

Quick Test The best new gear in brief...

Korg CR-4

A cassette-based four-track with built-in amp simulations and effects by **Trev Curwen**



Reports of the death of the cassette four-track have been greatly exaggerated

HERE'S A SHOCK

for those who thought that recording on to tape was a thing of the past: Korg has introduced a multitrack cassette recorder! The CR-4 is a four-track machine capable of recording up to four tracks simultaneously through

four jack inputs. It has a built-in Ampworks amp simulator and effects processor that can be applied to give a fully produced sound – courtesy of Korg's REMS modelling technology – to any single track as it's being recorded. For monitoring there are inbuilt speakers and two headphone sockets, or you can connect the single pair of outputs to a hi-fi or PA.

IN USE: Operating the CR-4 is as simple as it comes. Just plug a guitar into the input for the track you want to record, hit the effects button, select an amp and an effect from the two rotary dials, set a recording level and go. Do the same for the next track while listening to the first through the built-in speakers and you can practice a lead line over chords, or build up an arrangement that can be mixed down to a separate stereo machine with control over track levels and panning.

KORG CR-4	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Usability	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
<p>■ WE LIKED Very easy to use, minimal set up time, built-in speakers</p> <p>■ WE DISLIKED Tape hiss, not as versatile as a digital machine</p>	

Verdict

The Korg CR-4 may have the vibe of being cobbled together in Dr Frankenstein's laboratory, but it is a unique product that can do a great job. Unlike a digital multitracker, this unit is not designed to make polished master recordings, but instead it's a practical plug-in-and-play device for knocking ideas together quickly when you need to. Think of it as a practice amplifier with a built-in four-track recorder and you won't be far wrong.

Guitarist RATING ★★★★★

KEY INFO KORG CR-4 **PRICE:** £199 **TYPE:** Four-track cassette multitracker with amp sims www.korg.co.uk

Diamond Bottlenecks



UK-made glass slides in all shapes and sizes by **Dave Burrluck**



DIAMOND BOTTLENECKS IS

based in the 'glass-quarter': the Wordsley/Amblecote area of Stourbridge in the UK, known nationally as the spiritual home of British glassmaking craftsmanship for

over 150 years. The company offers a massive range of slides and a total custom service. You can, for example, choose a ready made slide or send in a cherished bottle and they'll make a slide for you.

We've selected three for review: a cobalt blue Redhouse, a mid-red heavy Ultimate and a plain glass Lap-Slide. It must be stated though that Diamond make each of these types and their other models – including the Standard, Pill Bottle, Reversible as well as the 50/50 (blue glass sleeve bonded to a brass or pewter 'core') – in an astonishing range of colours and sizes.

IN USE: The Redhouse is the most popular Diamond slide: a bottleneck with the lip removed and the ends cut in rounded, bevelled or flat-cut styles – a perfect all-round slide of mid-weight. The heavier Ultimate has a tapered

DIAMOND SLIDES	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Playability	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★
<p>■ WE LIKED Beautifully made, with loads of size, type and glass options</p> <p>■ WE DISLIKED Which one to choose!?</p>	

inner wall (plus numerous options) that adds mass for the thinner top strings – a beautifully sweet, thick tone. The Lap-Slide is obviously designed for lap steel instruments – this one is again beautifully smooth sounding, with a little more openness to the tone than a similarly sized metal bar.

Verdict

With everything from basic but beautifully made slides to exotic coloured glass slides, plus signature models and a lot more, Diamond Bottlenecks' slides are fabulous. You won't know whether to play 'em or collect 'em – we suggest both!

Guitarist RATING ★★★★★

KEY INFO DIAMOND SLIDES **PRICE:** £11.95-£17.95 **TYPE:** UK-made glass slides slides@diamondbottlecks.com

Fender Classic Series '72 Telecaster Deluxe

Sought-after alt-rock electric gets a long overdue reissue by Chris Vinnicombe

TELECASTER CUSTOM AND

Thinline models have long been staples of Fender's Classic Series, but it has taken until now for the Deluxe to get the reissue treatment. A long-time alternative favourite, this Telecaster is distinctive because of its seventies Strat-style headstock and Wide Range humbuckers, originally designed by Seth Lover. The Deluxe also features a Strat-style ribcage contour that contributes to a sleeker strapped-on feel than the traditional Tele's slab body. Small quantities of the seventies originals were equipped with vibratos, but Fender has chosen the stability, sustain and classic look afforded by a string-through-body hardtail bridge.

SOUNDS: Arguably an attempt by Fender to combat Gibson back in the rock halcyon days of the early seventies, the Deluxe offers Les Paul-style switching options and more tonal girth than its single-coil powered

'72 TELE DELUXE	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Playability	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

- **PROS** Great neck, huge versatility, immensely playable
- **CONS** Telecaster purists may not approve

brethren. Not as meaty as PAF-style humbuckers, the reissue Wide Range units are bright, articulate and reminiscent of mini-humbuckers in their overall voicing. A versatile guitar, the Deluxe handles bold, overdriven chords and blues-rock lead lines comfortably while retaining a fair amount of that trademark Tele twang and spank. Metal players will look elsewhere but for virtually anything else, the Deluxe performs with aplomb.

Verdict

The quality of Fender Mexico's production has never been higher and



this instrument is testimony to that. An ideal guitar to bridge the gap between Fender and Gibson tones, it would make an incredibly versatile gigging tool for a wide variety of genres. Thirty years on, the Telecaster Deluxe still feels contemporary and this reissue has finally made the model affordable outside of the vintage market.

Guitarist RATING ★★★★★

KEY INFO FENDER '72 TELECASTER DELUXE **PRICE:** £649 (inc gig bag) **TYPE:** Single cutaway solidbody, bolt-on neck www.fendereurope.com

Award-Session JD10 MkII

The popular Jerry Donahue-endorsed preamp gets a makeover by Dave Burrluck

THE JD10 IS basically a guitar preamp with on-board crunch and distortion. Rotary controls vary distortion amount (from clean to pretty filthy), three-band EQ and output level. The rugged metal-cased unit has an effect on/bypass footswitch for live 'stompbox' use, although the layout, with its front-mounted controls, means it'll happily sit in 'desktop' mode for recording, or on top of your amp. Two red push-switches on the front panel affect drive type – Classic (lower gain) and Rock (higher gain) – and whether or not you want to engage the G12T speaker simulator. The rear panel has input, output and tuner output jack sockets, and XLR

JD10	TEST RESULTS
Build quality	★★★★★
Usability	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

- **PROS** Highly versatile sounds and applications
- **CONS** Shame there aren't control knob numbers to 'remember' different tones

output and a power input. You can use any AC adaptor giving a positive or negative output of between 9-16 volts; alternatively, a 9V battery can be installed.

SOUNDS:

The 2004 upgrade centres on improved distortion tone and better compatibility when plugged into a combo. Certainly the range of sounds from clean through to heavily gained make the JD10 highly versatile as a direct recording device, an amp expander or a solo booster – especially for weaker single coils. The speaker emulator is convincing and the three-band EQ broad but musical; the new version sounds even more realistic.

Verdict

This reviewer has used an original JD10 for all sorts of jobs over the years

with great success: adding crunch to electros, as an amp expander, a direct-to-tape 'amp', solo boost and even direct to the PA when the backline failed. The JD10 is a must-have Mr Fix-it tone generator that you'll be happy to have in your arsenal.

Guitarist RATING ★★★★★



If Jim can't fix it for you, try the JD10 MkII

KEY INFO AWARD-SESSION JD10 **PRICE:** £99 **TYPE:** Multi-use guitar preamp www.award-session.com