Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **nathanscribe** » 24 Jun 2012, 20:04

As a non-guitarist I've been through a fair few Boss pedals (mostly single compacts) and have had mixed results with keys, particularly with dirt for reasons that are pretty clear if you've ever tried running a synth through an SD-1. However, after picking up bass a few months ago I've been dabbling with a few more and wondered what people's experiences were. Pedals meant for, or not meant for bass are all game.

Ones I like so far:

HF-2 - I like the tightness of the flange (ooer missus) across the whole frequency range, whereas the BF-2b rolls off the lows to keep them clear.
GE-7b - OK, it's meant for bass - but it works really well as a general tone-shaper on anything I put through it - plus it has plenty of gain for pushing.
PQ-3b - Oh OK, another bass-intended pedal, but it's really good so I can't leave it out.

Ones I don't like:

CS-3 - Just doesn't work for me. I use it to over-squash things for nasty effect, not as a 'proper' compressor.
CE-2b - meant for bass, but as with the Bass Flanger, the decision to filter out the low end of the effect to keep it clean means you lose the impact of it.
SYB-3 and 5 - they're not bad pedals, but they're not to my taste. I'd rather just use a synth.

Ones I'm on the fence about:

ODB-3 - sometimes I thing it sounds good, sometimes I think it's only got one good sound in it. Other times I don't think it has any.

I've seen Simon Gallup's pedalboard (ex Cure bassist) and he uses a BF-2 and MT-2, among other more standard things (TU-2, DD-3...). I've also heard the BD-2 works well with bass.

nathanscribe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Pepe** » 24 Jun 2012, 20:18

concerning the CS-3: Absolutely! Not the best compressor for bass!

concerning the CE-2B: Darn it! I still haven't tried it with bass yet. But the low end has to be kept clean. It's good that it doesn't have too much impact on the sound. A CE-3, for example, sounds great with guitar. With bass it's crappy. I love a bass chorus to be subtile.

concerning the SYB-3: How could you?!? Only joking, but this one is one of my favourites (if you still haven't found out) and I'd love to try the follow-up model one day. They are FANTASTIC if you play them live on stage and all people look out for the non-existing keyboard player!

concerning the ODB-3: Correct! It has one or two nice sounds, but none of them are killer. That's why I want a proper bass overdrive pedal for years!

Pepe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Pieces Of The Night** » 24 Jun 2012, 20:39

I've used my ac-2 with my bass with good results.

Pieces Of The Night

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Laurie** » 24 Jun 2012, 20:45

> *Pepe wrote:*
> *concerning the CS-3: Absolutely! Not the best compressor for bass!*

Not the best compressor. "."

Laurie

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Pepe** » 24 Jun 2012, 20:58

I didn't want to be too rude. 😉

Pepe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **nathanscribe** » 24 Jun 2012, 21:51

> *Pepe wrote:*
> *concerning the CE-2B: Darn it! I still haven't tried it with bass yet. But the low end has to be kept clean. It's good that it doesn't have too much impact on the sound. A CE-3, for example, sounds great with guitar. With bass it's crappy. I love a bass chorus to be subtile.*

Seems we have different tastes for bass chorus then! I like a nice thick chorus across the whole spectrum. If I want to keep lows clean, I'll split the signal and record wet/dry in parallel, and EQ them to mix. Other than that, the CE-2b is a nice chorus anyway, and certainly worth trying. If you like the CE-2, I expect you'll also like the CE-2b - same kind of sound, just a softer blend.

I'm kind of intrigued by what to look for in a bass dirt pedal - not tried very many with it, and don't want much dirt anyway. Actually I seem to get good results from chaining a load of pedals and keeping them all on bypass! Or using my nice UA preamp. Mmmmmm tubey.

nathanscribe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

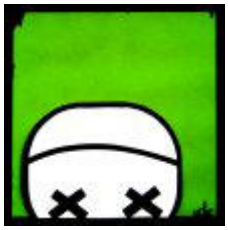
by **natthu** » 24 Jun 2012, 22:20

CEB-3 is a good bass chorus.
PQ-3B is the best bass pedal ever... seriously the thing is awesome. The GEB-7 is okay, but it doesn't have the same powerful shaping ability that you can really use in the PQ-3B to pull the bass out of the mix.
ODB-3 is rubbish IMHO. I actually think the Behringer Clone of it sounds better.

I'm not a big fan of many effects with bass, probably because I like bass clean by itself. I usually just use a compressor (Keeley) and a PQ-3B for a little tone shaping. Occasionally I'll use an octaver. An OC-2 works well directly after the compressor for me, but I ususally use an EHX POG2 for that and a few other 'tricks'....

