



# ✓ VG APPROVED GEAR

## TO THE LIMIT

### The Effectrode LA-1A Leveling Amplifier

In the world of guitar effects, there are consumer-grade pedals and *pro*-grade pedals. The former are affordable and fun, the latter are for players who crave stellar sounds and are willing to pay a little more for them.

Enter Effectrode's LA-1A Leveling Amplifier. In short, it's a studio-grade compressor in a foot pedal, and its name evokes the famous Teletronix LA-2A limiter, one of the most famous studio compressors. The folks at Effectrode have taken that legendary vibe and made it fit it on a pedalboard – which is the main reason many players will take notice of this box.

The LA-1A stands out in part by deploying a set of tubes to assist with clarity, quiet, and boost. Two 12AU7s and one 12AT7 are housed between two metal rails to protect them onstage, and make the LA-1A essentially two devices in one – an opto-photocell compressor/limiter and a tube booster.

On the go, the LA-1A works like most classic compressors, with Peak Reduction controlling the amount of compression dropped on the signal, and Gain adding the “makeup gain” that brings it back up to the desired output. Attack and Knee shape the compression applied. In lay terms, Attack provides the speed at which compression kicks in, and Knee provides either organic-



Price: \$469  
Info: [www.effectrode.com](http://www.effectrode.com)

sounding compression on the lower side or hard limiting at the upper end – a fast chop that isn't too natural but can control the output of the wildest guitar or bass pickups. In back, a Dynamic EQ toggle switch pushes the high-end frequencies – good for Rickenbacker 12-string jangle – or restrains unruly treble tones.

The tube-fired boost function works as one would hope, giving +6dB of clean gain for guitar solos or to make a thumpin' bass part really stand out. With Peak Reduction set at 0, the Gain knob can also add

+15dB of boost over the bypassed signal, essentially giving you two levels of boost for your volume needs. All of this comes in an amazingly quiet pedal perfect for the stage as well as the most delicate studio sessions.

You might look twice at the price, but consider that a rackmount LA-2A limiter costs about \$3,500. For all kinds of compression/limiting and tube-boosting needs, the Effectrode LA-1A is a formidable piece of guitar and bass hardware. When it comes to managing your volume and tone, grab this box and don't stress – compress. – **Pete Prown VG**