

# EFFECTRODE TUBE DRIVE

Will this Class-A, valve-powered overdrive pedal supply David Greeves with some A-grade tones?



**T**he latest pedal from Effectrode is an overdrive powered by a trio of vacuum tubes. Designer Phil Taylor has stuck to the proven formula that has delivered such great effects as the Tube Vibe and Delta-Trem and built this pedal around an all-valve, Class-A signal path, promising everything from mild breakup to full-on saturated overdrive. Let's see what it can do.

## Construction & Features

The Tube Drive is built into Effectrode's now familiar pedal casing – fairly sizeable by stompbox standards, but necessarily so considering the valve circuitry inside. It's powered by the included 12V DC mains adaptor, and this voltage is multiplied internally to supply the valves with proper plate voltage. The true-bypass switch is 'silent' meaning no nasty pops.

The pedal has three chickenhead control knobs for volume, tone and drive, plus a low-end contour mini switch at the rear. This is effectively an active low-end boost, useful for fattening the sound at lower volumes or compensating for thin-sounding pickups.

One of the most interesting features of the Tube Drive is the option of swapping out the valves to give a different sound. The two 12AX7s provide four cascaded gain stages offering increasing amounts of gain and clipping. Swapping one or both of these valves for a lower-gain 12AT7

or 12AU7 allows you to change the gain structure and alter the character of the overdrive.

The third valve, a 12AT7, powers the active tone control. Rather than simply subtracting from the signal like a passive tone control, this lets you boost or cut the crucial mid and high frequencies.

## Sounds

As we've come to expect from Effectrode, the Tube Drive's all-valve signal path has a wonderful effect on your tone. Even with the drive knob right down and only a small level boost added, the sound feels fuller and more vibrant.

There's tons of extra volume and gain available here, with drive knob moving effortlessly from light, crunchy drive sounds through to



Swapping valves varies the sound

full-on creamy distortion. Perhaps our favourite sounds are to be found somewhere in the middle, where you'll find an immensely satisfying classic rock-style overdrive that's rich with harmonics.

The active tone control proves a powerful tone-shaping tool – you've got to love the single-knob approach to tailoring your tone, especially when it's this well implemented. The low boost switch comes in handy for filling out the low-end. Conversely, switching it off at high-gain settings will help tighten up the bass.

We experimented with a few different valves in the first two positions, using some NOS 12AV7, 12AT7 and 12AU7 valves kindly supplied by Effectrode. We especially like the effect of fitting a 12AV7 in the first position, giving access to a wider range of low-gain overdrive sounds. This might be useful if you're using high-output pickups and want a little more headroom. Fitting a pair of 12AU7 valves lowers the amount of drive still further, transforming the Tube Drive into a superb boost pedal with just a hint of breakup.

## Conclusion

This is another very high-quality pedal from Effectrode. It's fairly pricey, and you might have trouble finding enough space for this big box on your pedalboard, but you cannot argue with the quality of the Tube Drive's tones or its flexibility – with a handful of spare valves, you can tailor the gain structure to meet your needs. **GB**



## EFFECTRODE TUBE DRIVE

**Price:** £269

**Built in:** UK

**Type:** Valve overdrive stompbox

**Features:** Volume, tone & drive Controls, low-end contour switch, 2 x 12AX7, 1 x 12AT7

**Power:** 12V DC mains adaptor only (included)

**Dimensions:** 95(h) x 170(w) x 120(d) mm

## CONTACT DETAILS

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[www.effectrode.com](http://www.effectrode.com)

## GB VERDICT

### GOLD STARS

- ★ Superb valve tones
- ★ Tube swapping adds flexibility

### BLACK MARKS

- Quite pricey by regular OD standards

### IDEAL FOR

Anyone passionate about valve overdrive

### GB RATING

