

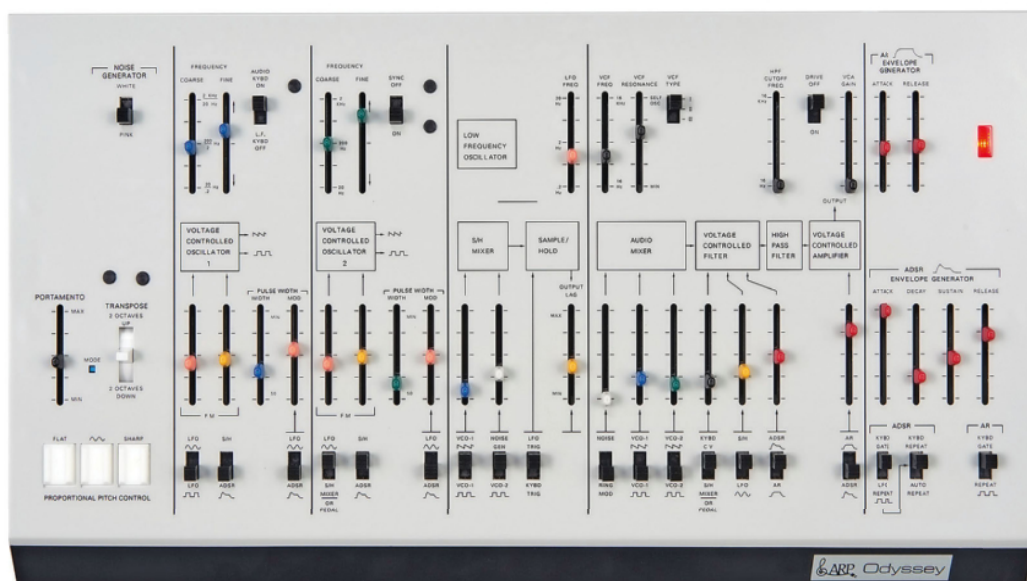
Korg ARP Odyssey Module £519

Korg's ARP recreation returns in a stripped-down desktop form. **Si Truss** goes on an abbreviated odyssey

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KEY FEATURES Duophonic analogue synth module with three variations of the original ARP Odyssey filter **I/O:** 2x main out (XLR, 1/4-inch jack), mini-jack CV in/out, gate in/out and trig in/out, 1/4-inch headphone out, 1/4-inch audio input, MIDI input, USB MIDI input





THE PROS & CONS



Retains all the features and controls of last year's reissue

Small, desktop-friendly footprint

The most affordable Odyssey yet



There's no MIDI parameter control or preset saving

Given the near unanimous praise for Korg's 2014 ARP Odyssey reissue, along with the well-received desktop version of their own MS-20, a keyboard-less variant of Korg's Odyssey was inevitable. And, beyond the removal of the keyboard, there's basically no difference here between the first reissue and module version. On a technical level, the only addition is the ability to receive pitchbend info over MIDI or USB. Aesthetically, the Odyssey Module is available in the Rev1 (pictured) and Rev3 (black and orange) designs, but not the Rev2 variation.

Beyond that, this is the same excellent analogue, duophonic instrument we reviewed in 2015. Again, we get two square/saw/pulse VCOs joined by a noise generator and Ring Mod and Oscillator switches. As before, these are accompanied by a low-pass filter that can be switched between Rev 1, 2 and 3 variants. Plus we get the wealth of modulation options that the Odyssey is famous for, including a pair of envelopes, a LFO and Sample and Hold section.

Connection-wise, things are identical to the keyboard version. There are high (XLR) and low (1/4-inch jack) outputs along with a headphone out with adjustable volume. There's a 1/4-inch audio input, which allows external sounds

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to be processed via the Odyssey's innards and can also be hooked up to the headphone jack to create a signal-boosting feedback circuit. There's a small CV I/O section too, offering CV in/out, gate in/out and trigger in/out, all via mini-jack. There are two pedal inputs, one for sustain and one for a portamento switch. Finally, a MIDI in and USB MIDI port provide the main control inputs.

We'll refer you back to our original review for a full appraisal of the synth engine – in short, Korg's version of the Odyssey is, for the most part, very authentic to the character and sound of the original. While those raised on modern synths might balk at its fiddly tuning sliders and occasionally idiosyncratic behaviour, far from being an unfortunate throwback to a bygone era, it's this edge of unpredictability that gives the Odyssey its character.

Does the removal of the keyboard detract from its appeal? Personally, I'd say no. While I'm no 'slim key' hater and found the original reissue's board surprisingly playable, it was hardly the best feature of the synth. I

feel the Odyssey is at its best hooked up to a sequencer or MIDI input anyway, leaving two hands free to tweak all those tempting parameter sliders. Admittedly, this new desktop 'studio' version makes the lack of MIDI parameter control and any kind of preset save/recall more obvious than ever, but there are plenty more modern synths available at this price if that sort of convenience is what you want. Given the modest footprint and lower price, there's a lot to like about this latest version. **FM**

FM VERDICT

8.9

This latest version of the Odyssey is just as good as last year's reissue, and now more desk and wallet-friendly than ever.