

# RTOM BLACK HOLES



**From £77** Neighbours and loved ones on your back about noise? These Black Holes could be a revelation

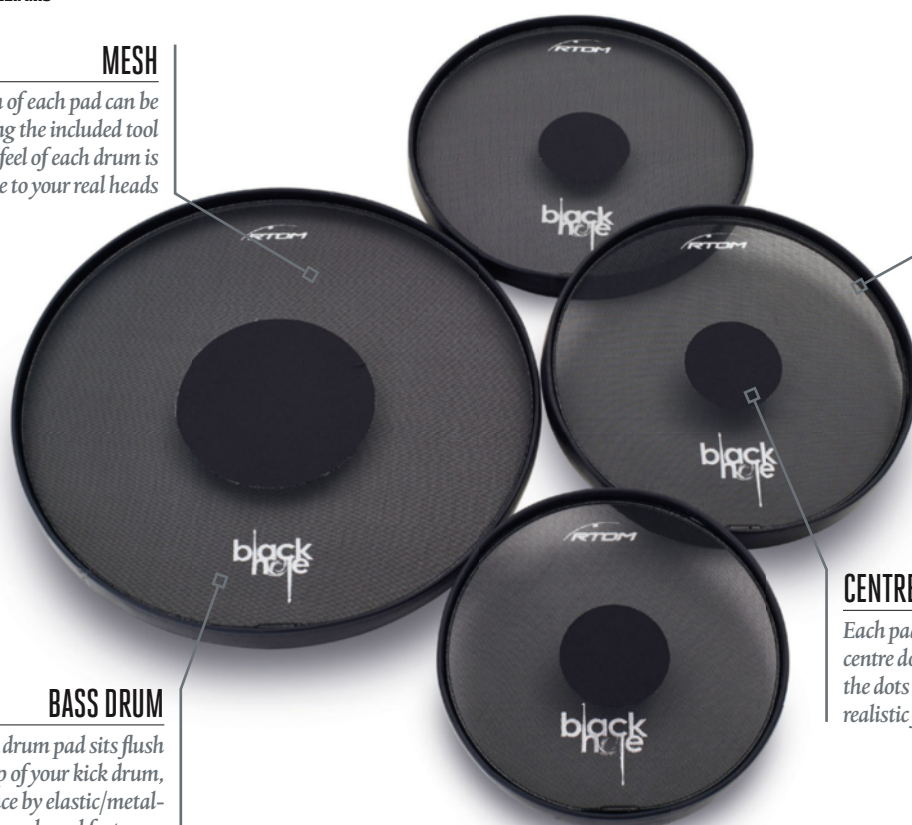
WORDS: **STUART WILLIAMS**

## MESH

The tension of each pad can be changed by using the included tool to make sure the feel of each drum is as close as possible to your real heads

## MOUNTING

The pads are placed on the rim of your drum, meaning you hit the mesh, which isn't in contact with your regular batter head



## BASS DRUM

The bass drum pad sits flush against the hoop of your kick drum, held in place by elastic/metal-clawed fasteners

## CENTRE DOTS

Each pad is fitted with an additional centre dot. As well as providing durability, the dots add a little extra attack and a realistic feel to the mesh surface

**N**oise is the second biggest problem we encounter as drummers, the first being the anger of everyone around us who has to deal with it. It can make playing on an acoustic kit at home very difficult, or even impossible. Of course, there are a number of products to help with this on the market, and progression from simple rubber mutes has increased over the last couple of years with the introduction of products such as Remo's Silentstroke mesh heads and Zildjian's L80 Low Volume cymbals. Now, MoonGel manufacturer RTOM wants to help you to keep the peace with the introduction of its new Black Hole system.

## Build

The concept is quite simple: you get the sound of your acoustic kit, but quiet, and it does the job in a different way to what we've seen

before. Each 'pad' comprises a tension-able mesh head, which sits within a rubber collar. The collar of the pad is placed over the rim of your drum (if you have die-cast rims, you'll need to purchase an additional elastic attachment), taking just a few seconds to get it in situ, and once you do, it sits proudly above the batter head by 1-2 inches. The bass drum attaches slightly differently, butting up against the hoop and held in place with bungee cords. A metal pedal attachment plate is also included with the bass drum pad.

## Hands On

So does it work? Simply, yes it does! The sound doesn't feel like a compromise as you are still hearing your tuning and tone. Because there's nothing in contact with your drum heads, the sound is completely sympathetic: very round, pure and forgiving, making it easy to play for long periods without fatigue.

We were able to play along with music on hi-fi speakers at only slightly higher than normal listening levels. You might find you'll need to adjust your stool or stand heights to recalibrate your comfort zone, but the height difference is uniform across each drum. The key benefit over other systems is the speed at which the pads can be taken on and off. **R**

**VERDICT:** The Black Hole system does exactly what it sets out to do. If you have a dedicated kit for practising, a more permanent option like Remo's Silentstroke heads will save you a lot of money. But for speed, sound and feel, RTOM has done a great job.

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

## Essential spec



## PRICE

10", £77; 12", £81; 13", £84; 14", £88; 16", £85; 18", £115; 20", £125; 22", £130; 24", £137

## AVAILABLE SIZES

10"-24" (18"-24" bass drums)

## MATERIAL

Mesh heads

## ATTACHMENT METHOD

Rubber collar, snaps to drum rim

## CONTACT

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