

FIRST PLAY



REVV G20 HEAD
£1,135

WHAT IS IT? A high-quality all-valve lunchbox head featuring MIDI control and a built-in Two Notes Torpedo module

Dynamic Duo

Revv's high-gain head comes loaded with Two Notes Torpedo making it perfect for stage and studio – a small footprint with a huge sound

Words Nick Guppy **Photography** Olly Curtis

Founded in 2014 by Dan Trudeau and Derek Eastveld and based in Winnipeg, Canada, Revv Amplification is the go-to backline for artists as diverse as metal god Jeff Loomis and Nashville session star Jeff King, along with many of Canada's best-known rock guitarists. Like most amp manufacturers, Revv saw the potential of a compact 'lunchbox' product but wanted to take things to a new level. Its D20 head certainly achieved that, being the world's first amplifier to integrate the award-winning Two Notes Torpedo reactive load and cabinet emulation technology.

Now, Revv has shifted its lunchbox offering up a gear with the G20 lunchbox head, which features its flagship Generator amp's high-gain 'Purple' channel and increased tonal flexibility.

Like its stablemate D20, the G20 is compact and portable thanks in part to an accurately cut and folded aluminium chassis, which helps offset the weight of two substantial transformers. It's an understated yet smart design finished in polished black enamel, with conventional control knobs on a black fascia and illuminated push-button switches.





The Revv G20's controls are easy to navigate, although a quick read of the manual will help understand how its functions hang together



1. The embedded Two Notes Torpedo module is hooked up to a balanced XLR output with ground lift. The USB is for connecting the G20 to the Torpedo Remote software app, which lets you load, save and assign patches

There's a hefty chrome carry handle that can be folded down as needed. The front of the G20's cover is dominated by a large 'Revv' logo that lights up when the amp is switched on and changes colour depending on which channel is selected.

Inside the chassis, the G20's electronics are densely packed on several high-quality PCBs. The main board includes sockets for a pair of 12AX7 preamp valves and two 6V6 output valves, as well as supporting daughter boards for the Two Notes module and MIDI switching, with three more for the front and rear panel components. Wiring is minimal and neatly routed; most circuit board connections via plug-in Molex pin connectors.

The G20's onboard controls are fairly straightforward but merit a swift scan through the manual before plugging in and letting rip. Conventional knobs for gain, volume, bass, mid and treble are joined by a six-way rotary switch that accesses a choice of pre-loaded Two Notes cabinet emulations. A push-button switch between the mid and bass knobs activates a tone mode called Wide, with another switch between the bass and master volume controls operating a built-in attenuator that drops the G20's output from 20 watts down to around four watts.

There are more push-button switches for changing channels, operating the G20's

The Aggression control means the G20 has more than enough tonal range to cope with any gig

three-way Aggression mode and saving patch settings. A fourth switch called Pre/Post switches the G20's Direct and headphones outputs before or after its 6V6 valve power stage, allowing use of the Two Notes virtual power amp feature instead, with a choice of virtual power stages including 6L6s, EL84s and EL34s. There's a headphone jack on the front panel with its own level control and a clip LED.

The rear panel's offerings includes MIDI in, with a four-pin DIN socket that's used to power the illuminated logo in some of Revv's own speaker cabinets. There's a USB socket for hooking up the G20 to the Two Notes Torpedo Remote app, while direct-to-desk connection is handled by a balanced XLR jack with a ground lift.

Other features include a buffered series effects loop and a single speaker jack, with impedance and defeat switches. A pair of test points lets you check the output valve bias current, and the adjuster is





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sensibly out of harm's way on the top of the chassis. There's also a socket for the G20's dedicated footswitch, but most users will want to make full use of the G20's MIDI functionality and integrate it into a wider MIDI-enabled rig. Overall, the G20 gives off a solid, no-nonsense vibe, designed and built to a high standard for many years of trouble-free use.

Feel & Sounds

The Revv G20 fires up with minimal hiss and hum, which is usually a sign of a well-sorted circuit. Plugged into a Vintage 30-loaded 2x12 open-back cabinet, the G20's Fender-influenced clean sound is smooth and warm, with enough range on the controls to add extra sparkle for humbuckers or emphasise a little more midrange for single coils. The Wide function helps at lower volume levels by adding extra bass and treble to the clean channel, or more of a low-end push to the lead channel, making the G20 sound louder and bigger.

