

# Quicktest



## IK Multimedia iRig HD £79

Upgraded audio connection for your iPad

**CONTACT:** IK Multimedia **PHONE:** 0800 0934 066 **WEB:** www.ikmultimedia.com

**The original iRig** was one of the earliest devices for connecting a guitar to an iPad and accessing amp sims and recording software. It plugged into the headphone socket, which wasn't an ideal way to do things because crosstalk could result in headphone feedback. There are no such problems with the new iRig HD, though; it features connection to the 30-pin port and also comes with detachable cables to connect to Lightning and USB ports, enabling it to work with any iPhone, iPod touch, iPad or Mac.

### In Use

Robust and easily portable, the iRig HD takes its power from your device and features a single jack socket for guitar. You set your input gain with an inset knob while monitoring the sound through headphones or monitors connected to your device or computer. With 24-bit audio quality, the iRig HD

translates your guitar sound well, inputting a clean, dynamic signal for your app. We got great results both playing the GarageBand and AmpliTube amps on our iPad and recording guitar. If you don't already have amp-sim apps, the iRig HD comes with four exclusive models (two metal amps plus Whammy and flanger effects) for the AmpliTube FREE app. Mac users also get a free download of the AmpliTube Metal collection.

### Verdict

With quality sound, easy portability and flexible connectivity, the iRig HD could well be the ideal way to link up your guitar with a mobile device or computer. **[TC]**

**GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★**

**Guitarist says:** Nicely upgraded, the iRig HD is a quality route to get your guitar into your i-device



## HardWire V-10 Power Block £179

A blockbuster pedal power source

**CONTACT:** Sound Technology **PHONE:** 01462 480000 **WEB:** www.digitech.com

**HardWire's V-10** Power Block is designed for players tired of the noise and hum of cheap PSUs, offering a quality unit that covers the spectrum of common pedal power needs.

You get 10 fully isolated outputs, with 1600mA total output. There are four 150mA nine-volts; two switchable nine-/12-volts at 200mA; two switchable nine-/12-volts at 150mA; and two more 150mA nine-volts, which can starve voltage down to five volts. The V-10's secret weapon lies in its switchable sections, though – they can each be merged to form 400mA or 300mA outputs for hungry units.

17 right-angled power cables are included with the V-10, including centre-positive and 3.5mm mini-plug cables, plus nine-volt battery clips. The unit itself is larger than the Voodoo Lab Pedal Power 2 Plus, but its aluminium enclosure means it's lighter, and will mount

conveniently underneath most Pedaltrain pedalboards.

### In Use

We ran the V-10 to full capacity, utilising all 10 outputs (with a handful of analogue pedals daisy-chained from one output), and merged outputs for high-current pedals such as the DigiTech Whammy and various digital delays and reverbs. This induced no noise or adverse tonal effects whatsoever – just pure, quiet power.

### Verdict

If you're serious about your 'board (and if you're using all 10 outputs, you probably are), the V-10 is a good contender for your power needs. **[MB]**

**GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★**

**Guitarist says:** A worthy addition to the PSU arena, with enough power outputs for all but the most massive of 'boards

# Mission Engineering VM-PRO £155

The volume pedal gets buff(ered)

CONTACT: Toneworld PHONE: 0161 605 0871 WEB: [www.missionengineering.com](http://www.missionengineering.com)

**Passive volume** pedals are notorious for sucking your high-end, and the same goes for 'boards loaded with true bypass pedals. Hoping to solve these problems is Mission's VM-PRO, a top-end buffered volume pedal.

The VM-PRO's audiophile-grade buffer is always on, which helps to maintain treble content, while three internal switches match the pedal to your rig: Active/Passive prevents active pickups overdriving the pedal's internal amplifier; Sparkle increases the high-frequency response at low volumes; and Impedance provides compatibility with Fuzz Faces and the like.

The actual pedal has a similar build to a modern Cry Baby,



18-volt PSU or a nine-volt battery.

## In Use

The VM-PRO's travel is silky smooth, while the buffer brightens up clean tones and provides a slightly increased output compared with running your guitar straight into an amp. The switches work a treat, too: Sparkle adds a touch more treble to lower-volume tones,

with easy battery access, plus a standard input and TRS output to connect a tuner for silent tuning – although a second output would have been simpler here. It runs from a nine-volt to

while Active/Passive is ideal for use with high-output humbuckers.

## Verdict

With the VM-PRO, Mission has created a volume pedal with enough options for almost any rig. In fact, the only thing we miss is a minimum volume control, although this won't be a deal-breaker for most. If your high-end is going AWOL and you need a high-quality volume pedal, the VM-PRO is well worth a look. **[MB]**

**GUITARIST RATING** ★★★★★

**Guitarist says:** Yes, it's another volume pedal, but few can match the VM-PRO's versatility, not to mention its high-integrity buffer

# MXR M69 Prime Distortion £59

Cut-price dirt that's primed to rock

CONTACT: Westside Distribution PHONE: 0141 248 4812 WEB: [www.jimdunlop.com](http://www.jimdunlop.com)

**In recent** years, MXR has really upped its game, not only in the tonal stakes, but also in terms of value for money, and the Prime Distortion is its most affordable dirt pedal yet. Nothing's sacrificed in terms of build quality, though: you still get a solid metal enclosure, not to mention true bypass switching. Control-wise, it's as simple as it gets: output, tone and distortion. Powering the pedal is a little trickier – replacing the nine-volt battery involves removing the entire baseplate, but a standard nine-volt power supply also does the job.

## Sounds

Set all the knobs to noon, and the Prime Distortion gives you a satisfying crunch, albeit one

with a slightly harsh top-end. Take the tone control down to 10 o'clock, however, and you get a chunky drive with a thick bottom-end and a judicious helping of mids. Lower-gain settings are fairly defined considering the amount of gain available, and surprisingly responsive to volume and pickup changes. The last quarter of the gain range does get a little bit muddy, however, and further emphasises those ice-picky treble frequencies. Keep that tone control below halfway and you'll be fine.

## Verdict

While it covers a decent range of sounds, the Prime Distortion



will only be the first choice if your tastes reside primarily in crunchy, saturated rock. Creating a new big-name pedal for such a reasonable outlay is to be applauded, and if you don't mind a bit of excess treble and tribal insignias, you might find yourself wanting some Prime time. **[MB]**

**GUITARIST RATING** ★★★★★

**Guitarist says:** A solid distortion that's great for 80s rock and metal, but could use a little taming in the high-end