



**CONTROL CENTRE**

**THE** CODE's control panel is logically laid out, with knobs and buttons following the same signal path as a real analog setup

**GATEWAY TO GREAT TONE**

**THE** Gateway remote control app is superb, brilliantly designed and by far the easiest of its type to use

**ALL ON DISPLAY**

**THE** generously sized backlit LCD display is thoughtfully designed, with all the relevant info in large, easy-to-read characters

**AT A GLANCE**

**TYPE:** Digital modelling amplifier

**OUTPUT:** 50W

**SPEAKER:** 1x12" custom design

**AMP MODELS:** JTM45, CL DSL, CL

American, CL JVM, Acoustic Simulator,

Clean, Bluesbreaker, Plexi, CR

American, JCM800, OD JVM, OD DSL, OD

American, OD Silver Jubilee, 50s British

**CONTROLS:** Gain, bass, mid, treble, volume, master volume, preset select, preset edit, pre FX, mod, del, rev, power, cab, exit/store

**SOCKETS:** Guitar in, 3.5mm aux in, USB, headphones out, footswitch socket (for the 4-button Code PEDL-91009 foot controller, £39)

**WEIGHT:** 13kg

**DIMENSIONS:** [HxWxD]  
440 x 530 x 280mm

**CONTACT:** Marshall Amplification  
01908 375411 [www.marshallamps.com](http://www.marshallamps.com)

# MARSHALL

## CODE50

**£229**

**Has Marshall finally cracked digital modelling with the CODE?**

**Total Guitar**  
**BEST BUY**

**THE** all-new CODE range from Marshall fills a gap in its catalogue that other manufacturers have been plugging for some time. The affordable, digital front-end, combined with a solid-state power amp and software partner app is a popular choice home users, so how does the CODE range stack up? The line-up spans everything from a 25-watt 1x10 combo to a beefy 100-watt 2x12 combo and head – here we're looking at the CODE50 combo, which packs a 50-watt power stage in a 1x12 enclosure.

For the CODE, Marshall developed a range of modelled preamps, power amps and speaker cabinets in collaboration with software plug-in supremo Softube, calling the result MST (Marshall-Softube). There's plenty of choice, too: the CODE50 comes loaded with 14 MST preamps, four MST power amps and eight MST speaker cabinets. These cover

every classic Marshall tone from the past 50 years – including the JTM45, 1962 Bluesbreaker, 1959 Super Lead, JCM800, Silver Jubilee and the JCM2000, right up to the current flagship JVM410, not to mention some classic American amp sounds as well. It all compares favourably with

Bluetooth, using Marshall's Gateway interface app, which updates settings in real time. Other clever features include a USB interface, used for updating firmware and recording to your PC or DAW, and there's also a built-in tuner, mp3 player input and headphones socket.

## It has every classic Marshall tone from the past 50 years

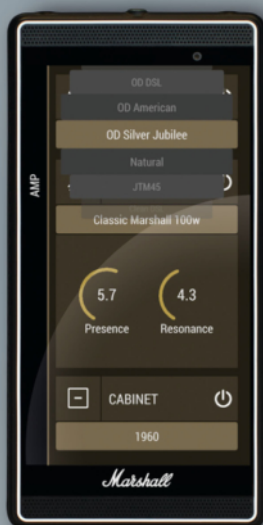
amp modelling combos from the likes of Line 6 and Blackstar.

Coupled with this mouth-watering choice of tone, 24 effects cover practically all vintage and modern needs, together with studio-quality reverbs. A total of 100 presets means you'll never run out of space to store your favourite sounds, while editing is done either from the front panel or

To the right of the familiar-looking matt-finished gold control panel is a large, orange-lit LCD display and a pair of knobs that scroll through presets and put the CODE into edit mode. We install the Gateway app on to an iPhone running the latest iOS software to try it out. Apple isn't the most Bluetooth-friendly mobile device builder and as expected, it takes us

a few attempts to pair the iPhone with the CODE, but on the third try everything hooks up with no issues and from then on, it's all plain sailing.

Modelling amps live or die by their factory presets, as these are often the first and last things a potential buyer tries. The CODE's are generally very good – yes, there are ambient sounds and trick delays that show off the DSP's processing power, but alongside these are some very authentic and highly usable tones that can go straight onto a track with a minimal tweaking. EL34 Heaven is the obligatory, all-guns-blazing instant gratification patch, while Plexi Classic is an astonishingly good emulation of the legendary Super Lead. We're also mightily impressed with the CODE's JCM800 voice, shown off best in the NWOBFHM patch. When we stripped away the effects, all the main sounds are impressively



## Gateway to tone

The CODE's controller is more than just another app

It's great to have all the power of a modern digital signal processor inside your amp, but you need to be able to harness that power creatively and musically, rather than having to wade through pages of preset parameters, by which time you'll probably have forgotten what you were trying to do in the first place. Marshall's Gateway app (available in Android and iOS flavours) is a brilliant piece of software that lets you access amp models, effects and cabinet simulations in real time using Bluetooth, so no fiddly cables to lose or break. Gateway lets you edit and save one hundred presets, which you can then upload onto any CODE amp, making it easy to share patches with your friends. It's actually easier to use than the amp's real controls. You can also stream audio from the Gateway app through your amp and jam along to your favourite tracks.

accurate and flatter every guitar we try out, without robbing the guitar's character: a Strat still sounds like a Strat, and a Les Paul still sounds like a Les Paul.

The tones are at least as good as the competition, and although streaming music into the amp via Gateway or USB sounds okay, you face the limitation that the amp speakers are for guitar, not full-range hi-fi. As you might expect from a Marshall, the CODE50 is loud and very giggable, with plenty of clean headroom as



The classic Marshall gold control panel is present and correct

It's not just amp models here – there's a variety of effects on board, too



long as the effects are kept back in the mix. Used with a full band, the CODE50 easily keeps up with a powerful drummer and keyboards, but with a caveat. In a live setting, the PEDL-91009 foot controller is really essential – this comes free with the 100-watt models, but will set you back an extra £39 with the CODE50.

The digital modelling arena is packed with lots of very clever products all fighting for your cash, and other manufacturers are now going to have to fight harder still.

The CODE is packed with great tone and likely to win a lot of friends; it's competitively priced, looks good, sounds great out of the box and it's ridiculously easy to use, even for a complete beginner.

**Nick Guppy**

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

## ALSO TRY...

### YAMAHA THR100HD

£729

Yamaha's THR100HD takes a different approach – it's a head so you need a cab, and there are actually two amps running simultaneously for dual-amp fun.



### BLACKSTAR ID: CORE BEAM

£229

This desktop-orientated amp features a stereo output stage and Bluetooth connectivity. It's much more compact than the CODE and not as loud.



### LINE 6 SPIDER IV 75

£244

The latest incarnation of the Spider remains one of the CODE's hottest competitors, with 16 amp models and 20 effects, which can be used four at a time.

