



# BOSS DD-500 £275

Boss breezes in with a do-it-all digital delay

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**N**o-one can deny that Roland/Boss has been a pioneer and a big player in the delay game through its Space Echo tape echoes, BBD analogue delays such as the DM-2, and digital delays from the rackmounted SDE series to its current DD compact pedals. Lately, though, there has been an absence in its roster: one of the new breed of all-singing, all-dancing, large-format delay pedals such as those made by Eventide and Strymon among others. But not any longer: the empire is striking back with the DD-500, a large format, triple-footswitched, digital delay stompbox with 12 different delay types, plus a looping facility, plenty of programmable patches and loads of parameter tweaking and control options.

While it's stuffed with functionality, the DD-500 is pretty straightforward to use. To get started, you can choose a delay type with the Mode knob and immediately tweak its major parameters with five knobs that set delay time, feedback, effect level, tone and modulation depth – grab any knob and the display

will refresh to show you its numerical value. Now, while setting up a sound like that is quick and easy, the power of the DD-500 lies in its ability to store patches. There are 198 of them in 99 banks of two, and each one can store loads of parameters beyond those that are tweaked with the knobs, including semi-parametric four-band EQ and ducking.

The two presets (A and B) in each bank are selected with the first two footswitches, while you can hold down two footswitches (A and B; B and Tap) to change banks. That third footswitch is ostensibly for tap tempo, but it can alternatively be assigned within a patch to fulfil a control function, so you can use it for such things as fading in the delay sound or outputting it only when you hold down the switch, cutting the delay time to a fraction of its current setting, holding the feedback for infinite repeats, or adjusting multiple delay parameters at once. The switch can even be set up to select a patch so you can have three patches available for instant recall, such as a Line 6 DL4 or the larger TC Flashbacks.

**ABOVE** Boss's new stompbox has 12 different delay types and enables you to go deep with your editing, storing up to 198 patches in total



**ABOVE** The MIDI I/O ports allow for additional control options

**RIGHT** A variety of modes presents a choice of standard digital delays, through vintage examples in the style of 80s rackmounts, plus darker sounds and tape echoes



There's also provision to add extra footswitches or an expression pedal for parameter control, plus there's MIDI I/O for more control options.

## Sounds

With 32-bit/96kHz delay processing and analogue dry signal, there are no sound-quality issues and you can choose true or buffered bypass, the latter enabling you to use the 'carryover' function where the delay trails decay naturally rather than cutting dead when the effect is bypassed.

The 12 delay types cover a host of options, including some familiar Roland/Boss emulations. While there is a pristine Standard digital delay, you also get a Vintage Digital mode that offers the differently flavoured repeats of the SDE-2000 and SDE-3000 rack units, and the DD-2 pedal. Analog mode recreates the darker echoes of the DM-2, while Tape mode has options for a single-head Echoplex-style emulation as well as a simulated RE-201 Space Echo where you get to choose various combinations of the heads. Coming right up to date, you also get a Tera Echo mode, derived from the Boss TE-2 pedal and offering intriguing ambiances that lie between delay and reverb.

Beyond those, there are the processed delays: Reverse, SFX, Filter and Shimmer where the repeats are pitch-shifted, and the gorgeous Slow Attack where you can make use of your playing dynamics to determine how the delays fade in. Pattern Delay, with 16 different delay lines, has 10 fixed rhythmic patterns,

but also has a 'User' pattern, which, with careful programming, can approximate head spacings on vintage multi-head tape echoes other than the RE-201. Finally, Dual mode offers two different delay lines that can be connected in series or parallel. That's not to be confused with another of the DD-500's functions: a mode that can set up the A and B footswitches so that both can be active simultaneously, allowing access to layered sounds by combining two patches.

## Verdict

With the varied delay types, all their editable parameters and the control options available for expressive effects, not to mention plenty of patch memory, the DD-500 is a delay powerhouse that lets you easily create, store and recall a massive array of effects that includes – but also goes beyond – all the common bread-and-butter types. While there are several quality contenders for your coin out there, Boss has managed to put the features that most players will likely need into a relatively compact space for a competitive price. The DD-500 is a timely product that builds on and continues a fine heritage. **A**

**PROS** A practical pedal that should supply all the delay sounds you need with various ways to deliver them on stage

**CONS** It eats batteries; the USB connection allows data backup, but there's no matching software editor as yet

## Tech Spec

**ORIGIN:** Taiwan

**TYPE:** Digital delay pedal

**FEATURES:** 12 delay modes, 198 patches, phrase looper, tap tempo, true or buffered bypass

**DELAY MODES:**

Standard, Analog, Tape, Vintage Digital, Dual, Pattern, Reverse, SFX, Shimmer, Filter, Slow Attack, Tera Echo

**CONTROLS:** Mode selector, Time/Value, Feedback, E.Level, Tone, Mod Depth, 4x edit buttons, 3x footswitches

**CONNECTIONS:**

Standard inputs A/Mono and B, standard output A/Mono and B, CTL/EXP jack, MIDI In, MIDI Out, USB

**POWER:** 4x AA batteries, AC adaptor (not supplied)

**DIMENSIONS:** 170 (w) x 138 (d) x 62mm (h)

**OPTIONS:** AC adaptor: PSA series

**FOOTSWITCH:** FS-5U, FS-5L, FS-6, FS-7

**EXPRESSION PEDAL:** Boss FV-500L, FV-500H, Roland EV-5

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**9/10**