

Quicktest

Welcome to Guitarist's regular round-up of the best of the rest of the gear that's passed through our hands this issue



Planet Waves PW-CT-10 £40

A chromatic tuner that clips to your headstock

CONTACT: Summerfield **PHONE:** 0191 414 9000 **WEB:** www.planetwavestuners.com

Tuning on the move is vital if you aren't able to use a more traditional stompbox. Buskers, troubadours and even solo acoustic players may have an issue with being tied to a pedalboard, and this new innovation from Planet Waves is an excellent solution.

The unit simply clips onto your headstock and operates via a sensitive internal piezo transducer, which measures vibration of the wood rather than the strings to take its measurements. It's also possible to incrementally calibrate the tuner above and below the 440Hz standard.

The design enables you to set the display window at just the right angle for a quick glance from a standard playing position and the read-out itself is simple: red when you aren't in tune, green when you are. It's backlit too – ideal for dark bars.

In Use

Any tuner obviously stands or falls by its accuracy and, thanks

to Planet Waves' history of producing great, consistent tuners, that's never an issue here. The actual tuning mechanism is, if anything, almost too sensitive, but once you become accustomed to tuning slowly, it's bang-on every time.

Verdict

The tuner should work with all manner of stringed instrument, both electric and acoustic, and it's impervious to venue chatter and other extraneous noise too. Although some may balk at the £40 price tag, if you've been waiting for a quality remote tuner, this is it. **[SB]**

The Bottom Line

We like: A cool idea that works very well indeed
We dislike: Doesn't look very rock'n'roll clamped on

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★



CEntrance AxePort Pro £161

A compact guitar-to-computer audio interface

CONTACT: SCV London **PHONE:** 020 8418 1470 **WEB:** www.scvlondon.co.uk

The CEntrance AxePort Pro is a compact and portable audio interface designed purely for getting your guitar signal directly into a computer. Looking like a small torch – all the more so when connected via USB, causing the end to light up – the AxePort Pro features a jack input for plugging in your guitar and a mini headphone jack for hearing the results back from computer. Small rubber knobs control the input gain and output volume, and an attachable plastic clip enables you to mount the unit on your belt or guitar strap.

In Use

AxePort Pro comes with associated software on a USB stick for easy transfer to computer. This software includes any necessary drivers and a useful control panel with a slider that enables you to adjust the mix of the dry guitar input and the sound coming back from the computer to

compensate for any latency delays. You also get the Schwa Oligarc effects plug-ins – with drive, phaser and chorus, plus the Reaper Digital Audio workstation software.

Operation is straightforward and the sound quality is quite excellent, allowing you to capture all the nuances of your playing in a pristine fashion.

Verdict

If you don't really need a mic input on your audio interface, there are several pocket-sized products to link guitar and computer on the market. But the AxePort Pro is the classiest one that we've seen yet, and it sounds great too. **[TC]**

The Bottom Line

We like: Elegant design; excellent sound quality
We dislike: We'd like it more if it cost less

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

Planet Waves Chordmaster for iPhone **£1.79**

More chords than you can even imagine... in your phone



CONTACT: iPhone Application Store WEB: www.planetwaves.com



Apple iPhone users will be familiar with the endless applications created for the beast, enabling you to do, play, research or work out, well, pretty much anything. Planet Waves has introduced the Chordmaster app into the already crowded list of chord library apps. It contains over 7,800 easy-access inversions.

In Use

You simply fire up the application on your iPhone, select the key, then the chord type from 'major', 'minor', 'dominant' and 'diminished', then scroll through variants including 7, 9, triad, 11, 5 and seemingly endless others. You

can then pluck strings individually on the screen or strum in any direction to hear the chord or the notes within it – represented as note names or intervals. Don't like that particular position on the neck? No worries, just scroll to the next inversion – there are up to seven different fingerings for every single chord!

Verdict

A few issues with some chord names notwithstanding – Chordmaster refers to sus2 variants as 'add9' – this is an immensely powerful, useful tool to have at your side when either working out songs or looking for inspiration for new

voicings. It's much more comprehensive than the popular 7 Chords application, but slightly more fussy to use. In short, it's about as much value as £1.79 could ever possibly give you... as long as you have an iPhone, of course. It even has a lefty mode if you're a wrong'un. **[MT]**

The Bottom Line

We like: Chords, thaaassands of 'em; brilliant interface; amazing value
We dislike: Sus2 chords called add9s

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

Shadow SH NFX-UK Ukulele pickups **£119**

Shades? Check. Shorts? Check. Summer's here and it's time to power up yer uke!

CONTACT: Barnes & Mullins PHONE: 01691 652449 WEB: www.shadow-electronics.com

The good ol' ukulele is not exactly the first choice as a performance instrument for most of us, but when this writer was recently called on to perform with one, it was a mad scramble to amplify it. A quick visit to London's Duke Of Uke (www.dukeofuke.co.uk) had us on the right track – they suggested either the EPM 'The Cap' passive transducer (approx £30) or this more expansive, but still neat, Shadow SH NFX-UK.

A small matchbox-sized box, with single volume control, contains the active preamp gubbins and has a mini jack output (conveniently the pickup is supplied with a mini-to-standard jack lead). Extending from its side is a piezo strip and the box simply attaches to the

face of the uke with double-sized stick-on pads.

In Use

You need to reduce the height of your saddle by approx 1mm (just rub the base of the saddle over some coarse sandpaper laid on a flat surface), position the pickup and stick on, then re-fit the saddle and strings.

Whereas the soundboard-placed EPM gives a more ambient, narrower sound, the undersaddle Shadow is more direct, clean and pristine: hi-fi uke! For serious use you might want to tape the supplied lead to the instrument and that, along with the serious-looking

pickup, gives a pro, "I've played uke at Glastonbury" vibe.

Verdict

A nice product that does what it says on the tin and gives a good sound. The problem is it only cost a bit less than the Lanikai S-T tenor we put it on! **[DB]**



The Bottom Line

We like: Easy installation; clean, crisp sound
We dislike: Not cheap – for serious uke-ists only!

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★