



## Blackhole

Eventide's celebrated reverb algorithm gets a dedicated pedal

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First appearing in rackmount processors, Eventide's Blackhole reverb algorithm has been around for some time. While it's recently been available as a plug-in, it was also found in the Space pedal and is a popular fixture in the newer H9 unit. Now, though, we have a dedicated Blackhole pedal – a reverb stompbox that features just the one algorithm but with all of its parameters laid out for knob control on the front panel, instead of having to dive into menus.

The Blackhole has various options for mono and stereo operation. The single input works with TRS as well as standard mono jacks, and you can set things for guitar or for line-level signals. There are five selectable onboard presets and you get access to 127 through MIDI or via the

Eventide Device Manager (EDM) editing software on your computer.

While the unit has six knobs, five of them (all except the dry/wet Mix knob) have secondary functions. Unlike some pedals, however, there's no messing around to get to them: the secondary function is clearly listed in a more subdued lettering underneath the main parameter for each knob, and you access it by pressing a small button that immediately lights up red to let you know that it's a secondary parameter that you're editing.

### SOUNDS

The pedal is capable of creating a range of reverb spaces with the Size knob, which will take you from a small room-like environment through to a massive cavernous void. The Decay character of the

reverb tail can be adjusted by the Gravity knob, gradually increasing the duration and density of a conventional fading envelope to its right, and offering the same for a reverse decay to its left for a trippier vibe. Besides these, you can add up to two seconds of pre-delay before the main body of the reverb kicks in, and there's a Feedback knob, adding repeats to extend the effected sound further up to an Infinite mode where you can continuously layer new sounds on top of a suspended reverb.

A pair of Lo and Hi filters takes care of conventional tonal tasks such as reducing low-end murkiness or taming/enhancing the high-end, and there's variable resonance for these so you can turn a simple treble boost into an edgy metallic sheen, for example. It's also possible to add modulation via the Rate and Depth

### 01. LED

This LED also functions as a button to change the Active footswitch function, toggling it between latching or momentary operation

### 02. FOOTSWITCHES

Besides making the effect active and engaging the Freeze function, these two footswitches allow access to the five onboard presets

### 03. PRESET LADDER

Each LED in this array represents one of the five onboard presets

### 04. GRAVITY KNOB

Central position is basically neutral. To the right you adjust the conventional decay envelope, with inverse decay to the left

### 05. SECONDARY FUNCTION BUTTON/LED

Press this so it lights up red and you can access the set of secondary parameters for each knob (legended in grey)

### 6. EDM

USB connection to your computer enables sound-editing and access to 127 presets through the Eventide Device Manager software



### Tech Spec

**ORIGIN:** China

**TYPE:** Reverb pedal

**FEATURES:** Multiple Bypass options (Buffered, Relay, DSP+FX or Kill dry), MIDI, 5 onboard presets, software editor

**CONTROLS:** Mix, Gravity/Delay, Feedback/Q, Size/Depth, Lo/Rate, Hi/Output Level, mono/stereo switch, guitar/line level switch, secondary function button, Active button, Freeze button, Active (Bypass) footswitch, Freeze footswitch

**CONNECTIONS:** Standard TRS input (mono or stereo), standard outputs 1 & 2, EXP, USB

**POWER:** Included 9V DC adaptor, 200mA

**DIMENSIONS:** 178 (w) x 121 (d) x 71mm (h)

**Guitarist CHOICE**

**9/10**

knobs, producing a mild chorus or a more extreme detuning effect.

With all of those parameter choices, there's a staggering range of unusual ambiences available here. There are some conventional reverbs to be coaxed out of the pedal – and yet the Blackhole is not about halls, rooms and so on. This pedal is more about creating otherworldly spaces. In fact, its forte is long lingering clouds of uniquely textured ambience. There's a world of esoteric soundscapes waiting to be dialled in with ethereal evolving pads built from reverb, delay and modulation nestling behind your playing.

While the hands-on knob tweaking is great here, the EDM software makes it even easier with every parameter laid out in front of you, as well as instant access to Eventide's 28 carefully programmed

factory presets, which really explore the unit's capabilities.

Use in performance has been amply catered for with the two footswitches, each having multiple functions. Primarily the bypass, the Active switch can be latching or momentary for short blasts of effect. The latching Freeze footswitch will get the last bit of reverbed playing sustaining on while you play over it, albeit with the pedal's dry sound, which might be too much of a contrast in ambience for some tastes. The footswitches can also call up presets. A press-and-hold on Freeze puts the pedal in Preset mode where it can scroll through the five presets; hitting the Active switch will load the selected one.

Further foot control is available by plugging in an expression pedal, which can have any combination of parameters

mapped to it for a complete morphing of the soundscape. The EXP socket allows for external tap tempo for the pre-delay or preset recall via a triple footswitch.

### VERDICT

Perhaps no big deal to anyone who already has Blackhole sounds in a Space or H9 pedal, but what we have here is proper hands-on control in a compelling reverb pedal specialising in massive 'out there' ambiences to lose yourself in. Plug in your guitar and you'll soon be sucked in. **G**

**PROS** Great range of unusual ambient sounds; easy hands-on operation; software editing; expression pedal control; latching or momentary switching

**CONS** Price could be lower compared with more versatile H9 but it's horses for courses