

MATCHBOX MB10

PRICE £89.95



The Matchbox MB10 is a battery operated DI unit, designed to help home recordists get a realistic guitar sound direct to tape, thus alleviating the cost and inconvenience of miking up an amplifier. Features include line level, Guitar EQ and 12in speaker simulation punch buttons, plus sensitivity and treble controls for additional tone. It's compact, robust, and dead easy to use, with help from an information sheet which provides set-up diagrams for a host of applications including AC30 Overdriver, Mike Pre-amp, Keyboard Warmer and Guitar Tone Expander.

I used the MB10 as an amplifier substitute, in line between guitar and mixing desk. In this mode its function is to reproduce clean or overdriven sounds. The clean sound is great; clear and bright, perfect for crisp rhythm playing, and the speaker simulator generates a room ambience which juices up and janglifies the sound. Turn the sensitivity dial and the MB10 begins to imitate an over-driven amp (the makers don't recommend this). The

resultant distortion has a very natural quality, mean and growly, without any fizzy overtones to ruin the effect. Even turned up to extreme thrash mode, there's still enough bass presence to keep the sound credible.

The Treble dial (only operational when the Guitar EQ is on) has a wide sweep; a little too harsh for my tastes when full on, but very acceptable over most of its range. This really is the icing on the cake and is best used to fine tune your chosen sound.

I'm impressed. I could fiddle for days with this device and not get bored. Armed with a basic Strat and the MB10 I was able to emulate anybody from Ennio Morricone to Slash. While the info sheet provides a start, it's actually more fun to experiment, since the unit is capable of a host of gloriously ugly sounds, in addition to more conventional ones. Make the world your oyster - then record it. AT

Also available is the Matchbox MB11 (for electro-acoustic guitars) and the MB12 (bass). Contact: Award Design 0256 477222.