



# Pedal To The Metal

It's flagship time again as Boss introduces the latest top-of-the-range GT floorboard processor

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## BOSS GT-1000 £969

CONTACT **Roland UK** PHONE **01792 702701** WEB **www.roland.co.uk**

1. Ten footswitches is two more than the GT-100 and the fact that you can assign them to so many different things offers massive flexibility in how you can use it

2. There are no scribble strips to name footswitch functions but you have ten different colours to assign

### What You Need To Know

#### 1 Another GT? Isn't it time Boss retired that name?

Well no, it might have been around longer than most floor pedal multi-FX but as long as Boss continues to upgrade and make innovations there's no reason to ditch a successful franchise.

#### 2 So are there innovations here?

Definitely. The newest thing is AIRD (Augmented Impulse Response Dynamics), which Boss describes as "groundbreaking technology that moves amp modelling, feel, tone and dynamic response to the next level".

#### 3 Is it a Helix killer?

Hmmm? We dare say that the success of the Line 6 units must have concentrated minds at Boss...

3. Two send and return loops on the rear panel allow you to integrate other pedals into the system. Each CTL/Exp socket can take a single or double footswitch or an expression pedal

Roland's COSM amp and effects modelling as seen in the GT series could be considered a bit long in the tooth, so a refreshment is no bad thing. And now Boss have given us a new acronym, AIRD, which stands for Augmented Impulse Response Dynamics, designed to give us more realistic amp simulations and implemented in the newly released flagship of the series, the GT-1000. Seeing as how the GT-100 has been around since 2012 we'd expect more than just that though, and we've got it: the GT-1000 has a more streamlined form factor and packs in three times the power with an ultra-fast DSP engine, 32-bit operation and 96kHz sampling rate. There's also onboard Bluetooth so you can remotely edit from a smartphone or tablet using the *Boss Tone Studio* app for iOS and Android. That editing ability is also available on Mac or PC via the USB connection, which also provides audio interface capability.

The GT-1000 has 250 factory patches in 50 banks of five that can't be overwritten but it also has the same number of user patches so there's plenty of storage for your own creations. These patches are created from a chain of blocks that can be routed in a number of serial and parallel configurations. The effects cover all genres and include some of the Boss MDP effects

and algorithms found in the 500-series pedals, as well as compact pedal favourites. Two effects loops let you integrate external pedals into the system.

Those AIRD amps, of which you can use two in the signal chain, feature Boss's Tube Logic approach and are designed to recreate the total interaction between all elements of a guitar amp/speaker combination, particularly the reactive push and pull dynamics. Boss has created a range of great-sounding original amps but also has a smattering of classic amp emulations. There's no cab mixing and matching as all the amps are said to be paired with the ideal speaker set up and can take advantage of the AIRD output, which adjusts the sound to suit whatever amp (selected from a menu) you may be plugged into. The idea is that you shouldn't have to disable amp/speaker modelling to plug into a guitar amp. It worked okay for us, retaining the sound of the patch using the specified setting with our AC30, although we wouldn't normally use amp sims into a guitar amp.

The main outputs and XLR sub outputs have independent AIRD Output Select settings to send simultaneously to different destinations and if you are going to a PA or full range speaker system, there's provision to use IRs although you can only store four onboard.

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With its ten footswitches and a pedal treadle with a toe switch, the default operation of the GT-1000 is based around patch switching with a couple of switchable variations within a patch. You get the first two switches on the top row to change banks while the five lower footswitches select the patches in the bank. The remaining three footswitches are assigned as control switches to change a function like individual effect switching or a parameter change within a patch, although the default CTL3 assignment for the factory patches is for the tuner.

What is notably absent is 'Manual' mode, as seen in previous GT processors, where you can instantly switch modes from calling up patches to having the footswitches calling up the individual pedals within a patch – in keeping with using the unit like a conventional analogue pedalboard rig and something that rival units all have.

Now, while it may seem that Boss have missed a trick by leaving Manual mode out, the designers have actually made the GT-1000 much more flexible, as you can assign whatever you want to any of the footswitches and the treadle, and also to any additional external footswitches and expression pedals connected via the rear panel. It's still possible, therefore, to use the unit in a 'Manual' mode style, as you can set all footswitches in a patch to toggle a different effect like a giant pedalboard.

There are in fact many ways to set the GT-1000 up: it's now totally your own choice so it's just as well that editing on the unit is made easy by six soft knobs linked to a large display, and easily accessible menus including a new 'Stompbox' feature that simplifies using common effects settings

in many different patches. However, we'd imagine that most users would favour the large, colour-screen convenience of a computer hook-up to get all their patches sorted before taking the unit gigging, and assigning the soft knobs to the most useful onstage tweaks.

### Sounds

There are some excellent factory patches onboard for instant use or to provide inspiration and a template for creating your own – the unit is capable of pretty seamless switching with delay/reverb carry over. The playing experience feels more tactile than with previous GTs, with a nicely-responsive connection between hands and sound.

While there isn't a vast number of amps, those available provide plenty of sonic diversity, while the quantity and range of the effects offers both the ability to get deeply creative with esoteric patches and to have a pedalboard with a full range of individual effects for instant recall.

### Verdict

Unless you stick to just playing through the presets straight out of the box, there's a bit of a learning curve with the GT-1000 but that's because the unit is so flexible and versatile.

It's got the best sounding and playing amps and effects we've heard from Boss too, but all of that doesn't come cheap, so the asking price may come as a shock to previous GT users who were used to prices south of £500, rather than the c£800 we are seeing in some retailers. Considering how much you'd have to pay for the equivalent pedals though, especially the 500-series, we'd say that it's well worth it. **G**

## THE RIVALS

Looking for a self-contained floor processor with amp sims and effects? There are three main rivals. The Line 6 Helix is available as the top-of-the range Helix Floor (£1,587) and the Helix LT (£1,064). There's also the HeadRush PedalBoard (£899) from the team behind Digidesign's Eleven, which has 270 presets and features a touchscreen for editing.

From Fractal there's the AX8 (£1,399) which puts Axe-FX II amps and effects into a stage-ready pedalboard that offers 512 presets featuring a traditional single amp plus effects chain, as opposed to the latest Axe-FXIII's dual amp chain capability.

LINE 6: [www.line6.com](http://www.line6.com)

HEADRUSH: [www.headrushelectronics.com](http://www.headrushelectronics.com)

FRACTAL: [www.fractalaudio.com](http://www.fractalaudio.com)



## BOSS GT-1000

**PRICE:** £969

**ORIGIN:** China

**TYPE:** Guitar Multi-FX processor

**FEATURES:** 116 effects types, 250 user and 250 preset patches, 38 second phrase looper (19 in stereo), 6 in / 6 out USB audio interface, software editor with USB or Bluetooth connection, mono or polyphonic tuner

**CONTROLS:** Output level, 6x soft knobs, 6x buttons, 10x footswitches, pedal treadle

**CONNECTIONS:** Standard input, standard outputs (L/mono, R), XLR Sub output (L, R), standard sends (1, 2), standard returns (1, 2), standard stereo phones output, CTL 4, 5/EXP 2 socket, CTL 6, 7/EXP 3 socket, AMP CTL 1, 2 socket, USB, MIDI In, MIDI Out

**POWER:** Supplied AC adapter

**DIMENSIONS:** 462 (w) x 248 (d) x 70mm (h)



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**PROS** Practical footprint, footswitch assignments offer flexibility of use, improved playing feel over previous GTs, massive range of effects, versatile signal routing

**CONS** Only storage for four IRs, some may miss the fixed Patch/Manual mode switching