



Jam Pedals Rattler+ Pedal Review

Mark Smith

The Rattler+ is a handmade RAT-inspired stompbox with the LM308 can-version chip

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Greece, the cradle of western civilization, known the world over for its ancient architecture, early Olympics, mythology, and... guitar pedals? Well if they aren't known for guitar pedals yet, they should be. Jam pedals are handmade in Greece with high-quality and often rare electronic components, and are engineered to emulate legendary vintage effect units. Jam Pedals' Rattler+ is a vintage distortion unit based on the original '80s Rat. Not to be confused with the company's Rattler Classic, which has a bit higher gain structure, the "+" version has a two-stage gain switch and a little less drive.

Features

Just like all Jam pedals, each Rattler+ is individually hand-painted and therefore unique. The one I got my hands on had plenty of endearing character in its imperfect monochromatic black, gray, and white brush strokes and paint surface textures. It comes in a similarly colored heavy plaid flannel pouch with a drawstring to keep it safe. The housing is cast metal and on the front is an image of a coiled rattlesnake ready to strike.

Three white knobs are located towards the top: L for level, T for tone, and G for gain. Next to the "G" knob is a switch that allows you to choose between two gain circuits—left for less gain and right for more gain. Input and output jacks are on the right and left sides, respectively, with the power jack on the left side. This pedal runs on the standard 9V



[Download Example 1](#)

Gain switch low, Gain knob low, single-coils

negative tip power or a 9V battery. Jam claims that the pedal uses 6mA of power when on, so the battery should last a while if you go that route. Overall this is a solid, quality built, nice looking effect.



[Download Example 2](#)

Gain switch high, Gain knob high, humbuckers



[Download Example 3](#)

Gain switch low, Gain knob high, single-coils.

All clips were recorded with Logic Pro, Apogee Duet, Sennheiser e609, Fender Hot Rod Deville 4X10 flat EQ, USA Fender Deluxe Strat with S-1.

Before firing it up, I just had to open up the housing to take a peek at the internals to lay eyes upon the LM308 can-version chip that so many seek and pine for in a distortion circuit. It was there in all its wonder and glory—now time to see how it sounds.

Sonic Character

First off, the Rattler+ is true bypass, so it won't mess with your clean tone. When I first kicked it on, I was surprised how warm and full sounding this pedal is for a distortion unit. This pedal can blur the line between overdrive and distortion, and using lower gain settings paired with a bit darker tone adjustment, you can get a pretty good sounding tube sag and make it sound like a well driven tube amp. The gain structure isn't super high like some of the more modern devices, but that's the point of this box—to emulate a vintage distortion. I found the combination of the Gain knob and switch to be very useful for dialing in just the right amount of bite, with the higher-gain side of the switch getting you right in the classic RAT territory.

The Tone knob is configured so that when you dial clockwise, the treble side gets attenuated, which is backwards from most gear. And though this difference takes some getting used to, the control provides a wide array of very useable tonal possibilities from dark and wooly to weighty cutting.

Perhaps the most notable characteristic of this pedal is how pleasing and musical the midrange sonic content is. At one point or another, I think we've all tried and tested distortion effects that sound hollow and scooped in the mid frequency content. This one is quite the opposite. Call it the LM308 chip or just good engineering, this thing really does have an extraordinary midrange to it. I found it difficult to make it sound too harsh or thin. Using single-coils, the midrange stays brilliant and not too brittle. Switch to humbuckers and you naturally get a thicker sound without losing clarity. As an added bonus, the pedal sounds quite good with bass guitar as well.

The Verdict

The Rattler+ is a solidly built distortion with a great, full, musical sound quality. If you are searching for a distortion that stands out in midrange sonic content without getting harsh or thin, this will do nicely. It is distinguished in its artistic styling as well as its analog sound character.

Buy if...

you are looking for a high quality gain pedal that essentially bridges the gap between overdrive and distortion, and delivers a pleasant and engaging analog midrange.

Skip if...

you are scared of snakes or are looking for something more modern, high-gain sounding

Rating...

