

VISUAL SOUND GARAGETONE PEDALS £59.99-£69.99
GUITAR EFFECTS

Visual Sound GarageTone guitar pedals

£59.99-£69.99

Four exclusive samples from Visual Sound's new boutique-cheap GarageTone pedal range *by Dave Durban*

PHOTOGRAPH BY NEIL GODWIN

Chainsaw Distortion £59.99

Creamy and affordable distortion with big low-end

The Chainsaw Distortion forms one part of Visual Sound's affordable boutique GarageTone range. Comprising five pedals, each with 18-gauge steel housings, hand-wired jacks and true-bypass switching. The Chainsaw has the usual drive, tone and volume controls, but offers surprising flexibility.

Sounds

Setting everything on halfway produces a piercing dynamic crunch, though with drive pushed a little more, there's a full-stack attack and big low-end thud. For bigger, rip-roaring solos, dime the drive control and hold on!

Verdict

If huge, creamy distortion is your thing, the Chainsaw is a must try. A great budget buy for heavy grungers and modern shredders alike.

Spec

PRICE: £59.99
ORIGIN: China
TYPE: Guitar distortion pedal
CONTROLS: Drive, tone, volume
CONNECTIONS: Hand-wired input, output jacks
POWER: DC adaptor (not supplied) or nine-volt battery
DIMENSIONS: 120 (l) x 81 (w) x 53mm (h)
RANGE OPTIONS: The other pedal in the range that's not reviewed here is the Oil Can Phaser (£59.99)
Headline Music
01223 874301
www.headlinemusic.co.uk

The Bottom Line

We like: Rip-roaring distortion tones; good overall flexibility
We dislike: Nothing

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

Chopper Tremolo £69.99

All-analog tremolo pedal with added Wave control

From Western swing to Johnny Marr-inspired indie, the tremolo is an essential tool. The Chopper utilises an expensive opto-isolator and an all-analogue circuit. Other features include a Wave control, which alters the effects feel, and a blinking LED for tremolo speed.

Sounds

Here you can create anything from subtle trem whimpers to full-on rock stutters with an authentic 'Tweed' feel and tone depending on the Wave control setting. Added to this, there's a lot of fun to be had with greasy slide playing and a Black Keys-style amp tone.

Verdict

An easy-to-use and effective pedal that delivers authentic sounds as well as excellent modern tremolo tones when paired with an overdrive.

Spec

PRICE: £69.99
ORIGIN: China
TYPE: Guitar distortion pedal
CONTROLS: Speed, wave, depth
CONNECTIONS: Hand-wired input, output jacks
POWER: DC adaptor (not supplied) or nine-volt battery
DIMENSIONS: 120 (l) x 81 (w) x 53mm (h)
RANGE OPTIONS: See Chainsaw

The Bottom Line

We like: Authentic tremolo sounds; Wave control; competitively priced
We dislike: Nothing

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★



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Drivetrain Overdrive **£59.99**

Reissued boutique overdrive for the working musician

The Drivetrain Overdrive is a repackaged and updated version of the Reverend Drivetrain Overdrive II, developed by Visual Sound's Bob Weil and Reverend Guitars' Joe Naylor. Alongside this, with independent treble and bass controls, it offers a wide array of driven tones.

Sounds
This delivers moreish tone all over: with all controls at 12 o'clock you achieve an open rock rhythm tone, while more gain aids its American voice for SRV-inspired blues tones. The Drivetrain also nails a muddy grunge sound with plenty of thick sustain and gain.

Verdict
Despite the modest outlay, this offers hugely versatile and sonically involving overdrive tones worthy of a higher-end, boutique price tag.

Spec
PRICE: £59.99
ORIGIN: China
TYPE: Guitar overdrive pedal
CONTROLS: Drive, treble, bass, volume
CONNECTIONS: Hand-wired input, output jacks
POWER: DC adaptor (not supplied) or nine-volt battery
DIMENSIONS: 120 (l) x 81 (w) x 53mm (h)
RANGE OPTIONS: See Chainsaw



The Bottom Line
We like: Transparent and versatile driven sounds
We dislike: Nothing at this price point

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

Axle Grease Delay **£69.99**

An ultra-affordable digital/analog hybrid delay

The Axle Grease delay utilises a hybrid digital/analogue circuit with 400 milliseconds of delay time. It promises quiet operation, good tracking and a range of classic sounds – from slap-back echo, to natural sounding delays to way-out weirdness.

Sounds
Its warm feel creates a classic vibe – slapback echoes are given a fifties jive; rock solo delay builds with impressive depth and precision, while ethereal analogue mayhem is not out of reach. The fact that it's straightforward to use and sturdy puts it right up there with best in this price range.

Verdict
This is a great sounding, easy-to-use and affordable unit that can be used for traditional sounds or to inspire some new delay experimentation.

Spec
PRICE: £69.99
ORIGIN: China
TYPE: Guitar delay pedal
CONTROLS: Time, repeats, level
CONNECTIONS: Hand-wired input, output jacks
POWER: DC adaptor (not supplied) or nine-volt battery
DIMENSIONS: 120 (l) x 81 (w) x 53mm (h)
RANGE OPTIONS: See Chainsaw

The Bottom Line
We like: Warm delay sounds; great price
We dislike: Being picky, the bland aesthetics

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★