As for the SYB pedals... they are good but I hardly ever use them with bass, I like to use them on drum sounds instead along with my PS-3.

Not really a pedal as such, but I have a Moog Minitaur on the way. I intend to try controlling it with a Sonuus B2M MIDI converter. Hopefully that will sound good with a little dry bass mixed back in with the signal.



natthu

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Guga Ramone** » 25 Jun 2012, 03:55

I have a chinese ODB-3 knock-off and I agree with everything that was said in this topic. In the search for a bass overdrive, I tried a Sansamp GT2 and found what I wanted! Really tight, slightly distorted (depending on the setting, it can become a monster!) that doesn't disappears in the mix and blends really great with the guitars in my band. Although it's primarily a guitar pedal, it really surprised me when used on bass.

Guga Ramone

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Arpeggiator** » 25 Jun 2012, 11:01

Funny, I wanted to start a topic on this as well.

A couple of days ago I tested about 15 different Boss pedals with my bass and I have gotten very good results with some of them:

PH-1: Quite awesome actually, but only on slower settings. I might put this on my future bass pedal board.

TW-1: Don't laugh - it sounded great! You have to mute strings between notes, though. If you let a note ring, the effect doesn't kick in. Still very neat for bass.

DC-3: I might finally have found a use for this thing. The DC-2 sounded even better, but it often distorts with bass.

None of the Boss OD's worked very well with the bass, I got very good results with my Barber LTD SR, maybe because it doesn't affect the instrument's tone too much. The others sucked a lot of low end...

Arpeggiator

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Dirk** » 25 Jun 2012, 16:14

> *Pepe wrote:*
> *concerning the CS-3: Absolutely! Not the best compressor for bass!*

Unless you mod the hell out of it, and make it sound like a CS-2.... That one by the way is awesome.

> *Pepe wrote:*
> *concerning the CE-2B: Darn it! I still haven't tried it with bass yet. But the low end has to be kept clean.*

I agree, putting too much effect on the lows turns the entire sound to a mush in a band setting, same thing goes for the flanger,
although the BF-2 is another great pedal for bass.

Others I like: PH-1r set for a slow phasing sound, any of the DD series delays, and the TU-2 of course.

Dirk

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Sibob6** » 28 Jun 2012, 12:29

For my bass pedal board, I'm currently using a TU-2, LS-2 and the following effects:
VB-2 - very cool on bass on an extreme setting
CE-2B - with Fromel mod, essentially turning it into a CE-2 plus much more: http://fromelelectronics.com/modificati... ass-Chorus
OC-2 - obviously
PH-2 - fantastic phaser, love it
PN-2 - chopchopchopchop
CS-2 - best compressor I've ever tried
GEB-7 - obviously
GE-7B - in a different channel to the GEB-7 & for the different freq. bands to the GEB-7

All chosen because they're awesome on bass

Si

Sibob6

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **nathanscribe** » 28 Jun 2012, 13:42

Doesn't the CS-2 lose some lows?

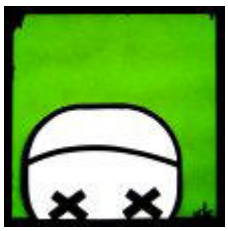
nathanscribe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **natthu** » 28 Jun 2012, 15:18

> *Sibob6 wrote:*
> *...CS-2 - best compressor I've ever tried...*

What others have you tried? (just curious, I found the CS-2 was 'good' but I've used nicer compressors).



natthu

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Dirk** » 28 Jun 2012, 15:58

> *nathanscribe wrote:*
> *Doesn't the CS-2 lose some lows?*

Not to my ears, whereas the CS-3 does.
Not a problem since I never turn 'em off and just add some lows on my amp.

I sure like the tubey feel of the CS'ses as opposed to the clean-ness of the LM's.

Dirk

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Sibob6** » 29 Jun 2012, 11:55

> *natthu wrote:*
> *What others have you tried? (just curious, I found the CS-2 was 'good' but I've used nicer compressors).*

CS-3
TC Nova Dynamics
Aphex Punch Factory
Demeter
EBS

I've not notced any loss of lows, but then I use it at the start of my noise channel, seperate to my sub/bass channel.
I MUCH prefer it to my LM-2, which has come off my board, the CS-2 is anchored in there

Si

Sibob6

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **ChristoMephisto** » 29 Jun 2012, 15:00

The LM2 is a much better alternative to a compressor, a limiter only controls the highs

The FZ2 pretty good as far dirt pedals for bass go. You have really good lows, octave up, or just a plain gain of up to (iirc) +18dB

The DC3 is a great light chorus for a bass, found it better sounding than the CE2B.

