

YAMAHA DTX522 & DTX562 E-KITS

From £966 We check out the improvements and enhancements on the latest DTX kits

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One of the highlights of the Spring Musikmesse and the recent online MusicRadar Drum Expo 2013 was Yamaha's new DTX502. This new module is said to have a "vastly improved sound quality, highly expressive playability and user-friendly functionality". It steps into the place of the DTX500, occupying the lower mid-range position of Yamaha's electronic kits.

Build

Giving scope for varying budgets and playing applications, Yamaha has produced four five-piece kits to accompany the new module. We have two of these for review – the DTX522 series entry and top of the series DTX562. The module has all the allure of any hi-tech gadgetry, with its shiny black top panel interspersed with a selection of clearly labelled, intuitively placed buttons, LED/LCD displays and the familiar quick access wheel.

There is over twice the memory capacity

Both review sets are a combination of two packages: the DMR502 module/rack set and, either the series baby DTP522 or, the top of the series DTP562 pad sets. The lightweight and robust rack features a resin ball-type snare mount and the DTX502 module. Both pad sets include the excellent KP65 kick pad and the triple-zoned XP80 snare which features Yamaha's excellent Textured Cellular Silicone head.

As well as on the snare, the DTX562 also features the TCS heads on all three of the 7" toms. There are three 13½" cymbal pads – one each for the crash, ride and hi-hat. The RHH135 hi-hat pad comes in two sections – the pad itself and an additional sensor which sits atop of the supplied hi-hat stand. As well as the aforementioned snare and kick pads, the DTX522 also includes the DTP522 pad set comprising three triple-zoned chokeable pads for hi-hat, crash and a ride, three 8" rubber tom pads and a hi-hat controller pedal.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE MODULE IS BOTH SWIFT AND INCREDIBLY ACCURATE AND THE SOUND IS LITERALLY STRIKING

and around 250 more sounds than its predecessor. The DTX502 now gives the user a total of 691 drum and percussion samples and 128 keyboard voices. There is also plenty of space for user kits – 50 of them in fact – that's 30 more than the previous model. While many of the drum samples are taken from Yamaha's classic acoustic drums, this module is the first in the DTX range to incorporate additional sounds created by third-party VST developers.

You are not confined to these onboard voices however thanks to the USB port, which gives the user access to the wealth of drum sample libraries readily available. Also, when connected to a computer and using Yamaha's free downloadable Musicsoft app, you can transfer your own samples and midi song data into the module's on-board flash memory and back-up user-created kits and settings.

Hands On

When powering on for the first time the module requests the user to input kit type – an initial requirement for pad/triggering optimisation. The keenly priced DTX522 is the first to be played, where I find the feel and response from the unforgiving rubber tom pads fairly typical of many budget-type kits. The impressive TCS snare, cymbals and KP65 kick help elevate the kit far beyond this level.

The interpretation of the module is both swift and incredibly accurate and the sound is literally striking. The samples are crisp and clean without being clouded or 'improved' with compression or masses of reverb – just a really great drum sound. The selection of intelligently compiled kits and the small but diverse range of songs is equally impressive. Features on the cymbals such as muting, swells and choking is authentic and makes



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the whole set more enjoyable to play.

One particular kit which demonstrates a little of the DTX522 and DTX562 potential is the 'Funk Master' kit – this has the usual snare, hi-hat and kick but two of the toms are used to trigger/halt a funk groove while the other has some snappy organ solos – constructive and fun. So too are the practice routines which makes these kits great platforms for honing those drumming skills.

Once the pads of the DTX562 are in place on the rack and the hi-hat set up, this takes the kit up to a whole new level. It becomes instantly more playable, and appears even more dynamic and responsive. The TCS pads respond beautifully and feel completely natural without over-exciting the sticks. The hi-hat pad mounted on the stand also feels natural and responds superbly.

Producing all the usual hi-hat chops appears far easier and accurate than with just the hi-hat controller. **R**

DTX502 MODULE

Yamaha claim the new module has a "vastly improved sound quality" and "highly expressive playability"

VERDICT: The DTX502 and its accompanying kits offer so much as a practice tool at home and maybe even for gigging too. While both kits offer a great deal for your wallet, it is worth shelling out the extra for the enhanced response and feel of those TCS pads.

BUILD QUALITY ★★★★★
PLAYABILITY ★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★
RHYTHM RATING ★★★★★



SOUNDS

DTX502 module has 691 drum and percussion samples

CYMBALS

DTX522 includes three triple-zoned chokeable cymbal pads

RACK

Rack is lightweight yet robust

PADS

DTX562 has Textured Cellular Silicone heads on all three of the 7" toms

KICK DRUM

Both sets include the excellent KP65 kick pad

Essential spec



PRICE

DTX522K, £966;
DTX562K, £1,526;
DTX502 Module, £298

CONFIGURATION

DTX522 (with DTP522 Pad Set): 1 x KP65 kick pad, 1 x HH65 hi-hat controller; 1 x XP80 for snare; 3 x TP70 for toms; 2 x PCY100 pads for crash and a hi-hat; 1 x PCY135 for crash/ride. DTX562 (with DTP562 Pad Set): 1 x KP65 kick pad, 1 x RHH135 hi-hat; 1 x XP80 for snare; 3 x XP70 for toms; 2 x PCY135 for a crash and a ride. The pad set also includes 1 x HS650A single-braced hi-hat stand

INSTRUMENTS

Drums and percussion: 691; Keyboard sounds: 128

POLYPHONY

32

DRUM KITS

Preset: 50; User: 50

EFFECTS

Master Reverb - Stage, Hall, Room, Master EQ

CONNECTIONS

Rear Panel: 1/4" jack Kick/8, Crash, Ride, Tom1/10, Tom2/11, Tom3/12, Snare, USB to host port, Hi-Hat controller, Hi-Hat, DC In, Output R and L/Mono. Front Panel: 1/4" jack for phones, Aux In (stereo mini jack). NB: the additional numbers against the toms and kick are for the inputting of additional single-zoned pads using a split mono cable

FILE FORMAT

Song Data: SMF; Audio Data: WAV, AIFF

DRUM RACK

1 x RS502: 2 x cymbal holders, 1 x Resin ball snare holder, 3 x tom holders

CONTACT

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