



TACTILE MULTI-FX ROUND-UP

The multi-effect unit has had a particularly bad rap in recent years and has been much maligned, especially with the advent of the boutique guitar pedal revolution. However, with units at the top end like the Line 6 Helix series rehabilitating their image, an interest is slowly redeveloping at a more affordable price point. Especially for 'grab-and-go' situations, or playing in function bands on small stages, there is certainly a case for small, integrated multi-effects units. Here, we've selected a few of the best contenders in the rugged, compact multi-effect category to pit them head-to-head and see which one emerges on top. Let's dive in...

T-Rex SoulMate

£399

MEET YOUR MATCH

The Soulmate is the largest of the units, and the tones available are appropriately massive to match. Given that it's about the size of a Pedaltrain Nano, it might not actually slim down a small rig by very much, but at least it's built like a tank. There's an overdrive, distortion, reverb and delay on offer, with a separate boost, stereo outputs and a tuner function. The delay and reverb are solid, but nothing to write home about when compared with discrete stompboxes. On the other hand, the overdrive is stellar, and although the distortion was a bit tricky to dial in, the two stacked make for a killer lead tone.

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

Valeton Dapper

£145

TIDY TONES

The smallest and cheapest of the units, the Dapper still has a sturdy construction and solid feel, with an overdrive, distortion and delay with tap tempo all individually footswitchable, as well as a tuner on the front panel. The distortion has a limited two-band EQ, but there's some decent heavy clipping saturation on offer. The red flag is with the overdrive where, depending on the guitar used, the tone control is only really usable after three o'clock if you want anything other than quite thumpy, muddy blues tones. Not the most versatile, but for a straight-up rock or blues player it fits the bill.

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



Need a grab-and-go board with analogue-style control? We've rounded up four of the best on the market

Tech 21 Fly Rig5

BREAK FREE

£329

In terms of looks, the Tech 21 wins hands down. The features are stripped-back with a SansAmp (preamp), Plexi and delay with tap tempo, but no tuner. The design and form factor are great and it feels slick and intuitive to use. The delay in particular has a really nice tone to it, and the addition of modulation makes it more versatile. When not running into a DI, the SansAmp section can be temperamental depending on which amp you're using it with, but the Plexi delivers a startlingly close drive tone to the gain channel of a Marshall we tested it with. Combine that with the boost footswitch and it really rips.

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

Mooer Red Truck

TRUCKFUL OF TONE

£220

The Red Truck has all the effects you could want in a simple channel strip, with reverb, delay, modulation, distortion, drive and an inline boost. Within each effect there are also a lot of options, like subdivisions on the delay, choice of tone between digital, analogue or tape emulation, and usable phaser, tremolo and flanger settings on the mod patch. The only setting that lacks is the shimmer on the reverb, which is devoid of the smoothness of other octave 'verbs. The overdrive is great for pushing an amp into saturation and has a lot of gain; the distortion is RAT-like with a powerful three-band EQ.

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

AT A GLANCE

- BYPASS Buffered
- POWER
- T-Rex Soulmate - 12v 350ma (supplied)
- Valeton Dapper - 9v (supplied)
- Tech21 FlyRig5 - 12v 150ma (supplied)
- Mooer Red Truck - 9v 300ma (not supplied)

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