

# Tascam PT-7 Chromatic Tuner/Recorder £108

Tascam comes up with a tuner that goes the extra mile for acoustic musicians *by Trevor Curwen*

**T**ascam's PT-7 combines a chromatic tuner with a metronome and a mono recorder with looping, pitch and speed facilities. It's a very versatile tool for acoustic players that not only tunes, but offers practice aids on the go.

Slim and compact, the PT-7 could easily slip into a pocket, gigbag or guitar case and has a pair of fold-out legs that allow it to sit on a table top at an ideal viewing angle or slot onto the base of a music stand. Signal input is either via an onboard mic or a 6.4mm jack socket configured to take the signal from contact mics. Tascam warns that the unit doesn't support the direct input of electric guitars or effects pedals, but that you may get away with distortion-free recordings if your guitar volume is turned down low. An internal speaker lets you hear the metronome, tuner tones or any recordings you make, but there's a socket for headphones if that's your preferred monitoring option.

A usefully sized backlit display lets you clearly see what's going on, even if you turn the backlight off to save the power of the AA battery. Three buttons let you scroll through the functions of the tuner, metronome and recorder.

The tuner can be calibrated so that the standard frequency can be set manually in a range of 349 to 499 Hz in 0.1Hz steps

or set to automatically match an input sound in the same range. It's possible to set the unit to seven other scales besides the 12-note equal temperament. Tuning can be done via the internal mic or by plugging directly in. You can also tune up by listening to a selected pitch when the PT-7 is in Sound mode. The sound can be turned on and off with the start/stop button, while the pitches are scrolled through using plus and minus buttons.

The tempo of the metronome can be set manually in a range from 30 to 300 bpm or tapped in using the plus or minus button. There are two different metronome sounds – acoustic or electronic – and several different rhythms.

The PT-7's internal memory, can hold approximately 20 minutes of audio and up to 99 different sound files. Standard tape machine-style transport controls are provided on the front panel, but you can also loop a section of audio and change the speed without changing the pitch during playback (from 50 per cent to 150 per cent in 10 per cent increments). The audio's pitch can also be changed in a range of six semitones up or down without changing the speed.

## In use

The tuner operation is excellent via the inbuilt mic and also from a direct input from an

electric guitar – the display is very stable and lets you tune with accuracy. No problems either with the metronome, which provides a versatile range of time signatures and tempos to practise with.

The onboard speaker is very small and not overly loud so, although it is fine for outputting tuning tones and the metronome, it's not great for playing back any recordings you may have made. Using headphones though, those recordings sound surprisingly good for such a small onboard mic, with great results recording an acoustic guitar and, despite Tascam's warning, an acceptable sound for a plugged-in electric.

Setting up a loop is dead easy, as is changing speed or pitch, but the sound of the altered audio is somewhat degraded – prompting the thought that the recording facility is great as a 'memo recorder' for capturing riff and song ideas but has limited use as a phrase trainer.

## Verdict

Designed for use with a wide range of instruments, the PT-7 has features that should appeal to an acoustic guitar player. If you're looking for a pocket-sized tuner, it makes perfect sense to choose one that has built-in facilities to aid practice, plus a recorder to capture musical inspiration wherever you may be. **G**

## The Rivals

For versatile tuning the **Peterson StrobeFlip** (£160), a compact virtual strobe tuner, features a wide variety of classic temperaments and new sweetened tunings. **BOSS** has a big range of tuners – the two equipped with a metronome like the PT-7 are the **TU-88** (£59) and the **TU-80** (£25). Tascam also has a range of dedicated portable trainers for guitar – the **CD-GT2** (£127) can play back audio from CD while the **MP-GT1** (£169) features an mp3 player.

## Tascam PT-7

**PRICE:** £108

**ORIGIN:** China

**TYPE:** Chromatic tuner with metronome and recording facility  
**FEATURES:** Built-in speaker, built-in microphone, metronome  
**RECORDING CHANNELS:** One  
**SAMPLING FREQUENCY:** 44.1 kHz  
**QUANTISATION BIT RATE:** 16-bit  
**RECORDING TIME:** About 20 minutes (1Gb)

**TUNER SCALES:** 12-note equal temperament, Pythagorean, Mean Tone, Werckmeister III, Kirnberger III, Kellner, Vallotti, Young  
**METRONOME TIME SIGNATURES:** 0-7 beats, duplets, triplets, shuffle, quadlets, quadlets without centre beats

**METRONOME TEMPO RANGE:** 30 to 300 BPM

**CONNECTIONS:** 6.4mm jack input, stereo mini-jack headphone output  
**DIMENSIONS:** 150mm (w) x 18mm (h) x 64mm (d)

**POWER REQUIREMENTS:** 1 x AA Battery or AC power adaptor

**FEATURES:** Built-in speaker, built-in microphone

**OPTIONS:** PS-P520 AC adaptor (£28)

**Tascam UK**

**01923 438888**

[www.tascam.co.uk](http://www.tascam.co.uk)



## The Bottom Line

**We like:** Stable tuning; portable recording; scale options, fold-out legs

**We dislike:** Audio artefacts with pitch/speed change

**Guitarist says:** Accurate tuning combined with useful on-the-move recording

## Test results

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

**GUITARIST RATING** ★★★★★