BOSS CS-3

by **shaun_mac** » 20 Feb 2013, 21:20

Looking for an alternate to the MXR Dyna-Comp I have. I like the CS-3 because it has an ATTACK knob. I mainly play a Stratocaster or a Fender Jaguar. Has anyone had any luck with this compressor? I'm also interested in any insights anyone may have about it in comparison to other compressors like for instance the analogman CompRossor and the analogman Bi-Comp.

shaun_mac

Re: BOSS CS-3

by **Dirk** » 20 Feb 2013, 21:52

I mainly use compression with bass guitar, but I did find the Dynacomp way too heavy handed.
I've been using an old CS-3 modded a little for bass, since '95 and I'm equally fond of it's predecessor, the CS-2, and the
halfrack version, the RCL-10.

You should also check out the Ibanez CP-10 which is pretty identical to the CS-2/3.

Dirk

Re: BOSS CS-3

by **Pepe** » 20 Feb 2013, 22:04

Welcome to the forum!

Actually the CS-3's ATTACK knob is a "release" control. It is called "attack" on most compact pedal sized compressors, but that's not the same as the "attack" control on a studio compressor (normally "attack" defines the time that the compressor takes to kick in). The release knob (here: ATTACK) defines the time value for the decay of the compressor. Once you're under the compressor's threshold level (this is fixed at the CS-3), the compressor stops its work after a certain time that you've dialled in with this knob. On the maximum position of the CS-3's ATTACK knob, the compressor almost immediately stops working then. On the opposite if you dial in the lowest setting, the compressor still works if you've been below that threshold level for a second or so. This can result in very smooth solo lines and some people want exactly this, but I prefer it the other way, because this minimum setting pretty much kills your playing dynamics.

This is a unit that needs no doctor's degree. A child can use it. Studio compressors are not as easy to dial in, but they are superior, because you can set the effect in the exact way you want it to work.

As said, the threshold when the compressor kicks in (or stops) is at a fixed setting. The SUSTAIN knob (which is also in fact no "sustain" knob, but I want to spare you more smart-assing) pushes your input level so much that you reach this threshold. In maximum position you get the "sustain" effect which is nothing else than keeping the input level constantly over the threshold level. It is driven so much in this position that your guitar seems to keep a note endlessly. But it's quite noisy, because if you boost the original signal to the extent, it's logical that hiss and noise comes for free. Don't overdo it, except you need it, otherwise your tone gets added with noise (because of the high signal boost) and your picking dynamics get lost. You get a very flat dynamic curve this way and everything sounds the same - very flat, especially with a low "ATTACK" value (remember: that's "release"!). If you use low "sustain" values, you have to turn up the VOLUME knob to make it match with your original signal (or

louder). Yes, this is another booster! There are two boosters in this pedal. Two ways to add hiss...

All in all I didn't like the CS-3 for my uses. I had two exemplars (a modern one and an early model) and I felt no love for these. I don't want flat dynamics and I don't want added noise.

I stick to my BOSS LM-2 Limiter (not in production anymore for a long time). A limiter is also a compressor, though it works a bit different. This one has a defineable threshold and it works with the normal volume of the input signal. This way I get no hiss through signal boosting and I can define the threshold to set the limiter's working range. It's tone control is fine as well. At the 12:00h position I hear no difference to my original signal. I can use it to work as a compressor, but I only really use it to avoid high signal peaks. This way I can get peak-free recordings and it compliments other effects as well, such as modulation pedals that don't really like high volume peaks. It's an "always on" pedal at my place. But that's just *my* way. I want to have my playing dynamics almost unaffected.

If *you* want the "typical" compressor tone, the CS-3 might just be perfect for you. This site might be useful for you to search the ultimate compressor: . This site is VERY helpful! Another compressor that I could recommend is the Seymour Duncan "Double Back" (review here:). I haven't used this one before, but its specifications (and the review) sound promising.

Dirk: I had the CP-10 and it was pretty noisy in comparison to the CS-3's I had.

Pepe

Re: BOSS CS-3

by **nathanscribe** » 21 Feb 2013, 10:07

And here ends the quote from Wikipepepedia

nathanscribe

Re: BOSS CS-3

by **Dirk** » 21 Feb 2013, 17:59

> *nathanscribe wrote:*
> *Wikipepepedia*

You, my friend have won the Word-of-the-week award this time.

I like how the old model CS-3 with the dbx chip sounds more tube like than the newer THAT chip version. That one's way too sterile, I like a little dirt.
But, I also modded mine for more low end, and changed a few diodes from silicon to germanium for more tubeyness.

On my RCL-10 I have both the attack and release controls set to minimum, so it just only momentarily dips in the peaks without destroying my dynamics.

Dirk

Re: BOSS CS-3

by **shaun_mac** » 21 Feb 2013, 19:28

Well played.

Thanks for the info, sounds good to me. CHEERS!

shaun_mac

Re: BOSS CS-3

by **belafonte** » 22 Feb 2013, 21:43

I think a lot of boss pedals sound great stock but the CS3 isn't one of them. It's REALLY noisy. That said the monte allums opto plus mod is great and I was somewhat skeptical of it. I always liked the squish of the CS3 but it was unusable because it was so noisy, that mod changed things and i'm usually not too big on modding these things, only other mod I've ever done to a boss pedal was adding a simple volume knob to my TR2

belafonte

Re: BOSS CS-3

by **fuzzbuzzfuzz** » 23 Feb 2013, 14:54

Well it is not a "transparent" compressor, it will clearly be audible as "on", and has a "dry" tone to my ears as opposite to older vintage type units. I found it ideal for my tele with mild drive and delay for a modern rock sound, or a very pronounced squeeze for country licks, Nels Cline swears by it it seems. I think the CS-2 is more subtle and lets more of your original tone through. Anyway my 2 pence! Good luck

fuzzbuzzfuzz