



FIRST PLAY



ORANGE TREMLORD 30
1X12 COMBO
£999

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WHAT IS IT? 1950s-style amplification: a clean machine with no preamp gain controls, a traditional spring reverb and a superb valve-powered tremolo



Shimmer & Shake

Orange lords it with a combo that tips its hat to the golden age of the 1950s

Words Nick Guppy Photography Olly Curtis

It's been over 50 years since Orange Amplification was founded and today the brand is as popular as ever, with a strong presence on international festival stages and pro touring rigs underlining the 'Voice of the World' motto. While most modern Orange amps are all about gain – and lots of it – their vintage designs were renowned for clarity at high volume. A new addition to the Orange catalogue, the TremLord 30 is Orange's take on the 1950s combos that would have influenced Orange's earliest models, complete with a few surprising twists.

As you might expect, the TremLord 30 is substantial, with a deeper than average plywood cabinet clad in standard Orange basketweave vinyl, featuring a jute speaker grille and wooden skids instead of rubber feet. The control panel is typical Orange, with a silkscreened 'Pics Only' design on white enamel with oversized control knobs.

Possibly unique to this amp, there's a cool feature that lets you dial in tremolo depth with two different tremolo speeds and swap between them with a footswitch.

1



1. The Bedroom/Headroom switch drops power output down to two watts with four valves or just one watt with two valves
2. The basketweave speaker grille is part of Orange's traditional styling; it also helps smooth out high frequencies



Other controls include volume, bass and treble, and a level control for the traditional spring reverb.

On the bottom panel you'll find a pair of send/return jacks for the TremLord's valve-buffered effects loop, and a half-power switch that turns off one of the TremLord's two pairs of EL84 output valves. Combined with the front-panel Bedroom/Headroom attenuator switch, this gives you four output power settings, from a maximum of 30 watts down to 15, two and just one watt.

Inside the white enamel-on-steel chassis, most of the electronics sit on one high-quality printed circuit board, including the front panel controls and all the valve sockets, with two smaller boards for the rear panel jack sockets. The loudspeaker is another unique feature; instead of Orange's regular 'Voice of the World' driver, the TremLord features a custom design from the Italian pro audio specialists Lavoce. Overall, the TremLord is typical Orange: built to handle the rigour of non-stop pro touring, with exceptional attention to detail.

Feel & Sounds

The TremLord switches on with practically zero hum and hiss, which is always a sign of a well-sorted circuit. We tried it out with our regular Les Paul and Stratocaster, together with a flatwound-strung Super 58-loaded Ibanez AFJ95 hollow-bodied archtop. While there's no preamp gain control, you can still make the TremLord distort if you turn up the volume; anything above halfway progressively adds more crunch, which combines nicely with the reverb and tremolo effects.

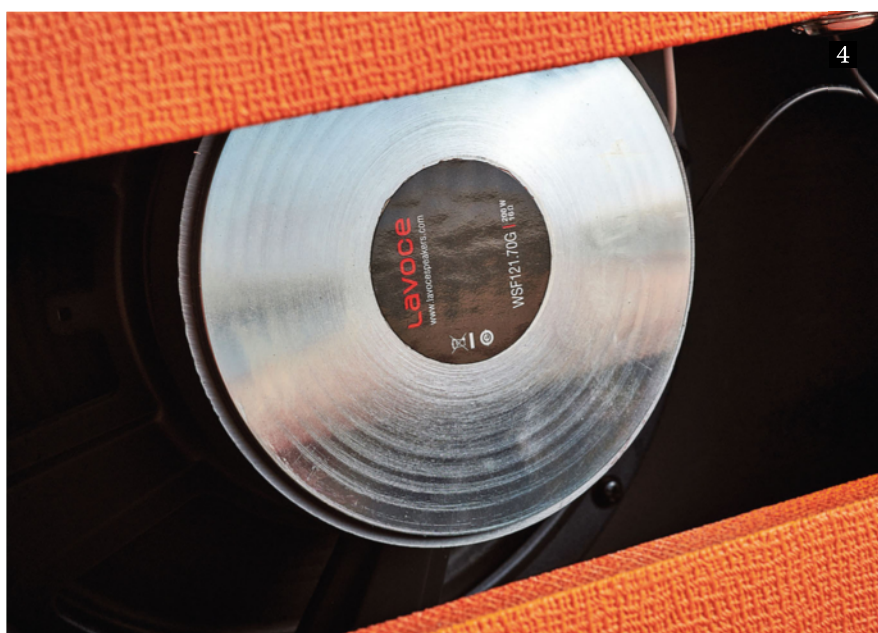
Using the Bedroom/Headroom and half-power switches makes these crunch effects easier to achieve at low volumes. We found the two-watt setting ideal for recording, while the 15-watt setting adds just the right amount of edge when used with an averagely loud drummer and bassist. Switching back to the full power rating, the attack is punchy with a mild compression that enhances sustain and makes chords and single notes come alive in a very satisfying way.



