

CONNECTIONS

YOU can plug in an expression pedal, add an external tap tempo switch or plug in a 'Favorite' switch to save and recall a favoured preset on the fly

CONTROL

WOBBLE dials in random modulations akin to manually varying tape speed; the three-way type toggle switches the virtual tape decks from in-phase (sum) to phase-inverted (invert), to stereo ping-pong or mono double repeats (bounce), depending on how the unit is hooked up

AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Tape saturation and double-tracker pedal
CONTROLS: Saturation, blend, lag time, volume, wobble, type switch;
SOCKETS: Input, expression pedal, 2x outputs, power
BYPASS: True or buffered bypass
POWER: 9V power supply (included)
CONTACT: MusicPsych
 0207 607 6005 www.strymon.net

HIDDEN FEATURES

PRESSING and holding the double-tracker bypass footswitch introduces through-zero flange, while high trim, low trim, auto-flange time, wide stereo mode and +/- 3dB boost/cut are all adjustable in secondary mode

STRYMON DECO **£279**

Old-school tape machine effects now available on your pedalboard



IF you can do so, imagine a world in which recording studios didn't have computers, and guitarists had little choice when it came to modifying their sound, other than the spring reverb and valve tremolo circuits in their amps. Admittedly, these conditions birthed some of the greatest recordings in popular music history, with killer guitar sounds that plenty of us still attempt to replicate today, but to say life has got a little more convenient for the six-string player since the 50s and 60s is a massive understatement.

Yet for all today's Kemper and Axe-Fx acolytes getting big amp sounds without bursting their eardrums, you have only to turn on the radio to notice that mainstream pop and indie guitar playing is more textural and less 'rock' than ever. Bands such as Tame Impala have turned to warm, overloaded mixing desk-style fuzz tones rather than traditional heavy stack sounds,

while the likes of Dan Auerbach and Jack White have brought vintage analogue studio sounds back into the contemporary arena.

Enter the Strymon Deco, which emulates the kind of effects once achievable only by lab-coated engineers manipulating tape machines, wrapping them up in a smart, brushed-metal enclosure

It's a serious investment, but this is a pro-quality pedal

with all the pedalboard-friendly usability of a modern digital stompbox. Best positioned at the end of your effects chain in a standard electric guitar rig, the Deco's key control on the left-hand side of the pedal is saturation, which when engaged, apes the warm overdrive and compression that occurs when tape machine inputs are in the red; think Keith

Richards' 'acoustic' guitar sound on *Jumpin' Jack Flash*.

On the right-hand side of the unit, we're into the world of simulated ADT – automatic double tracking – which was the precursor to time-based effects such as flange and chorus. As your virtual tape decks get further out of sync, slapback and short tape echo

fans. Flipping an internal jumper to allow the connection of a TRS stereo input cable means that you can use the Deco as an outboard stereo effects processor for recording, and warm up – or totally scramble – any signal you like, from drums to vocals, or even the whole band mix.

Although it takes the emulation of old sounds as its starting point, the Deco offers a huge amount of range for the creatively minded player seeking inspiration – we've barely scratched the surface. At £279, it's a serious investment, but this is a pro-quality pedal that will make your guitar sounds and even demo mixes stand out.

Chris Vinnicombe

FEATURES	
SUMMARY	SOUND QUALITY
	VALUE FOR MONEY
	BUILD QUALITY
	USABILITY
	OVERALL RATING ★★★★★