

ALESIS SAMPLEPAD

£99.99 Following on from their nifty Percpad, Alesis presents a conveniently compact sample player designed for drummers and percussionists

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DESIGN

Samplepad is similar to Alesis' Percpad but with the ability to play user-created samples

During the summer of 2011 Alesis unveiled their compact and highly affordable Percpad – an intuitive four-zone drum pad with onboard drum and percussion sounds, MIDI out and an additional trigger input. Taking the basic concept a step further, Alesis has produced a similar-looking pad with all the above features but, in addition, the new model has the ability to play user-created samples.

Build

While the new pad is the same size as its Percpad predecessor, Alesis has embellished it with a tasteful chrome trim, shiny black casing and an LCD segment instead of the basic LED display. This shows a variety of information such as voice names (samples and internal), sound location (card or internal) and range of parameters affecting the control of any of the sounds including tuning, reverb, pan and volume.

Located well out of sticks' reach is one of the most

significant, yet understated, additions – that of the SD card socket. While Alesis don't include an SD card with the Samplepad, one can be purchased for less than a fiver for a 4GB card. As on the Percpad, there is a bank of LEDs which show which pad is being struck, proving useful for assigning onboard sounds and samples.

Hands On

I captured a selection of samples (voice, drums, snippets of music and sound effects), using basic PC sampling software and saved each of the 44.1K .wav files onto the 4GB card. Even with a stack of samples, there's still a load of space left for more. With the card inserted, there is a slight pause while it checks the integrity. Then one of the first samples to load is a 'power chord' into PAD 1 (keeping the tuning as with the original sample), then I put the same sample into PAD 2, altering the tuning. Though there are nine levels of tuning, this will allow an internal sound or sample to be taken up or down by around a third.

While a sample is sounding, the same sample (or an additional one) can be triggered again (and again!), creating an interesting wall of sound – great effect with the power chord I created previously! Once played through the pad, the samples I loaded are virtually indistinguishable from the original, proving the pad's ability to faithfully reproduce the sounds. **R**

VERDICT: Before the review I believed the limitations of a mono sample would put me off the pad. However, the ability to play any sample, alter its tuning and add a sprinkling of reverb turns the Samplepad into a powerful little box of tricks. The potential is immense while the price isn't.

BUILD QUALITY

PLAYABILITY

VALUE FOR MONEY

RHYTHM RATING

Essential spec



PRICE

£99.99

ONBOARD SOUNDS

25

SAMPLE FILE FORMAT

.WAV (mono only)

SD CARD TYPE

Any SDHC (high capacity) or SDSC (standard capacity) up to 32GB

PADS

Four, velocity-sensitive

SENSITIVITY

10 levels

INDIVIDUAL PAD VOLUME

10 levels

EDITABLE MODES

Tune, Reverb, Pan, Midi (note number), Sensitivity, Assign, Level

EFFECT

Reverb, 10 levels

PANNING

9 levels (4 left, centre, 4 right)

CONNECTIONS

SD card (max, 1/4" Headphones Jack, 1/4" Left (Mono), 1/4" Midi Out, 1/4" jack for 'Kick' (or other pad), Socket for 9 Volt power supply

CONTACT

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