

MODELS

THE familiar amp model selector switch accesses 11 different amp sims (up to 20 using the Tone Room editor software). The amp actually reconfigures itself for each setting

IN AND OUT

YOU can plug in external sources using the aux in jack; the headphones socket also doubles as a recording output and interfaces with any mixer

BIAS & CLASS

THE new Bias and Class buttons operate to vary the VT40X's dynamic response and add crossover distortion, along with other subtle nuance effects

AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Digital/analogue/valve hybrid modelling combo

OUTPUT: 40W

SPEAKER: 1x10" Vox Special Design

CONTROLS: Amp model select, gain, treble, middle, bass, volume, power level; preset mode switch, 3x effects select button, 2x effects value edit, bank select, 4x channel select, tap button, bias shift, class select

SOCKETS: Input, aux in, headphones out, footswitch (optional) in, USB

WEIGHT: 9.5kg

DIMENSIONS: [HxWxD]
404 x 462 x 225mm

CONTACT: Vox Amplification
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VOX VALVETRONIX VT40X £238

The Brit amp co revamps an old favourite

VOX introduced its Valvetronix amps way back in 2001, and they're still going strong today, outlasting most of the modelling amp competition along the way. There's no real secret to this; they sound superb – and while they aren't the cheapest, the sounds and build quality more than compensate for that. After such a long time, however, it was clearly time for a refresh, which has given us the newer, better VTX series.

The 40-watt 1x10 VT40X has a restyled sealed cabinet, with a clever bass reflex design to enhance the 10-inch driver's bass response. Inside the chassis, there's a new digital signal processor that, along with other components, takes advantage of 15 years of technological progress to offer more realistic sounds than ever before. This is where Vox has leveraged the considerable digital expertise of parent company Korg, using its VET (Virtual Element

Technology) modelling system to simulate each amp down to the last component, changing gain structure, tone network, operating class and bias, all in real time.

On the surface, the VT40X's control panel looks quite similar to the old Valvetronix amps, but with some new features, most notably the class and bias buttons. These

The sounds have improved, with more focus and detail

allow selection of class A or class AB, as well as shifting the bias voltage from normal to either cold or hot modes. Both buttons change the VT40X's dynamic response, affecting the Valve Reactor circuit, which uses a real 12AX7 valve to provide more realistic valve-driven tone and response. While the preamp is digital, this digitally controlled analogue part of the

amp adds significant warmth and dynamics, which is still difficult to capture in the digital domain.

The VT40X's sounds have really improved with more focus and detail. The Vox models are uncannily realistic, especially the AC30TB, which captures the original's class A grind and vocal solo voice. Other old favourites

such as Boutique OD (based on the a Dumble) and Double Rectifier have more dynamic range, with a sweeter, more detailed top-end that comes almost uncomfortably close to the real thing. The effects are equally impressive, with a choice of 12 onboard modulations, delays, reverbs, overdrives and distortions, as well as a handy noise reduction.

But the fun doesn't end with what you get out of the box; Vox's Tone Room editor software allows in-depth editing of parameters, adds extra models and effects and lets you save personal favourites offline, in addition to the eight patches you can store on the amp itself. You can also sample other user patches, which can be a great help for newbies.

All in all, there's no doubt: the new VT40X and its stablemates have extra added zing in many departments, making them even more desirable, and ensuring that the Valvetronix line remains at the top of the amp modelling hill for many more years to come.

Nick Guppy

SUMMARY	FEATURES									
	SOUND QUALITY									
	VALUE FOR MONEY									
	BUILD QUALITY									
	PLAYABILITY									
OVERALL RATING										★★★★★