

**Beetronics
Royal Jelly**
£289

1



**Electro
Harmonix
Triangle Big
Muff Pi**
£93

2



Fuzz/drive pedals

Distortion has many names in audio production and is a magnet for adjectives and simile. For this four pedal round-up the focus is on two distortion sub-genres, fuzz and overdrive, hopefully keeping the adjectives to a minimum...

**Gamechanger
Audio Plasma
Pedal**
£299

3



1

This is the collection's boutique stompbox lover's option, with an appropriate pricetag to boot. The Royal Jelly houses parallel distortions (overdrive and fuzz) with two independent mix channels for the user to toggle between. The fuzz circuit is fixed with just a Buzz switch to 'nasty up' the top-end, so the amount of fuzzing is dependent on the input signal. The Honey knob controls the overdrive amount, ranging from mild breakup to something more explicitly Rock. Coupled with the quality dual Hi/Lo EQ and Dry level knobs there is a wealth of tone and usability on offer. The Royal Jelly works very well with a guitar/amp setup, as well as electric piano/organ, but is also no slouch when it comes to synth/loop reamping. This is the most refined tool of the selection, though it can bare its teeth when dialled up full.

beetronicsfx.com

VERDICT 8.4

2

The Big Muff needs no introduction, having been in production in some form for almost 50 years. This is a recreation of the original '69 circuit, packed into a pedalboard-friendly case. As any guitarists out there surely know, the Big Muff is never a subtle effect, even when dialled back, and yet there is still a lot of range between the Tone and Sustain knobs within the Big Muff sound-realm. This Triangle version has the big gain/smooth sustain you expect accompanied by a less harsh distortion characteristic than we recall from other versions. Excellent for guitar, but also works well with monosynths and drum machine kicks/snare (when blended).

ehx.com

VERDICT 9.0

3

Ok, so we said this was about fuzz and overdrive, but we lied. The Plasma Pedal stakes out its own patch of the distortion landscape by the use of a xenon-filled tube, instead of a transistor or vacuum tube. The input signal drives electrical discharges across the xenon tube which produce a distorted analogue at the other end, as well as a pretty light show. The sonic effect is an intense, scrambled and crackling distortion which gates as the input decays (this threshold is adjusted with the Voltage knob). There are EQ and Blend controls to mix and shape this heavy effect, which comes into its own amongst other pedals. The gating effect makes it highly percussive, though at full tilt you can also zip around for a smooth yet ripped sound. It plays well with guitars, bass and monosynths, as well as drums in a reamping context. The novelty comes at a price.

gamechangeraudio.com

VERDICT 8.0

4

In its most subtle form The Pelt can rough up your tone, shaving off some transients and adding sustain, while at the other end it does indeed get very hairy. The range is impressive, with plenty of variation available via the Fuzz/Bloom knobs and the two tone switches (Mid cut/boost and Thick). The Pelt can deliver buzzy bee leads and bloated doom stomps within a couple of tweaks. It's also a well-designed pedal (magnetic pedal hatch – cool!) with backlit knobs. Fares well on synth and electric piano, as well as guitar, but less useful for drum loops (not its primary application, to be fair).

shop.fender.com

VERDICT 8.7



4

Fender The Pelt
£96

FM VERDICT



THE HIGH PERFORMER Triangle Big Muff Pi. It's by far the most simple distortion in the group, there's no dry-wet control, but what it does is spot on.



THE BEST VALUE The Pelt. Combined with the wealth of variation afforded by the tone/fuzz character controls this is a lot of effect for under £100.