BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **sclitheroe** » 15 Dec 2013, 03:54

So I've been using these two pedals in a low gain situation (noon or below on the gain knob on either), and I'm on the fence about which one is going to stay on my board.

I like the OD-3 because its got a more sensible EQ range (it's usable with the tone at noon), and it addresses the note decay sputter of the BD-2 . It's nearly as touch sensitive/cleans up as well as the BD-2 in my opinion, which is another thing I value.

But the BD-2 feels subjectively a bit better to me when I'm playing, and I'm trying to figure out why. They are so close in tone the way I have them running (low gain, tone sounds pretty close when I A/B), and the OD-3 does better with the note decay, but the BD-2 feels better, and it's bugging me trying to figure out why this could be the case. It's a slight difference, but every time I play with the OD-3, I think about that BD-2 in the drawer and wonder if I should put up with the sputter to get that tiny increase in feel.

Do you think the OD-3 is more compressed and maybe that's what's bugging me? Don't get me wrong, I think the OD-3 is darn good, and I know the BD-2 has its flaws, but something about the two is leading me towards the BD-2 for a low gain rhythm guitar application.

For those of you that have both, and I know there's a few on here, what swayed you to pick one or the other?

sclitheroe

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **Clean Channel** » 15 Dec 2013, 04:36

Personally prefer the BD-2. Just sounds more 'transparent' to me. I want to add some grit, or boost into my amp or another pedal, but keep the basic tone of my guitar intact. I find the OD-3 adds to much of its own sound when I engage it.

Clean Channel

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **charmonder** » 15 Dec 2013, 05:52

OD-3 for me personally, it just happens to be pretty much the exact sound I wanted out of an overdrive/distortion pedal. BD-2 I like also for a different reason. I really need to do a side by side comparison I foolishly sold off my BD-2 years ago. As I remember they are kinda similar with all knobs at noon, apart from the EQ range, it seems the OD-3 does a type of compression while the BD-2 does a dynamic expansion

charmonder

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **visserman** » 15 Dec 2013, 15:23

OD-3 is darker in sound, BD-2 is brighter and tinner.

They may feel close but when you play with volume settings I think you should get to hear those differences.

I do like the BD-2, used it a lot but then stopped using it as the harshness at moderate levels of the pedal is not good. Should get it modded then? Maybe, but there are too many things to do. Even tried different BD-2's and some sounded better than other ones----talked about this on the old Boss forum---but overal they sound pretty similar and anyone who likes the pedal but cannot live with the harshness, modding is probably the way to go.

I have recently used a Fender London Reverb, this amp is transistor and early 80s. Guess what the dist. sounds like? BD-2 but without any form of harshness! How good is that eh? I did not know this before I used the amp, did not know anything about it at all, but when I tried the dist. channel it was like: "Oh this is where the BD-2 does get its Fender sound from"

I think if you use the BD-2 at higher dist. levels, not really the subtle boost, it does sound better. But the subtle boost is probably what most people like, hence its name eh?

visserman

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **sclitheroe** » 15 Dec 2013, 15:26

> *Visserman wrote:*
> *OD-3 is darker in sound, BD-2 is brighter and tinner.*

The brightness might be it - bringing the tone up on the OD-3 a touch last night helped keep it on my board.

sclitheroe

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **deancrean** » 16 Dec 2013, 02:37

They are both great overdrives! For me though it is the OD-3. It is the overdrive that is always on my board now. I use it with very little gain, but a good amount of level as a boast. On its own or with other drives. With the tone at noon I don't find it alters the sound that I am already getting from my amp. No bass cut at all either. Love it.

deancrean

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **visserman** » 18 Dec 2013, 13:12

Okay I had to check them both and play and to see the finer details of how they both behave.

BD-2 is unique in one word. Not many overdrives can do that very subtle boost without giving you any dirt.

In a nutshell: BD-2 can give clean boost, OD-3 not (this may depend on the amp your are using, but still some dirt on signal)
BD-2 can come very close to sound of OD-3, OD-3 cannot do what BD-2 can.
BD-2 will give you tones a la Robert Cray (depending on amp, and ampsettings! and kind of pick-ups on guitar) when you keep gain very low. Put gain at noon and you get Rock tone. (Some of you may call that Blues tone as well, all depending on what kind of Blues-style you go for really)

The harshness I mentioned before may not really be an issue when you use valve amps, it is still there, but only slight. When you use transitor amps the pedal is less forgiving when you dial in little gain while adding treble.

Personally I prefer the BD-2 because of any of the above and its versatility.

The basic rule: BD-2 = Fender tone whilst OD-3 is Marshall tone still applies. The OD-3 can mimick tones of JCM 900 very well, the differences are in tightness of the sound. Amp without pedal is what I really dig, but, on the other hand, it is also cool to have a pedal around which can give you Marshall tones from any amp.

