Yamaha DTX-Multi 12 | £700

The DTX-Multi 12 is Yamaha's latest addition to their DTX drum line. **Dan Goldman** gets percussive…

WHAT IS IT?

Percussion unit with 12 rubber pads and sound module with sample upload capability, various trigger modes, MIDI, USB and a pattern sequencer all in one portable box.

CONTACT

Who: Yamaha UK
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HIGHLIGHTS

1 Sturdy, portable and can be stand-mounted easily
2 Feels good to play
3 Wide range of sounds onboard plus ability to upload your own

SPECS

Built-in pads: 12
External inputs: 5

Wave memory
Drum and percussion:
1,061 keyboard – 216 total
Drum kits Preset: 50
User-defined: 200
Effects: Chorus, Reverb, 5-band EQ
Wave memory: 64 MB

Connections
3x pad input, hi-hat control, foot sw, output L/mono and R jacks, phones jack, Aux In, MIDI I/O, USB and DC IN.

Dimensions
345 x 319 x 96mm

Weight
3.3kg

Yamaha's DTX line incorporates several different drum orientated products, including their pad kits and the DTXT3 module – the drum brain from which many of the DTX-Multi 12's sounds are taken. All products in the range are intended to replace or augment traditional acoustic kits, add sounds to use with external MIDI gear, or to simply use as standalone percussion boxes.

The DTX-Multi 12 can be a perfect accompaniment to an acoustic kit, allowing a drummer to have easy access to his/her favourite samples/loops and beats/patterns or the included 50 preset kits, or it can be coupled with additional kick, hi-hat and snare trigger pedals to use as a completely self-contained electronic kit. On top of this, you can use the DTX-Multi 12 as a MIDI controller for inputting beats into your DAW's sequencer, using sticks or even your hands on the pads for more dynamic realism.

It's the beat

Build quality seems good throughout, though it worries me that you can easily hit the controls or display with sticks causing considerable damage if you get a little carried away. You can also use your hands/fingers or anything else, though, initially, I was having trouble getting the unit to trigger sounds consistently using fairly light drumming with light sticks and my hands.

However, once I'd dug into the trigger options and selected Hand Trigger Mode, the unit reacted much more sensitively. Generally, the pads feel good for both stick and hand playing and, while the operating system is fairly cryptic at first, it just about makes sense after a little practicing!

There are 12 textured rubber pads that work well for most applications and there's a nice bounce to them, while they aren't too hard either. Pads can be set up to trigger the onboard sounds or to trigger user content uploaded from a DAW and sent over USB via memory stick, USB hard drive or direct from your computer. Yamaha also include a cut down version of Cubase to facilitate the recording and transfer of sounds to the DTX itself. One beef here is that the flash memory is fairly small at 64MB and coupled with the fact there is no onboard card storage, this may be an issue for some users.

Sound-wise, Yamaha have provided a limited number of preset kits, some of which are pretty average, while many are filled with clichéd DJ one shot samples, though thankfully the majority of kits, onboard effects, and percussion samples are pretty good, cover a wide range of styles and trigger well.

There's further space onboard for 200 user kits too and here you can upload your own sounds or mix them with the onboard sounds.

Promising pad

Other features of note include the ability to mute/trigger sounds from a single pad (much as you would stop a drum or cymbal ringing with your hand after triggering) and you can also layer several sounds on a pad, plus sequence/trigger your own loops and patterns. Each sound is editable too, with amp envelope, filter cutoff and res and some basic effects.

This a useful bit of kit with some nice features, some good sounds, some filler (why so few useable preset kits onboard?) and some limits, including the measly flash memory and lack of onboard removable storage media. At £700, it's not cheap either but then there aren't many boxes in production with these capabilities, so definitely put it on your list to check out. **FM**

FutureMusic VERDICT

BUILD									
VALUE									
EASE OF USE									
VERSATILITY									
RESULTS									

It's not cheap and it has limits but if you're after a self-contained percussion box, test it out.