



# IK MULTIMEDIA Z-TONE DI

£159

IK makes going direct more fun

**W**hile IK Multimedia has long been a proponent of software modelling, its latest product is more of a creative tool than a full-blown interface. At its core, the Z-Tone is a DI box. Yes, there are hundreds of DIs available, and they sit somewhere between stands and gig bags on the list of Boring Yet Useful Purchases. They're the guitar equivalent of broccoli: you know it'll do you good, but you never really want it.

Interfaces start at round £20, and many even have instrument-level inputs allowing you to plug your guitar in directly, so why would you need this? Well, the Z-Tone DI takes various features from IK's Axe I/O to offer you greater control over your direct

signal, as well as additional flexibility on how you're routing it.

First off, there's the input side of the Z-Tone. If you've ever plugged your guitar into a recording interface and noticed that you're getting a duller sound from your guitar, chances are you have an impedance mis-match. The Z-Tone control solves this by allowing you to dial in the impedance of your signal to match that of your pickups from 1 MOhm to 2.2 kOhms, as well as letting you switch the box to accept an active pickup signal

correctly. In addition to this, the Z-Tone DI includes a switchable pre-amp section comprising an uncoloured 'Pure' circuit and a FET-buffered circuit for additional harmonics and analogue-style warmth.

Then there's the routing - let's say you want to split your guitar signal for recording: the Z-Tone lets you do this by plugging your guitar directly into the DI box, then the Link output will send a mirror of your signal to your amp. From here, you can send your dry DI signal to your interface, giving you a faithful

clean sound for re-amping later, while mic'ing up your amp for recording into another channel.

The Z-Tone is probably what we'd call a luxury for many. But if you're diving down the recording rabbit hole, it really does make a difference. It offers plenty of flexibility to help you capture and route your guitar signal. The type of product that we think you'll wonder why you need it, then wonder how you managed without it.

Stuart Williams

YOU'LL WONDER HOW YOU MANAGED WITHOUT IT

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
	USABILITY	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★