

It's a battery/mains bass DI, a preamp, a headphone amp, a compressor and more

Phil Jones

Bass Buddy

This little box from Phil Jones Bass can be used in a number of different ways: firstly as a headphone amplifier for unobtrusive practising (provided you have cans of the requisite quality to reproduce a good bass sound, of course), complete with an Aux Input with associated volume control

FINAL SCORE

Build Quality	19/20
Usability	19/20
Sound	19/20
Value for money	17/20
Vibe	17/20
TOTAL	91%

Good for... getting a superb sound for any form of low-level practising, or as a highly versatile DI

Look elsewhere... if it stretches your budget too far or you hate practising with headphones

on the back which allows you to plug in a drum machine, CD player or such-like; secondly, as an active DI box for recording or funnelling through a PA, with a useful five-band graphic EQ coupled to a balanced XLR Out; or thirdly, as a low-level practice amp, sending your signal to an external speaker for low-level rehearsal. The onboard compressor/limiter enables you protect both the unit and your ears from spiky peaks in level.

All of these functions are housed in stainless steel case with a 1/4"-thick CNC-machined aluminium front panel, weighing only 2lbs. The whole package also comes in a rather cool padded carrying case which even includes a pair of 9v batteries amongst its contents because, yep... you can even use this for bass busking.



IN USE

Though circumstances forced us to use a pair of £20 AKG K-44 headphones – not exactly ideal – an active six-string bass sounded superb through the Bass Buddy. The EQ is powerful and will overload if you're not careful, but the limiter is an excellent antidote, reining in the spikes in a natural-sounding manner. There's also a stack of variation available from ear-shuddering lows to snarling midrange to snappy highs, and cutting 12kHz gives a gorgeously silky-edged tone.

VERDICT

So good, you can easily forget you're wearing headphones. Recommended!

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