ChristoMephisto

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Pepe** » 30 Jun 2012, 23:25

> *Arpeggiator wrote:*
> *TW-1: Don't laugh - it sounded great! You have to mute strings between notes, though. If you let a note ring, the effect doesn't kick in. Still very neat for bass.*

Yeah, I forgot the FT-2! It sounds pretty cool with bass. It's a shame that it doesn't have a dry/wet knob. But with an LS-2 you can dial in the desired amount of clean signal. The SYB-3 has a "T Wah" mode as well - and this pedal has two separate volume controls for the clean and the effect signal.

Nice sounding BOSS dirt pedals with bass: FZ-2, HM-2 and for some crazy sounds the XT-2.

BOSS dirt pedals that sound like arse with bass: DF-2, DS-2, OD-2(R), MT-2, MZ-2, PW-2.

The LM-2 is great with guitar, but I prefer the LMB-3 for my bass. I kicked my compressor out of my usual effects chain two years ago. I just need to have the peaks tamed.

Pepe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **ChristoMephisto** » 01 Jul 2012, 00:26

Which is the better of the two? The LM2B or LMB3?

ChristoMephisto

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Pepe** » 01 Jul 2012, 00:29

I don't know. I only have the LMB-3. It's good. The "Enhancer" knob enhances noise as well, though. I keep that one at moderate levels.

Pepe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Dirk** » 01 Jul 2012, 09:49

I've had both, they're equal in my opinion.

Dirk

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **nathanscribe** » 01 Jul 2012, 10:43

> *Pepe wrote:*
> *Nice sounding BOSS dirt pedals with bass: FZ-2, HM-2 and for some crazy sounds the XT-2.*
>
> *BOSS dirt pedals that sound like arse with bass: DF-2, DS-2, OD-2(R), MT-2, MZ-2, PW-2.*

Interesting, thanks. I've also heard the MD-2 works well with bass, though haven't tried it myself.

nathanscribe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Pepe** » 01 Jul 2012, 12:30

I never had an MD-2, although it pops up for quite cheap from time to time.

Pepe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Sibob6** » 02 Jul 2012, 11:15

I haven't really gotten on with my LM-2, it definitly 'enhances' noise too.
I can't overstate how much I love my CS-2 haha.

But yes, I agree with the MD-2 suggestion too, I have one and, although I've replaced it with something more 'grinding' now, it blows the ODB-3 out of the water in my opinion.

Si

Sibob6

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Pepe** » 02 Jul 2012, 12:01

My first LM-2 had faulty electrolytic capacitors. It was noisy, especially in combination with dirt pedals. I replaced them all with new ones and then it was almost noise-free, just like it should work. Maybe you have faulty caps inside as well.

Pepe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Sibob6** » 02 Jul 2012, 13:31

Thanks for the heads-up Pepe, it's certainly worth some investigation.

Cheers
Si

Sibob6

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **RandomP** » 04 Jul 2012, 19:51

Particularly like the MD-2 on Bass, just got an MZ-2 and an ODB-3 and blows both to smithereens.
Also:

SD-2 - Do quite like.
FT-2 - Freaking awesome!

They aren't technically pedals but they do have footswitch options so I'll include the RPQ-10 and the SE-50

RandomP

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Pepe** » 04 Jul 2012, 20:13

Oh... I have an SE-50. Which effects of this unit work good with bass in your opinion?

Pepe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **RandomP** » 04 Jul 2012, 20:46

The reverbs, definately. Most of the other presets are a complete pain but I'm working on it. Have managed to set the amount of reverb to be MIDI-controlled by my keyboardist! I also use this in conjunction with an Alesis noise gate which adds a lovely "thump" to the sound. Great for cutting through the mix.

RandomP

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Pepe** » 04 Jul 2012, 22:41

Okay, you can't do anything seriously wrong with bass and a reverb effect. I thought you might have found some eccentric settings that work great with bass. Well, then it's up to me to find it out some day.

Pepe

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **RandomP** » 04 Jul 2012, 22:57

Lol - possibly! From what I gather it was designed specifically for the reverb settings so it's not too much of a surprise. One other great bonus is that it's true stereo

RandomP

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **Sibob6** » 09 Jul 2012, 12:45

If anyone was interested in hearing the MD-2 against the ODB-3, I did a little video a while ago:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pimHiDdNl34

The settings were as close to each other as I could, obviously they're different sounding distortions (I wouldn't call the ODB-3 Overdrive at all), but hopefully it highlights how useable the MD-2 is on bass.

Cheers
Si

Sibob6

Re: Boss pedals that play well with Bass

by **ChristoMephisto** » 09 Jul 2012, 16:02

My friend is in a punk band and he uses a touch of reverb when playing bass
really thickens it up

ChristoMephisto