

Quicktest

Sonoma Wire Works GuitarJack £139

Audio input for your iPhone or iPad

CONTACT: MSL Pro PHONE: 0207 118 0133 WEB: www.sonomawireworks.com

We took a look at the first (iPhone-only) GuitarJack in our recent iOS input devices roundup [back in issue 348]. The second incarnation, Model 2, is now with us and it's compatible with iPhone, iPad and iPod touch – connecting via the dock port.

GuitarJack will take a guitar plugged into its standard jack input and also has a mini jack stereo mic/line input so you can record in stereo and simultaneously record vocals and an instrument when used with an app that supports that function such as Sonoma's FourTrack multitracker (£6.99), which includes a GuitarJack control panel to set the 1/4-inch jack input impedance,

various parameters for the mini jack, plus input gain levels.

In Use

GuitarJack is ruggedly built and offers a great sound quality plus a robust headphone output for plenty of volume. We were able to use it with guitar straight out of the box with GarageBand and other amp sim apps as the default setting for the standard jack input is for Hi-Z with a decent level of input gain.

You get two free apps included in the GuitarJack package: GuitarTone offers amps and effects simulation while Taylor EQ provides a variety of presets based on Taylor guitar shapes. These can also be used as plug-ins in FourTrack so you can record full electric guitar tones and add character to an acoustic.

Verdict

It's not cheap, but if you want a rugged audio input device for iOS that will slip into any pocket and take more than just guitar signals, GuitarJack is the way to go. [TC]

The Bottom Line

We like: Not just for guitar; solid construction; easily portable; sound quality

We dislike: GuitarTone app doesn't have much response to playing dynamics

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

TC Electronic PolyTune Mini £65

Pocket-sized polyphonic tuning

CONTACT: TC Electronic PHONE: 0800 917 8926 WEB: www.tcelectronic.com

TC Electronic started the polyphonic tuning ball rolling with its original PolyTune in 2010, and since then many guitarists have switched over to the convenience of seeing whether all six strings are in tune at a single glance. Other companies (HardWire and Korg, to date) might be following the TC lead but the Danes are keeping them on their toes by continuing the PolyTune lineage with a new ultra-compact version, the PolyTune Mini.

In Use

With a 4 x 9cm footprint, the true bypass PolyTune Mini is far smaller than the original and about a third the size of the rival HardWire HT-6, making it perfect for slipping into any tight previously-unused space on your pedalboard. The display, although small, is bright and will clearly be seen on a darkened stage. If you strum all six strings the polyphonic display will let you see if any strings are out, then, as you pluck each individual string, the pedal will work like any standard chromatic tuner as you tune to the correct pitch. Holding down the switch for a while will put you in drop D mode and a small switch on the side lets you set the polyphonic tuning for capo

positions up to B and lowered tunings down a similar amount.

Verdict

The Mini does a gallon job in a pint-sized package, offering an ideal way to put a tuner on your board while still leaving plenty of space for the pedals that create your sound. [TC]

The Bottom Line

We like: Tiny size; polyphonic operation; easy to read display; altered tunings

We dislike: No battery operation – a 9V DC adapter is the only option

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★



Super-Vee BladeRunner Tremolo System £120

Classy update for your Strat-style guitar...

CONTACT: Madison & Fifth PHONE: 01858 446782 WEB: www.super-vee.com

Easily the most popular vibrato ever, the Fender Strat's waggle bar is not perfect, and one of its 'problems' lies in the relatively crude fulcrum point. But now Super-Vee has come up with a unique solution: its Blade technology, a 'pivot' created by a small insert of industrial grade stainless spring steel. There is no actual pivot point to wear or prevent return to pitch, the flexible insert just bends as you move the arm.

Very nicely made with a lightweight aluminium block and an arm that screws into a nylon insert so it stays where you put it, the BladeRunner is a direct replacement for most Strat-style vibratos. Simply remove your old vibrato and its

six pivot screws and fit the BladeRunner – you only use the outer four screws but screw them hard down. The front on the vibrato doesn't move, it's the insert between that and the main vibrato block that provides the flex.

In Use

Fitted to our reference Road Worn Fender Strat there's a really nice lively resonance to the guitar – subtly different to the original vibrato. Things do feel a little stiffer: the arm stays put and you seem to need a little more push; but again it's subtle and after half an hour of playing, unless you like a really light vibrato feel, we think you'll adapt. But it's the tuning

stability that is most impressive. Our Strat feels (and sounds) well and truly upgraded!

Verdict

A idiot proof, easily reversible retro-fit vibrato that won't damage your guitar. It sounds good and although feels slightly stiffer has exceptional return to pitch with zero tweaking. [DB]

Guitarist
CHOICE

The Bottom Line

We like: Easy installation; won't damage your guitar; sound; tuning stability

We dislike: Very little; you just have to adjust slightly to the subtly stiffer feel

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

EternaShine Guitar Scratch Remover £19

Another restorative guitar potion

CONTACT: Posh Guitars PHONE: N/A WEB: www.poshguitars.com

Anyone who wants to keep their instrument pristine knows how frustrating minor scratches and pick marks can be. Normal polishes won't remove those, so many of us resort to more abrasive options, such as T-Cut, which can be too harsh for some finishes. EternaShine's Guitar Scratch Remover is a new solution.

The package includes two polishes, one slightly more abrasive than the other, for those small scratches, plus a microfibre cloth. EternaShine says there's enough polish for about 25 applications.

In Use

Designed for any modern gloss finish (not satin or older, worn

finishes) we try it on our well-gigged Yamaha NCX2000, which is beginning to look a little tatty with a lot of marks that a causal clean hasn't removed. Using the coarser number two polish on the back where small scratches are clearly visible, along with lots of elbow grease, our favourite Yamaha soon looks much smarter, especially after a final application of polish number one. While some of the marks did disappear, some where still visible, though seemed less obvious; to remove these you'd probably need good ol' T-Cut.

Verdict

This is a nice package that works on those small but still

annoying scratches and marks, as well and giving your favourite axe a thought clean and polish. Plus, if you purchase the product from Posh Guitars, 10 per cent of the asking price goes to charity work in Africa building orphanages to care for AIDS victims. Nice. [DB]

The Bottom Line

We like: It works on minor scratches and pick marks

We dislike: Deeper scratches will need something stronger

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★