The Lavoce flatters your tone with a smooth bass roll-off, warm midrange and crisply detailed highs

The TremLord has ample clean headroom helped by the massively over-spec'd 200-watt Lavoce speaker. It's an ideal platform for effects, notable by the inclusion of a very musical valve-buffered series effects loop; it sits after the TremLord's tremolo effect but before the reverb, which makes it easy to add air and ambience to delays and other modulation effects.

Despite the lack of a midrange tone control, the TremLord is easy and actually quicker to dial in for single coils and humbuckers. The treble and bass controls interact smoothly with no noticeable peaks or troughs, producing a very natural balanced tone that worked well with all our guitars. Rolling off a little treble helped to get a great rockabilly tone out of the Ibanez's bridge pickup, with the volume around halfway, a slow tremolo and lashings of reverb. The Strat and Les Paul both worked well in any blend of country/blues/rock genres, assisted by the TremLord's more balanced tones and edgy bite when wound up.



Peter Green fans take note, this amp's low front-end gain pretty much nails that vintage Fleetwood Mac sound, largely thanks to the onboard valve-powered spring reverb, which is a dead ringer for the effect used on classic tracks such as *The Supernatural*, *Man Of The World* and *The Green Manalishi*. Given Orange's close association with Peter Green's Fleetwood Mac, it's especially satisfying to be able to come close to recreating these tones.

3. The TremLord features Orange's trademark 'Pics Only' control panel, a cool feature that first appeared on Orange's famous Graphic head back in 1972

4. The TremLord features a high-efficiency 12-inch driver from Italian pro audio specialists Lavoce Italiana



The TremLord's valve-powered tremolo has not one but two speed settings that can be selected from a standard footswitch

We're really impressed with Orange's non-standard choice of loudspeaker, too – the Lavoce's big magnet and voice coil mean it's never likely to be under any stress, yet when pushed with a decent level it sings in a way that high-powered loudspeakers often don't. Some loudspeakers derived from PA designs reveal every fluffed note with ruthless efficiency, but the Lavoce is forgiving and guitar-friendly, flattering your tone with a smooth bass roll-off, warm midrange and crisply detailed high frequencies. It also benefits from an impressive 99dB sensitivity that lets the TremLord punch well above its weight in the volume stakes.

Verdict

While the TremLord 30 is unmistakably Orange, it has a little less of that boxy midrange many think of as being part of the classic Orange signature tone and yet

there's no shortage of character. The TremLord seems to blend into any style and responds with a satisfying punch from the superb Lavoce speaker, making it easy to handle almost any gig with authority. The all-valve tremolo and reverb effects are superb, adding a dash of Fullerton chipotle to a very British sonic experience.

While it may not be the cheapest 1x12 valve combo out there, the TremLord is different enough to justify its price, with the impeccable build quality we've come to expect from modern Orange products. Where portability is concerned, it's not the lightest or most compact 1x12 and we think this amp should really have a pair of grab handles on the sides – 24kg is too much to swing from one hand, especially a hand that plays guitar. This gripe aside, though, the TremLord is a great choice for vintage and modern players looking for something a little different. **G**



ORANGE TREMLORD 30 1X12 COMBO

PRICE: £999

ORIGIN: China

TYPE: All valve preamp and power amp

OUTPUT: 30W RMS, switchable to 15, 2 and 1W

VALVES: 3x 12AX7, 2x 12AT7, 4x EL84

DIMENSIONS: 570 (w) x 460 (h) x 285mm (d)

WEIGHT (kg/lb): 24/53

CABINET: Ply

LOUDSPEAKER: 1x12" Lavoce Italiana custom design

CHANNELS: 1

CONTROLS: Volume, treble, bass, tremolo speed x2, tremolo depth, reverb level

FOOTSWITCH: Standard latching footswitches toggle reverb on/off, tremolo on/off and tremolo speed select

ADDITIONAL FEATURES:

Bedroom/Headroom attenuator switch, half power (2 valves) switch, valve-buffered series effects loop

OPTIONS: Also available in black

RANGE OPTIONS: None

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9/10

PROS Lots of clean headroom if needed; cool dual-speed tremolo effect; very vintage vibes

CONS Because it's hefty and not as compact as some other 1x12 combos out there, the TremLord could really do with grab handles