



The Way Up

Tech 21's Boost Series Pedals

Tech 21's new Boost Series of fuzz, overdrive, and distortion pedals offers a compelling concept – premium effects with the ability to deliver a healthy output kick for solos or that big riff to bring it all home.

The Boost Fuzz is Tech 21's take on the classic germanium fuzztone boxes of the late '60s. Despite being the holy grail to fuzz connoisseurs, those pedals typically were rife with temperamental components and unpredictable changes in tone. The pedal is equipped with controls for Level, Tone, Drive, Sag, and Boost; Sag controls dynamic response to the user's playing style. Its Bypass and Boost switches engage a clean volume leap capable of 21 db.

The Boost Distortion is engineered to give players the hot-rodded sound of an '80s stack. However, its distortion has a greater dynamic range and cleans up well. This box also comes with Level, Tone, Drive, Sag, and Boost; the Sag knob acting much like it does

with the Fuzz, allowing the user to tailor the dynamics of the pedal. The Distortion also comes with Bypass and Boost switches; the Boost function is completely post-distortion, meaning it only adds volume, not extra crunch.

The Boost Overdrive is based on the bluesy tones achieved from '70s overdrive pedals, while building upon those classics by providing more dynamic response and the ability to clean up the pedal, much like one could with a tube amp. The Overdrive has Level, Tone, Drive, Sparkle, and Boost knobs. The Sparkle control introduces upper harmonics to the tone of the pedal. The Boost, like that on the Distortion, is also post-overdrive and provides a purely clean boost.

The Bass Boost Fuzz is a tribute to the fuzzed-out bass tones of the '60s, as used by Jack Bruce, Paul McCartney, John Entwistle, and underrated San Franciscans like Jack Casady and Phil Lesh. Unfortunately for bass players of

the past, most (if not all) fuzz pedals were designed for the frequency range of guitars, cutting out much low-end. Tech 21 has remedied this situation for bass players looking for that classic fuzz sound by expanding the frequency range. The Bass Boost Fuzz has five control knobs – Level, Tone, Drive, +Clean, and Boost. The +Clean control determines the amount of clean signal mixed with the fuzz signal, allowing players to add more definition and complexity to their sound.

Using a Hamer Explorer and Fender Precision Bass into a Fender Twin and a Line 6 modeling amp, the Boost Fuzz attained the great lead sound of germanium fuzzes, but with enough girth to carry thick riffs and chords. Each control had great range, with the Sag knob being particularly versatile. It was quite capable of changing the character of the fuzz, bringing it from the classic late-'60s sound to a more-cutting fuzz, reminiscent of '90s grunge.

The Boost Distortion may be the most impressive of the line. While similar to other modern distortion pedals in terms of features, the Boost Distortion does a great job delivering a tone very similar to the punchy, hot, stack sound of the '80s. Its Sag control enables the user to traverse

TECH 21 BOOST PEDALS

Prices: \$149 each, street
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the spectrum of the Boost Distortion's character, from an almost bluesy, loose tone to a hard tone that could punch a hole in the wall.

The Boost Overdrive is also deserving of its name. Many modern overdrives are sold as distortion pedals, but the Boost Overdrive sticks to appropriate territory, pumping out exactly what one would want from an overdrive – gritty, rough-yet-clear rhythm tone with a singing, bluesy lead sound. The Sparkle control is a nice addition to this workhorse, introducing a tonal complexity that adds depth and air to the sound.

We expected the Bass Boost Fuzz to be similar to its guitar-oriented cousin, but it was much different. On lower settings, it dished out modern, almost robot-like fuzz, turning the round tone of a bass into something entirely different and futuristic. Cranking the Drive control added girth and gave the overall tone some authority. Bass players will love the control it offers, particularly those playing in bands; the ability to mix clean signal with the fuzz signal is almost like playing two basses at the same time. – **Max Prown VG**