

TASCAM BB-1000CD PORTABLE RECORDER £530
RECORDING

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JESSE WILD



Tascam BB-1000CD Portable Recorder £530

Practical digital recording in a convenient, portable stereo-sized package *by Trevor Curwen*

There are plenty of compact portable stereo recorders on the market nowadays, but while they're undoubtedly very practical items to carry in your gig bag not everyone has the need for a hand-held unit. If your circumstances don't in fact require your recorder to be pocket-sized, a unit such as Tascam's new BB-1000CD offers more features within its inevitably larger footprint. What you get is a mains or battery-powered, boombox-sized stereo recorder that can record to a blank CD or an SD card, sports built-in microphones (two on the front, two on the back), which can be trimmed so you can record sounds from in front of the machine or from all-around and has its own onboard 10-watt sound system with a pair of three-inch speakers.

The BB-1000CD has various connections on one of its side panels including XLR inputs (complete with phantom



power) for connecting a pair of mics for high quality stereo recordings, line in and line out connections and a headphone socket for monitoring should you choose to turn off the unit's speakers. The recorder offers uncompressed recording to CD-R/RW media for audio CDs while the SD Card can record audio as wav or mp3 files. Anything that you record on SD card can be burned to CD later if desired and music from any CD can be transferred to your SD card.

Built-in features include a metronome with adjustable speed and key plus a looper that enables you to loop any section of recorded audio and apply Tascam's phrase training speed and pitch adjustment.

In use

With all the major controls located on the BB-1000CD's top

panel, everything is comfortably within reach and operation is very simple, especially when you compare it to smaller hand-held units, which can be a bit fiddly to set up and place in an optimum recording position. By contrast, you can just plonk the BB-1000CD down on a table or the floor facing, or surrounded by, the action, set the input gain for one or both sets of mics and get on with it while it does its job – an onboard limiter automatically keeping the signal in line if you choose.

The four mics provide an excellent facility for capturing decent quality sound in a room and, while the internal speakers won't reach foundation-shaking volumes, playback is loud enough and very clear.

The most obvious use that we could envisage for the BB-1000CD would be in a band rehearsal room. With a high-capacity SD card installed you could leave it running for the duration to capture the whole session. You can record those moments that we all have when something new comes up while jamming that you decide to use in a song, but can't quite recapture when you try it again. Instant playback should at least



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resolve all those 'no, you played it differently that time' arguments. What's more, when you've nailed an arrangement you can send your bandmates home with a freshly burned CD.

Outside the rehearsal room the BB-100CD would fit capably into various scenarios – you could use it for recording gigs (maybe even burning live CDs to sell the same night) or perhaps use it to record a live drummer in stereo to take

home and transfer the track to your DAW as the bedrock of a backing track. It also has an overdub facility so you can layer parts when songwriting, it will do the business as a phrase-trainer and, of course, there's nothing to stop you using it as a standard CD player in any room in the house.

Verdict

With it being both easy to use and very versatile, the

The Bottom Line

We liked: Easy to use; a nice blend of facilities for all-round functionality

We dislike: A carrying handle would have been a nice touch

Guitarist says: The ideal recording/playback/archiving machine to have in your rehearsal room

BB-100CD is definitely a great facility to have on hand at practices and gigs. That is, provided the £500-plus price tag doesn't worry you. **G**

The Rivals

The BB-100CD is unique in the range of facilities that it offers – other CD recorders on the market tend to be rack-mounted units or portable professional machines, such as the **Marantz CDR310** (£1,010). For stereo location recording, there are several hand-held units: **Edirol's R-09HR** (£349) and **Zoom's H4n** (£329) both feature an onboard monitor speaker. Among the ranks of hardware multitrackers, the **Zoom R16** (£429) 16-track recorder comes with built-in mics, so could be used for stereo recording on location. If you're into the idea of the BB-100CD, but would prefer a less expensive alternative, **Tascam** has just announced the **BB-800** (£399) which lacks the CD recording/burning facility.



Anything you record can be burned straight to CD

Tascam BB-100CD

PRICE: £530

ORIGIN: China

TYPE: Portable CD/SD Recorder

RECORDING MEDIA: SD card (64MB to 2GB), SDHC card (4GB to 32GB), CD-R, CD-R-DA, CD-RW, CD-RW-DA

FILE SYSTEM: FAT partition: FAT16/32

SAMPLING FREQUENCY: 44.1kHz

QUANTIZATION: 16-bit

CHANNELS: Two

CONNECTIONS: Two XLR mic inputs, RCA phono line input (L/R), RCA phono line output (L/R), stereo mini jack headphone output

PHANTOM POWER: Yes

SPEAKERS: Two, three-inch

AMPLIFIERS: 5W and 5W digital amplifiers

MICROPHONES: Omnidirectional L/R (front) and Omnidirectional L/R (rear)

DIMENSIONS: 380mm (w) x 204.7mm (h) x 107mm (d)

WEIGHT (kg/lb): 3.4/7.5

POWER REQUIREMENTS: Eight AA batteries or supplied AC power adaptor

FEATURES: Built-in tuner, metronome, looping with pitch and speed and centre-cancel functions, overdub facility

EXTRAS: Remote control

OPTIONS: None

RANGE OPTIONS: BB-800 (£399)

Tascam UK

0845 130 2511

www.tascam.co.uk

Test results

Build quality ★★★★★
Features ★★★★★
Sound ★★★★★
Value for money ★★★★★

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★