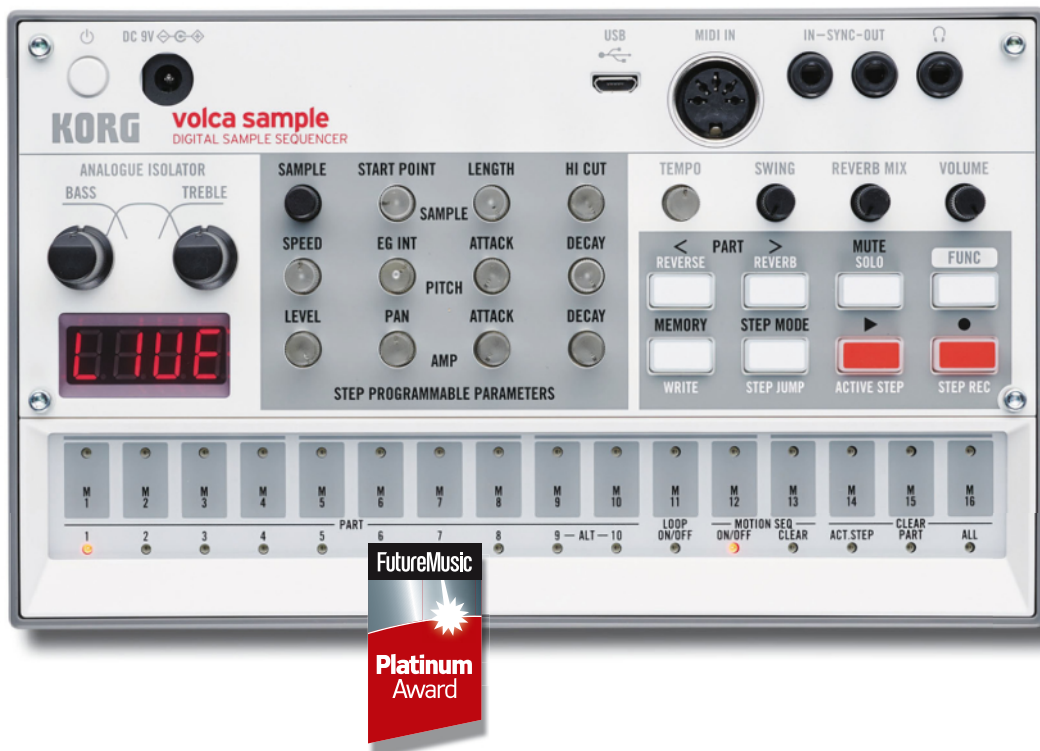


# Korg Volca Sample 2 £150

Korg's most popular Volca gets an update. Si Truss samples the new features of version 2...

**CONTACT** WHO: Korg **WEB:** [korg.com](http://korg.com) **KEY FEATURES** 10-part digital sample player with reverb send and analogue isolator EQ **I/O:** headphone out, MIDI in, pulse sync in/out, USB, power





## THE PROS & CONS



USB input means sample upload is a lot easier

Pattern chaining adds more flexibility

More sounds and memory than v1



No included USB lead

According to Korg, the original Sample remains the bestselling entry into the company's popular Volca range. While it was never my favourite personally – the Drum, FM and Kick take the top three spots, since you asked – I definitely see the appeal. With ten tracks and eight voices of polyphony, plus a decent depth of editing and sequencing control, the Volca Sample always offered a lot of potential for something so small and cheap. It was undeniably a lot of fun too.

Given its popularity, it's little surprise that the Sample is the first Volca to get a direct version 2 follow-up. In actuality this is more a subtle refinement of the original design, rather than a true fresh version. For the most part the design and functionality remain largely unchanged, although Korg have added several key enhancements that make it worth reappraising.

Let's recap what hasn't changed first. As before, this is a 10-part digital sample groovebox that can play back PCM sounds as either one-shots or loops. Front panel control lets users set the source sample, start and end points, as well as pitch and volume for each sample. There are also attack and

decay controls for both amp and pitch, along with hi-cut and reverse parameters. On the global level, the Sample features a reverb send with Mix control and an analogue isolator EQ that can be used to boost or cut low and high-end frequencies.

In terms of the hardware itself, the Sample mostly falls in line with the rest of the Volca range. There's a 16-step sequencer equipped with Motion Sequencing automation, Step Jump and Active Step Modes. Audio output is provided by a single headphone jack, which comes accompanied by a MIDI input and analogue pulse clock in and out. Power comes from either six AA batteries or a separate power supply.

So what's new? The most significant addition is a micro USB port on the front panel, which allows users to hook the Sample up to a computer for direct sample import. This is a major bonus; the original did allow users to add their own sounds, but doing so involved streaming audio into the Sync In from an iOS app, which was somewhat fiddly. It's still possible to transfer sounds to the Volca Sample 2 using this method, but the new desktop librarian is far more convenient. The USB port can also be used for sync and MIDI control, and the Sample now lets users route individual MIDI channels to control each sample track, which makes

control via a DAW or external sequencer far easier.

The onboard sample memory has been doubled too, which is a nice touch, and the Sample 2 comes with an upgraded library of sounds to take advantage of the extra space. The only other upgrades to mention are to the sequencer, which adds pattern chaining – a welcome bonus if you want on-the-go creativity – and off-the-grid steps, which are handy for creating more unusual grooves and swung rhythms.

In all then, it's a subtle, but very well-targeted upgrade to the original design. The extra memory, convenience and sequencing scope combine to make this a significant step up. Given the still very reasonable price point, this Volca is more tempting than ever. **FM**

## FM VERDICT

# 9.0

Easier to use, more flexible and packed with more sounds – v2 is an all-round improvement for Korg's most popular Volca