



DigiTech Whammy DT £289

The newest incarnation of the classic treadle-operated pitch shifter, which boasts a number of new functions

by Simon Bradley

First released over two decades ago, the DigiTech Whammy has undergone a number of evolutionary spurts resulting in improvements in both performance and the choice of effects. Tom Morello during Rage's Killing In The Name, Vai's Touching Tongues and David Gilmour's lines in Floyd's Marooned are just three very different yet equally musical uses of the Whammy and prove that, when used sensitively and sparingly, it can provide effective and ear-hooking effects.

The pedal provides a number of intervals to which a note can be pitch-shifted by the player using the onboard treadle. Turn the effect on via the dedicated switch and choose between the harmony, whammy or detune

selections. The first will bend a note either up to or down from another shifted note while keeping the original note in the mix. The second will take the note you're playing and bend it up or down to a maximum of two complete octaves; the latter

also provides a chorus of two intensity levels.

However, the main advance with the Whammy DT is the drop tuning function. It shifts your tuning either up or down by up to seven semitones, plus a full octave and a dry/octave mix

option. The drop tune switch gives access to these effects and you can even mix them in with the harmony and whammy menus to give some very weird sounds indeed.

What's more, the DT also features a momentary switch that turns the drop tune setting in and out instantaneously. This allows you, for example, to go from playing a riff in E to D without detuning the guitar, removing a capo or investing in a seven-string guitar.

Additional features include a MIDI in port that allows for remote control of both the effects and the position of the



The drop tune switch provides shifting for all intervals up and down to a seventh

The Rivals

The **BOSS PS-6 Harmonist** (£129) features a usable whammy effect via its traditional pedal, while the **TC Helicon Harmony-G XT** (from £205) applies harmony technology to a guitarist's vocals. Whammy is about all that's missing from the incredible **Eventide PitchFactor** (£399).

treadle, plus input for the optional DigiTech FS3X footswitch for selecting the effects. There are also two bypass modes, true and DSP bypass, with the later smoothing the operation of the momentary switch – and you can even recalibrate the treadle if necessary.

Sounds

All of the harmony and whammy effects provide a smooth glissando between intervals, and there isn't, nor has there ever been, any ugly stepping or glitching to contend with. Although the Whammy does work with chords, it's with single notes that the effects are at their most strident. For sheer ferocity, using the octave up options provides some truly searing notes and the treadle is so smooth that emulating Tom Morello is just a question of timing [and talent! – Ed].

The dive bomb feature, which was first introduced to the Whammy in 2000, mimics the unbridled joy of abusing a double-locking vibrato system without the need to drill holes into your pride and joy, and the drop tune section can genuinely operate as a virtual capo, albeit

restricted to the interval you've set the pedal to.

If you plan to use the momentary switch, we would suggest setting the pedal to DSP bypass, as there is an infinitesimal yet discernible hiccup between the original and shifted signal when used with true bypass. While we're on the subject of more technical issues, the level of unappealing digital fluttering, which is especially apparent when using full clean chords with the harmony effects, is somewhat reduced from previous Whammys: good news.

Verdict

The Whammy DT is a unique pedal, and if you fancy joining the ranks of some of the guitar's greatest and most innovative players then this is the version to add to your pedalboard. A lower spec version – the Whammy (£219) – is available, but the drop tuning options afforded by the DT should not be missed. Easy to use and with a robust construction, it can provide a powerful addition to your arsenal whether you play metal, country or styles in between: how many pedals can you say that about? **G**



The Bottom Line

We like: The drop tune effects; ease of use; authenticity of the effects

We dislike: The occasional digital fluttering

Guitarist says: The best Whammy pedal so far? We think so. If you've ever fancied giving one a go, the time is now

DigiTech Whammy DT

PRICE: £289

ORIGIN: USA

TYPE: Pitch-shifting, harmonising and drop tuning pedal

EFFECTS: Nine harmony, 10

whammy, two detune, 18 drop tune

CONTROLS: Effect selector knob, drop tune effects selector, whammy effects switch, drop tune effect switch and momentary switch

CONNECTIONS: Mono input and output, footswitch input, MIDI In port

OTHER FEATURES: Onboard expression pedal, DSP bypass or true bypass modes

DIMENSIONS: 208 (w) x 59.5 (h)

x 196mm (d)

WEIGHT (kg/lb): 1.59/3.5

POWER: 9V external DC

PSU (supplied)

EXT CONTROLLERS: Three-way

FS3X (£49)

RANGE OPTIONS: DigiTech

Whammy (£219)

Sound Technology

01462 480000

www.digitech.com



Test results

Build quality	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

GUITARIST RATING ★★★★★

All the harmony and whammy effects provide a smooth glissando between intervals, and there's no ugly stepping or glitching to contend with



The harmony and whammy effects are as effective and ferocious as ever