Switching to the lead channel activates the gain control and unleashes the Revv's signature solo tone, rich in harmonics with a sweet Californian-inspired top-end that can be made to squeal or snarl on demand, using the three-stage Aggression switch, which changes colour to indicate which mode is active.

The embedded Two Notes reactive load and cabinet emulation module offers six pre-loaded cabinets accessed from the six-way switch on the front panel. You'll need to load the Torpedo Remote app on your desktop and connect the G20 using a standard USB printer lead, which couldn't be easier to do. On our Windows 10 desktop it took just a few seconds to install the app, while the G20 was immediately recognised as a USB device. From within the Torpedo Remote app, you can decide on your virtual

2. This amp can hold six separate Torpedo presets, which are edited and loaded from the Torpedo Remote app and selected from this front-panel rotary switch

3. There's MIDI control of all of the Revv G20's switched functions, enabling up to 128 patches to be stored and recalled





The front-panel headphones output includes the Two Notes technology and has its own level control

room ambience, choose your virtual cabinet, add virtual microphones, load IRs and edit dozens of parameters to your heart's content.

The Two Notes digital effects are added to the XLR and headphones outputs but don't come down the speaker lead, making the G20 ideal for the wet/dry mix setups favoured by many pro players.

The Pre/Post switch is a very cool feature, letting you bypass the G20's real 6V6 output stage for direct and headphones signal paths and substitute the Two Notes virtual power amp, so you can experiment with other valve emulations, each with a distinctively different character.

With all the G20's switched functions accessible by MIDI and up to 128 Torpedo patches to store things in, there's no end to the variety of tones you can create. The Two Notes emulations are impressively realistic, while the Torpedo Remote graphics are beautifully realised, making this feature a real delight to use. The G20's 20-watt full

The addition of the Two Notes embedded technology is what catapults the G20 into a league of its own

output provides plenty of punch for small to medium gigs while the four-watt setting is perfect for studio use, allowing the amp to be cranked up at more sensible decibel levels.

Verdict

Revv has done a great job on the G20. It's compact, portable and built to last. The aluminium chassis is an extra touch of class, offering improved screening, no interaction with transformers, better heat dissipation and, of course, lighter weight compared with its steel-clad competitors. Thanks to the three-stage Aggression control the G20 has more than enough tonal range to cope with any gig from jazz to metal, while MIDI makes it easy to store and recall patches.

The addition of the Two Notes embedded technology is what catapults the G20 into a league of its own, though, with world-class cabinet simulations, EQ, reverb and lots more. The G20's practically seamless integration between old tech valves, MIDI control and the Two Notes digital plug-in, make it a pleasure to use.

Aimed at serious live and studio players at all levels, we reckon it's excellent value for money and could be the perfect tool for those who want the reassuring security of a real amp, while enjoying the versatility of cutting-edge direct-to-desk cab simulation. Revv's G20 is proof that sometimes you can have your cake and eat it. 



REVV G20 HEAD

PRICE: £1,135

ORIGIN: Canada

TYPE: Valve preamp and power amp with Two Notes Torpedo reactive load and cabinet emulation

OUTPUT: 20W switchable to 4W

VALVES: 2x 12AX7, 2x 6V6

DIMENSIONS: 190 (h) x 160 (d) x 315mm (w)

WEIGHT(kg/lb): 4/9

CABINET: Aluminium

CHANNELS: 2 with a choice of 6 internal cabinet emulations from the built-in Torpedo module

CONTROLS: Gain, treble, mid, bass, volume, 6-way virtual cabinet select. Wide switch, Aggression switch, 4/20-watt output switch, channel switch, store switch

FOOTSWITCH: Not supplied, can also be controlled via MIDI

ADDITIONAL FEATURES: Built-in Two Notes Torpedo reactive load/cab sim, USB (connects to Torpedo Remote app), balanced XLR recording out with ground lift, buffered series effects loop, external bias test points, pre/post switch removes power amp from direct output signal chain, headphones output with level control, MIDI in, cabinet lighting extension socket for dedicated Revv enclosures

OPTIONS: A dedicated footswitch will be available soon, but the MIDI option allows superior control and patch recall. There are matching cabs (UK availability TBA)

RANGE OPTIONS: The D20 is a little simpler and costs £1,049

Audio Distribution Group ApS

01732 884972

www.revvamplification.com



PROS Great overdrive sounds; huge choice of world-class cab sims; compact and very portable with a smart carry case included

CONS There's an occasional slight pop on this sample when switching from overdrive to clean sounds