

The unit is heavy and feels built like a tank. There's a look and feel to the unit that speaks of quality and longevity. Made in Taiwan, with the high quality you'd expect from that fact, and it's all-metal.

The jacks feel like they're quality—somewhere between the junk certain manufacturers use and the traditional Switchcraft "clench of death" jacks. Much closer to the latter, though.

Much of the unit's real estate is taken up by the footswitch pad. That means less area is devoted to slider range, and so you need to be careful when dialing in. Total slider range is about 25 mm. A couple of millimeters of slider motion will make a difference in what you hear, since the range is ± 15 dB.

The footswitch pad, height-wise, is slightly above the slider bank. This means there's almost no chance of stepping on a slider and breaking something when you engage or disengage the unit during a performance.

The footswitch itself is FET-based, not mechanical, and so it's completely silent. The unit is also silent signal-wise. Even at high volumes, I could hear no evidence of switching or hiss.

A lot of thought went into the center frequencies and the Qs of each slider. The two lowest ones (50 and 120) operate over a fairly wide range, which is perfect for making broad-based tone changes. The next two (400 and 500) run in an extremely narrow range. The 350-600 Hz range is "gank range" for bass guitar, and many players, including me, like to notch that out a little without having the notch spill over into the upper and lower adjacent ranges. This unit will do it.

The next two sliders (800 and 4500) aren't quite as narrow as the 400 and 500, but they're still narrow enough to boost or cut specific frequencies without spilling over into adjacent territory. I've personally never understood the need for varying gain in the 800 Hz range, but some players do, and so it's there if you need it. The 4500 is great to bring out slap overtones, but again without paying the price of boosting the entire upper midrange. It would also be good for taming drivers that are hot in the upper mids, or for knocking down everything from about 4 K upward (with the 10 K pulled all the way down, too, of course).

The last (10 K) slider is shelving, which makes total sense in a cut scenario, because there's nothing up there anyway for bass guitar, unless you're running effects that generate their own extremely high-end content from a BG signal. However, even something like an overdrive/distortion unit wouldn't operate in that high a range. A full cut should effectively eliminate any residual noise the unit puts out—that's the advantage of shelving for top-end cut—though, again, I couldn't hear any noise from this unit at all.

The Boss battery-swap drill is new to me. You loosen the black thumbscrew at the bottom of the footswitch plate, and that allows the plate to be lifted. The battery sits in a compartment underneath. I would've made the battery clip leads a couple inches longer, but other than that, a battery swap should be uneventful if you're careful not to yank on the wires when you pull the clip off the dead battery. However, let's add some context: In the real world of performance pedals, you'll probably be powering this and the rest of your pedals from AC adapters or from a central source like a Voodoo. And so I would consider slightly short battery wires a non-issue.

I'm running off the adapter that came with my Tech21 BDDI. No problems whatsoever. Also tried it with the adapter I bought with my MXR M89 overdrive. Again, no problems whatsoever. You do not need Boss's proprietary adapter.

I like this equalizer a lot. It does nothing wrong that I can tell, and it does everything right, helping a bass player get the sound he's after, while shielding him from some of the pitfalls he might encounter with other equalizers due to uninformed use. Ten out of ten.

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