





AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Valve preamp and power amp
OUTPUT: 20 watts RMS, switchable to 3 watts and 0.5 watts
VALVES: 3x12AX7, 2x EL34
CONTROLS: Gain (with pull boost), tilt, bass, mid, treble, presence, master volume

SOCKETS: Guitar in, speaker out x 3, effects send/return, footswitch, DI out
WEIGHT: 10kg
DIMENSIONS: [HxWxD]
 220x520x225mm
CONTACT: Marshall Amplification
 01908 375411 www.marshall.com

1 TILT
 The clever Tilt control lets you mix to taste between two distinct voices that emulate the High Treble and Normal channels of early four-input Marshalls

2 PULL BOOST
 The Origin's gain control has a useful pull boost function that can also be foot-switched, adding extra punch for leads and crunch rhythm work

3 EFFECTS LOOP
 The Origin 20 features a simple series effects loop, which can be footswitched in and out of circuit. It's ideal for delays, reverbs and modulation effects

£459

MARSHALL ORIGIN 20 HEAD

Marshall revisits its roots with a new twist on classic tone

So, what's your ideal Marshall? Thanks to renewed interest from many pro players, the sound of those early amps that made Marshall's reputation in the mid-1960s has made a big comeback, but they aren't so flexible and typically need help from a handful of effects to tame them. Heads like the JTM45 and Super Lead are unfashionably loud, dating back to an era when PA systems were non-existent. Today, what's needed is some way of turning the amp up so you can hear those power valves working, without being sued by your audience for hearing loss, or annoying your FOH engineer, right? An effects loop would be nice, better still if you could footswitch it, and a footswitchable gain boost would be great, too. And how about if the

amp had that cool jumpered channel feature from the old JTMs and Plexis, but without a patch lead to lose, or break? Marshall has been listening and the new Origin amp series could be exactly what many of us have been asking for.

We're taking a look at the Origin 20, which sits in the middle of the

what's inside that's really interesting. The Origin 20 has a proper, dual-EL34 power stage featuring Marshall's clever new Powerstem power reduction, so you can balance the master volume with a choice of three power levels to suit the venue. There's an effects loop you can

fine-tunes the output stage's high frequency response for all the control you need. It's all put together with typically robust construction to withstand non-stop touring, and has plenty of 'I want' visual appeal.

The Origin 20 is all about pre-JCM800 vintage Marshall tones, particularly the JTM45 and early Plexi heads that drove the ground-breaking British blues explosion in the mid-1960s. Using a regular Strat and Les Paul plugged directly into the input jack, the Origin 20 does an excellent job of reproducing the JTM45's distinctive complex treble response, full of glassy harmonics and overtones that get progressively edgier as the volume knobs are turned up. On old Marshalls players quickly discovered that linking the two preamp channels with a short

AN IDEAL CHOICE FOR BLUES, CLASSIC AND INDIE ROCK

range and comes as a head, or a 1x10 combo. The Origin 20 head features some cool vintage Marshall-styling cues, with slimmer cabinet panels covered in black vinyl, teamed with gold piping and a gold aluminium control panel topped with a small logo. This pushes the right style buttons for many players, but it's

footswitch, a speaker-emulated DI output, a gain control with a boost that you can footswitch, and a super-cool Tilt control that emulates mixing the High Treble and Normal preamp volume controls of a classic four-input JTM or Plexi. A familiar bass, mid and treble tone network combine with a proper presence control that



The origin of amp

A look back at the amps that took Marshall from Hanwell to world domination

The first Marshall was the JTM45, which was modelled closely on Fender's 4x10 5F6 tweed Bassman, an amp that was practically unobtainable in 60s Britain thanks to import restrictions. Jim Marshall always listened to what his customers wanted, and bands like The Who and the Small Faces wanted that classic Bassman tone, but more of it. A slightly modified JTM45 loaded into a 2x12 open-backed combo was used by Eric Clapton on John Mayall's Bluesbreakers 'Beano' album in 1966, introducing many to the sound of an overdriven Marshall for the first time. Meanwhile, The Who guitarist, Pete Townshend, wanted more, prompting Marshall to re-engineer the JTM45 circuit for a 100-watt output stage, which became the 1959 Super Lead head used by Hendrix, Kossoff and Page.

patch lead so they were both audible added significant extra gain, as well as better tone control from balancing the two volume knobs. The Origin's clever Tilt control effectively mimics this, meaning you can precisely control high-end zing.

The Origin isn't a mega-high gain design. But by activating the gain boost and turning up the master volume you'll get a respectably vicious crunch even at low volume levels, thanks to the clever Powerstem circuit, which drops the output from 20 watts down to 3 watts or a bedroom-



The Origin: bringing classic Marshall sounds up to date



friendly 0.5 watts. However, the Origin 20's speciality is vintage-approved low and medium gain sounds, which make it a great platform for pedals, especially as the series effects loop is footswitchable. The speaker-emulated DI output sounds great into a desk and is ideal for recording or live plugged into a PA.

Teamed with a suitable cabinet, the Origin 20 does a great job of bringing those classic Marshall sounds up to date in a highly usable design that's also compact and portable, while offshore manufacturing keeps the price

affordable. Early Marshalls had great flexibility from a very simple control layout and the new Origin 20 is just as versatile, making it an ideal choice for blues, classic and indie rock, with just enough in the way of modern features to satisfy most needs, especially when paired with a good drive stompbox or two.

Nick Guppy

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

ALSO TRY...



ORANGE OR15H

£539

Orange's OR15 is a scaled-down version of the classic OR120, one of Marshall's biggest competitors in the late-1960s. Vintage looks matched with classic tones.



VOX AC15 HEAD

£572

Vox's AC15 was one of the first British guitar amps, with a unique sound that was integral to the swinging 60s and Merseybeat. Pure vintage.



PEAVEY CLASSIC 20 MINI HEAD

£545

Also inspired by early tweed amps, Peavey's Classic Mini Head delivers 20 watts from a pair of EL84s and combines modern features with authentic USA sounds.