

FIRST PLAY



ORANGE THE GUITAR BUTLER £329

WHAT IS IT? A versatile two-channel preamp for stage and studio, providing a replacement for your amp's front-end with that unmistakable Orange sound



At Your Service

“Your tone is served,” says Orange as the renowned British amp builder presents a juicy new preamp

Words Nick Guppy Photography Olly Curtis

1. The Guitar Butler's versatile design includes a built-in series effects loop and a balanced direct output on XLR, featuring a ground lift and speaker emulation, for easy hook-ups to mixing consoles for live or studio work

2. These high-brightness LEDs are easily visible in bright sunlight. Every function has a different colour so it's easy to see the preamp status at a glance

3. The Guitar Butler offers two footswitchable channels, with two footswitchable master volumes on the Overdrive channel. The controls are straightforward but use Orange's traditional 'pics only' graphics, so a little light reading of the manual might be helpful to understand the functions

Orange has been turning out consistently great-sounding and innovative products for over 50 years, with a history that goes back to the early days of British blues and rock. Back then, the emphasis was on big, heavy 100-watt heads and 4x12 cabinets. Today, things have changed and many guitarists choose pedals to shape their sound, using amplification purely for making things louder. Consequently, self-contained preamps are increasingly popular and Orange has just released the new Guitar Butler, following on from its popular Bass Butler preamp introduced a couple of years ago.

The Guitar Butler is a full Orange front-end, squeezed into a compact, pedalboard-friendly enclosure and built to Orange's typically high standards. Inside the alloy box the electronics are all held on one large circuit board, excluding switches and sockets, which are directly mounted to the box and neatly hand-wired into the circuit. The dimensions make it an easy fit on most freestanding pedalboards, with rear-mounted sockets to keep wiring neat. Power comes from an 18-volt DC wall wart, so if you want to use a multi-outlet power supply then make sure it has this option.

The Guitar Butler features footswitchable Clean and Overdrive channels, both with gain controls and a passive three-band EQ. The Overdrive channel also includes a Presence control and two footswitchable master volumes, so you can pre-set one level for rhythm and a louder one for lead. On the back panel, there's a buffered series effects loop, an amp output on mono jack, and a balanced output on XLR, with a ground lift and cabinet simulation.

We tried out The Guitar Butler with a valve head and a 2x12 Celestion V30-loaded cab. Right from the start, the Clean channel added an expansive vintage-voiced tonality that enhanced single coils and humbuckers, while the JFET-powered lead channel has plenty of overdrive to cater for any taste, from vintage blues to full-on Britpop roar, very typical of the 'Orange sound'. Hiss and hum levels are impressively low, making this ideal for recording as well as live use.

Aimed at pro players and serious amateurs, Orange's Guitar Butler seems to tick all the boxes. If you're looking for a pedalboard-friendly preamp that gives you a wide range of classic British tone at a reasonable price, The Guitar Butler should be top of your list. **G**



ORANGE THE GUITAR BUTLER

PRICE: £329

ORIGIN: UK

TYPE: 2-channel preamp

VALVES: N/A

DIMENSIONS: 177 (w) x 155 (h) x 67mm (d)

WEIGHT (kg/lb): 1.3/2.87

CASE: Aluminium alloy

CHANNELS: 2

CONTROLS: Clean Channel: Gain, 3-band EQ; Dirty Channel: Gain, 3-band EQ, Volume 1, Volume 2, Presence

FOOTSWITCH: 1x Solo level 1/Solo Level 2, 1x Clean/dirty channel

CONNECTIONS: ¼" input jack socket, buffered FX loop. Amp out: ¼" output jack socket with no cab sim, XLR balanced out with cab sim

POWER: 18V DC adaptor (supplied)

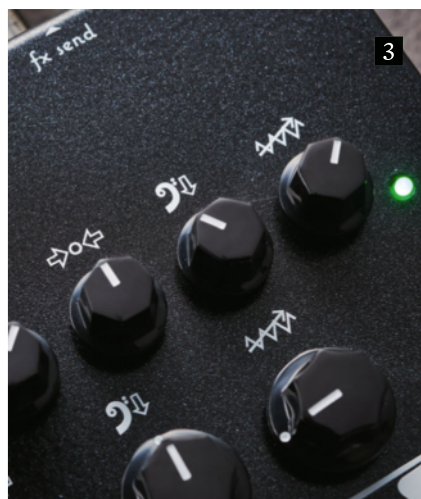
OPTIONS: None

RANGE OPTIONS: Orange The Bass Butler (£329)

Orange Amplification

020 8905 2828

www.orangeamps.com



Guitarist CHOICE

9/10

PROS Great range of clean and overdrive sounds; the excellent low-noise performance is ideal for recording purposes

CONS The 18V DC power requirement may need some thought when integrating the Guitar Butler into a pedalboard with a multi-outlet power supply