Will create some videos where I will demo any of these ideas, need to see how to wrap it up for video to make sense instead of just doing demo of BD-2 or JCM 900.

visserman

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **twizzle** » 18 Dec 2013, 16:50

BD-2 with the Monte Allum mod for me

twizzle

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **charmonder** » 18 Dec 2013, 20:19

> *Visserman wrote:*
> *The basic rule: BD-2 = Fender tone whilst OD-3 is Marshall tone still applies. The OD-3 can mimick tones of JCM 900 very well, the differences are in tightness of the sound. Amp without pedal is what I really dig, but, on the other hand, it is also cool to have a pedal around which can give you Marshall tones from any amp.*

I've also suspected this, if you notice the BD-2 OD-3 and TR-2 are the only compacts with gold color knobs, and are if any the only analog compacts that beg a comparison to amp modelling territory.

charmonder

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **Johnnyseven** » 24 Dec 2013, 09:45

I've had both and I much prefer the BD2. Mine now has the Monte Allums H2O Plus mod and sounds great.

Johnnyseven

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **Ricey** » 24 Dec 2013, 17:32

I have heard that the BD-2 has a Blackface Fender tone stack, but this is the first I have heard of the OD-3/Marshall connection. I have never seen anything in any Boss literature, manuals or website to confirm either is by design. Does anybody know the genesis of these rumors or is it just people's impressions from playing through them? I have to admit, when I have my BD-2 set to very low gain, I can get a great Surf style sound. My problem with the BD-2 is that I have to turn the tone knob almost completely counterclockwise to match the sound of my amp when the BD-2 is bypassed. Why would they design it this way?

I also used to have an OD-3. It's been a long time but I seem to remember that I sold it because I could hear a strange "farty" note bloom on lower notes after the initial attack. Maybe I had a bad unit or it just did not mix well with my guitar and amp combination? I had both an amp with a headphone jack and a Rockman at the time and it was really noticeable through headphones, less so through the speakers. It sounded good otherwise. I have different guitars and amps now, so maybe I will give the OD-3 another shot.

Ricey

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **visserman** » 27 Dec 2013, 12:06

OD-3 and Marshall connection is just my own view, but not only me. Same for all the other OD's, they are all in the Marshall range.

Your strange sound when playing bottom notes and having sound going through Rockman and headphone jack does not surprise me: When you play pedal through amp you get totally different tones, usually fuller. All pedals react differently through different amps/set-ups and guitars.

Here is my sound demo for bluestone from JCM 900 using BD-2. Check out my volume setting: Slightly below unity to get a brighter tone.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsrPa9S2aD8

There are many different ways to get this sound, another one would be to use the EH-2 with a compressor.

visserman

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **bob barcus** » 19 Jan 2014, 04:46

BD2 with my 100 watt Marshall Plexi is awesome,has great low end roar,my sd-1 that I modded sounds really good too in both my 63 bandmaster and Plexi 100w

bob barcus

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **sclitheroe** » 09 Mar 2014, 01:00

> *Visserman wrote:*
> *The basic rule: BD-2 = Fender tone whilst OD-3 is Marshall tone still applies. The OD-3 can mimick tones of JCM 900 very well, the differences are in tightness of the sound. Amp without pedal is what I really dig, but, on the other hand, it is also cool to have a pedal around which can give you Marshall tones from any amp.*

I've also suspected this, if you notice the BD-2 OD-3 and TR-2 are the only compacts with gold color knobs, and are if any the only analog compacts that beg a comparison to amp modelling territory.[/quote]

I'm starting to think this observation about the OD-3 and BD-2 is on the mark - the BD-2 sounds like a smaller amp pushed hard, whereas the OD-3 is more like a big Marshall stack overdriving. I'm not saying I think that's exactly what Boss modelled, but I do think it's the general idea they had for tonal centers for these pedals.

sclitheroe

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **bigtone** » 21 Mar 2014, 05:05

I really like my BD2. I picked up an abused one for next to nothing and modded it in the spirit of the Keeley Phat mod. I only changed the tone control caps, the high pass cap and added the phat switch, didn't bother with changing the rest of the cap's composition-I was just going for the tonal shaping mods. Had a green LED to replace the broken red one, too. It has become my go-to pedal for overdrive. I fully understand it's popularity!
I have played an OD3, but need to take one home and A/B it. I have heard really good things about it.

bigtone

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **Ptak** » 21 Mar 2014, 09:16

I'm a high gain man and prefer the BD-2 but playing them low gain I liked the OD-3 better but not by much.

Ptak

Re: BD-2 vs OD-3 - which do you prefer?

by **sclitheroe** » 23 Mar 2014, 18:11

I threw the BD-2 on my board in place of the OD-3 on a whim about 2 weeks ago, and had one of those nights where everything clicked - I played well, the rig sounded great, etc., so it's stuck around (why mess with what is apparently the lucky pedal), and I've been appreciating it more lately.

One of the things that strikes me about the BD-2's tone control, and generally harsh nature - it's perhaps not the blues tone people associate with modern blues players, but if you go back and listen to some old BB, or Freddie King, or any early blues really, the tone generally is *extremely* dry, brittle, and trebly. The BD-2 isn't SRV's blues tone, and it's *definitely* not Joe Bonamassa's; it hearkens back to a much, much earlier era.

This is only one example of what I'm talking about (since I'm on a Freddie King kick lately), but it's the kind of dry brittle tone you'd easily get with a BD-2:

http://www.youtube.com/v/pISR6Xfjv_A

There's tons of stuff that sounds like this, this isn't even the best example, just one that came to mind - but it's a tone you can nail easily with the BD-2.

sclitheroe