RATING** ★★★★★

modern and spring, selected via a switch between the two knobs controlling the reverb depth and decay. These, in the simplest terms, respectively govern how much reverb you get and how long it lasts.

The modern setting gives you a real sense of space around your sound, with careful juxtaposition of the knobs taking you into various sized real-world spaces – although things can get a bit unreal as you start maxing out the controls. As for the spring setting, in our opinion no digital



Both ToneBugs' power sockets accept 9V and 12V inputs to maximise your power block's outputs