

GEAR REVIEW

ROLAND RT-30 TRIGGERS



Essential spec

Roland

From £45 Roland helps us get trigger happy with a helping hand into the wonderful world of hybrid drums...

WORDS: DAVE HOLMES

Once the preserve of Stadium Gods, as the cost of the tech decreases, the fusion of acoustic drums with electronics is now within easy grasp of the semi-pro player – welcome one and all, to the world of the hybrid. The advantages of a hybrid set-up are clear; you can play your beloved acoustic set while also producing electronic and ‘real’ sampled sounds – any sound you can possibly imagine – and combining them with your acoustic kit. How exciting is that?

Build

We have all three of Roland’s brand new RT-30 triggers which now replace their decade-old RT-10s. While the new models have a sleeker appearance, they are not only reduced in size but in price too. There are many refinements including a more reliable clamp which allows the triggers to fit a wide range of hoops including those with an inward-facing top flange such as the S-Hoop. Also, each unit adjusts automatically to the distance between sensor and drum head – no tweaking necessary, simply plug and play!

Roland has now suffixed the new RT-30s with an H for ‘head’ (single trigger) and HR for ‘head’ and ‘rim’ (dual trigger) – making it clear that both triggers are suitable either for toms or snare. However, the RT-30K (significantly deeper than the other two), is specifically designed for the kick. This features “misttrigger cancel” technology which prevents double triggering by utilising two piezo transducers in a similar way to Roland’s BT-1.

Hands On

For review purposes Roland has kindly included the TM-2 trigger module. I am using my usual acoustic set and testing with a selection of snares having different hoops, including the S-Hoop. Initially I have the RT-30HR attached to my brass snare (which is fitted with a die-cast hoop) while the RT-30H goes onto one of my toms. This has a triple-flanged hoop. However, the clamps are so quick to swap over that I’ll be doing plenty of experimenting.

Initially the set-up strangely draws me to



BASS DRUM TRIGGER

The RT-30K uses two piezo transducers to prevent double-triggering

DUAL TRIGGER

RT-30HR dual triggers work on the head and rim of the drum, suitable for snares and toms

try a ‘Heavy Metal’ kick sound mixed-in with my snare which, though outlandish, gets me thinking about the immense possibilities. Next, something more ‘sensible’ with the ‘Dance HiLo’ snare sound for the head and a simple clap for the rim. Without the electronics, the snare almost appears lifeless but when slowly bringing it into the mix, it seems to transform the drum.

With inspiration from the TM-2, I am layering two sounds on my acoustic kick – the previously applied Heavy Metal kick and a tambourine element (not the whole sound, just a snippet), both of which trigger each time I strike the drum. The kick drum is punchy and massively powerful and happens to sound as if there has been some compression applied – clever stuff.

Even on my comparatively slack toms, I am impressed with the response from both the H and HR triggers. On the snare drum, even when hammering away as fast as I possibly can, the triggering appears to be accurate with no noticeable latency – impressive. **R**

VERDICT: The vision of reliably transforming an acoustic set into a fully fledged hybrid has now become a cost-effective reality – the best of both worlds just got better.

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

PRICES

RT-30H Single Trigger, £45; RT-30HR Dual Trigger, £49; RT-30K Kick Trigger, £55

CONSTRUCTION

Fibreglass reinforced ABS

TRIGGER TYPE

Piezo

HOOP FITMENT

RT-30H and RT-30HR – rim height (max): 13mm; RT-30K Kick Trigger – rim height: 30–36mm, rim thickness (max): 12mm

ACCESSORIES

3.5m Stereo Cable

CONTACT

Roland (UK) Ltd
Tel: 01792 702701
www.roland.co.uk