



FENDER PEDAL ROUND-UP

Though it boasts some bona fide classics among its vintage pedal line, such as the Blender fuzz, Fender has never especially been known for its stompboxes. With its recent pedals, however, the company has been seeking to change that, enlisting excellent engineers to work on designs, and flexing its R&D muscles to see just what it can achieve with its brand and deep pockets. We've already raved about the Marine Layer reverb and Santa Ana overdrive, but here we've gotten another round-up together of the best new pedals Fender has to offer. The one thing they've not got going for them is their size, with the current trend being more toward micro pedals, but hey, maybe bigger is better...

Fender MTG Tube Distortion

£159

TUBE TIME

Many drive pedals claim to be 'tube like', whereas the MTG has a real tube, in this case a NOS 6205 preamp tube, at its heart. With a three-band EQ and a tight control, there's plenty of scope for tone shaping too. The higher gain settings shine, but we also found usable blues tones with the gain and tight control pulled back, on the neck pickup of a Les Paul. Though it sounds good, at this price, you're competing with the likes of Amptweaker pedals – which the 'tight' control alludes to – and boutique offerings like the Hamstead Odyssey, and against these the MTG doesn't hold its own so well.

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

Fender Tre-Verb Tremolo/Reverb

£199

TRE COOL

The Tre-Verb is a digital reverb/ tremolo that brings to mind the Strymon Flint. It has an intuitive control scheme and stereo inputs and outputs. We mostly stuck to the bias trem mode, but the harmonic tremolo setting makes it surprisingly versatile, and that's true of the reverb as well, which has a '63 brown face reverb tank, '65 black face reverb tank and a studio-style plate reverb emulation. With its muddy, vintage tone and washiness on longer settings, we enjoyed the '63 most for atmospheric post-metal riffs, but pulling back the dwell and blend adds fatness and colour to Tele-pickup blues licks as well.

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



Has Fender struck gold with the latest entries in its new series of compact pedals? We take a closer look...

Fender Bubbler Chorus £119

PREACHING TO THE CHOIR

The Bubbler Chorus might not be the most exciting pedal in this line-up, but that doesn't mean it's without a trick up its sleeve. Despite appearances, it's a fully-analogue, bucket-brigade chorus with stereo outs, which means it's something of a budget alternative to pedals like the excellent Boss DC-2 reissue. In that vein, it's got an excellent retro chorus sound, which when pulled back toward something more subtle, and in the triangle rather than sine-wave mode, put us in mind of Alex Lifeson's guitar sound on *The Spirit Of Radio*. It also has two speed settings that you can switch between; a nice touch.

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

Fender Pinwheel Rotary Speaker £199

TAKE IT FOR A SPIN

There's been a glut of attempts to model rotary speakers of late, and the Pinwheel easily punches up there with the best of them. First off, there's the delicious drive control, which allows you to boost and warm up the tone of the pedal; then there's three different operating modes – via expression pedal and two footswitchable presets, which the pedal transitions between according to the speed set by the ramp knob, or via the sensitivity control. The sensitivity control responds to your picking dynamics, ramping from your slow preset to your fast, and it results in wild, brilliant psychedelic chaos.

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

AT A GLANCE

BYPASS:
True Bypass

POWER:
9V DC centre-negative

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