

## POWER

**THE** four-position power switch lets you drive the output stage hard, just like a real valve power amp, and it responds uncannily like one, too

## SPEAKER

**A** 12-inch loudspeaker with a massive magnet delivers the tone; it's enhanced by the clever use of lightweight poplar ply in the cabinet for extra zing



## USB RECORDING

**A** handy USB output records the Blues Cube Hot's scintillating tones direct to your DAW

## AT A GLANCE

**TYPE:** Solid-state preamp and power amp, using analogue and digital circuits

**OUTPUT:** 30W, switchable to 15, 5 and 0.5W

**SPEAKER:** 1x12" Roland V 80 custom design

**CONTROLS:** Volume, bass, mid, treble, reverb, master volume, output power switch, boost and tone switches

**SOCKETS:** Input, headphones, line out, USB recording out, footswitch jack (toggles boost and tone)

**WEIGHT:** 12.6kg

**DIMENSIONS:** (HxWxD)  
413x433x239mm

**CONTACT:** Roland UK  
01792 702701 [www.roland.co.uk](http://www.roland.co.uk)

# ROLAND BLUES CUBE HOT £409

Real valve amp tone from transistors – has Roland finally cracked it?

**THE** long-running Cube series of guitar amps has always represented great value; they're compact, portable and the Roland badge means excellent quality and reliability. While Roland is one of the most popular solid-state amp brands, there's a still a general opinion that even good solid-state amps never have quite the same feel and response as valves. However, the Blues Cube could change that, thanks to something Roland calls Tube Logic.

More than just modelling, Tube Logic is Roland's new design philosophy, and a radical development from the Blues Cubes of the 1990s – a philosophy that starts at the input socket and extends all the way to the speaker. In between, Roland has duplicated not just the tone, but the organic response and dynamic envelope of a vintage tweed valve amp, using a clever mix of analogue and digital circuits.

The Blues Cube Hot is a single-channel design with footswitchable boost and EQ, as well as four output levels, from 30 watts down to around 0.5 watts, to properly reproduce the sound of a valve power stage driven into cut-off at any volume level. The smart control panel is easily understood: there's a single input

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jack, with knobs for volume, bass, mid and treble, reverb and master output level. Two small illuminated buttons control the Cube's boost and tone features. Next to the shielded power switch is the four-position pointer knob that selects 0.5, 5, 15 or 30 watts of output power. On the rear, there are sockets for a two-button footswitch, together with a

headphones socket, line out and a handy USB recording outlet.

The Blues Cube Hot needs no tweaking to find a great tone; the sonic gratification is instant. Punchy mid-biased cleans combined with snappy treble and tight bass shift to a warm, highly responsive tweed-inspired overdrive as the volume is wound

power, it's loud enough for small gigs, while at the other extreme, the 0.5-watt setting is perfect for home practice and recording, with no loss of tone or feel.

Solid-state has come a long way in the last decade, and when amps as good as this one come along, it's hard to deny the benefits. Portability, reliability, consistency and affordability are a given, but great tone is what really counts. But this sounds and responds like a top boutique valve amp, with none of the valve drawbacks. The Blues Cube Hot is perfect for players at any level, from keen amateurs to the most demanding professionals. Tube Logic is a winner.

**Nick Guppy**

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