

# EBS MultiDrive

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Sweden's EBS has previously shown that they are not only extremely gifted at building bass amplifiers but also effects pedals. Earlier, we have tested [their] OctaBass, MultiComp, UniChorus, and BassIQ [pedals], all of them getting excellent marks.

Supported by the success they have now tackled every manufacturer's nightmare - an overdrive effects pedal [for bass]. Few effects can cause such varying opinions in musicians than their preferences in overdrive/distortion effects.

## CONSTRUCTION

The metal housing is robust and compact and the [pedal's] weight gives it a feel of solid workmanship and authority. Thanks to its weight and a rubber-cushioned bottom plate, the pedal stays in place on the floor.

A small but important detail is that the knobs use metal shafts and are inset, two features that guarantees survival in an existence where being "trampled underfoot" is part of everyday existence.

EBS offers three different ways to power the pedal. Of course, batteries can be used but if you want to be more environmentally friendly and cost-effective, an external AC adapter can be used. If you use an EBS amplifier you can also use the built-in phantom-amplification. You only need to activate it (done differently, depending on amplifier model) and use a stereo cable between the amp and the pedal.

A class-A circuit that according to EBS "simulates a preamp valve in an old vintage valve-amp" generates the overdrive effect.

In addition to the usual in /outputs there is a small switch on the pedal's [output] side panel to optimise the pedal for use with active or passive instruments.



The main switch is of the FET-type to insure noiseless operation. A LED-indicator shows if the effect is set to on or off.

There are two knobs for Drive and Volume plus a three way-selector - Flat, STD and Tubesimulator.

The Drivepot controls the gain, (i.e. how much distortion you want) and the Volume knob controls the relative level between the pedal's on/off positions. When set to Flat the overdrive-effect is applied to the whole frequency range, but with the STD (Standard) or Tubesimulator settings activated the low-end frequencies are not affected to guarantee low-end punch and definition.

With the Tubesimulator setting selected yet another simulation control stage is used which gives a smoother treble with less attack.

## IN USE

The overdrive characteristic of the Multidrive pedal is confident and raw, [but at the same time] transparent, yet aggressive.

If you prefer a distorted rather than an overdrive sound, maximum Drive and the Flat-mode is a successful setting. Personally, I favoured the STD and Tubesimulator settings.

I go along with EBS's [claim] that the pedal gives you the tonal characteristics of an overdriven tube amplifier, but different amps sound different, depending on how hard you push them, and in this case liked the lower gain settings the best.

With the drive-control almost completely anti-clockwise the sound becomes focused, a very positive feature.

The [effected] sound is not experienced as "fuzzy or distorted" but rather a more focused sound and drive. That complex sound is extremely hard to achieve, even with the help of effects like a compressor and/or equalizing.

This setting also works well for adding "life and warmth" to a clinical sounding hi-tech instrument. With a P-bass and a pick, you get a wonderful raw and crunchy sound.

The Standard setting is more open and more transparent than the Tubesimulator-setting, which is more solid yet smoother-sounding. The difference between the STD and Tubesimulator settings can be more easily experienced at higher drive and louder volume level settings.

I am more than a little surprised that I did not miss the almost obligatory tone control that most overdrive/distortion effects-pedals use to get rid of irritating frequencies.

When compared to a SansAmp Bass Driver, the EBS pedal is better at simulating a complete amp and cabinet-set up and has a more focused distortion [sound].

In my opinion, the Multidrive was also much better in retaining the fundamental low-end tone; the SansAmp pedal's simulation circuitry makes the sound more indistinct or "hollowed out."

I also think that the SansAmp is more adapted for extreme distortion, while the EBS pedal's strength lies in less overdriven sounds.

## CONCLUSION

The EBS Multidrive is an overdrive [pedal] that needs to be taken into account [if you are looking for a bass overdrive pedal].

The construction is impeccable and sturdy, and as usual, we are treated to great features like, phantom powering and a pure low-end sound.

The two control knobs and the three-way switch make the pedal extremely flexible and easy to use.

The sound can be heavily distorted but in my opinion, the pedal's main strength is when it is used with a lower amount of distortion.

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Very good overdrive character sound  
Good low-end sound with plenty of body  
Sturdy and robust construction  
Many different powering options

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Nothing

### Overdrive effects pedal

<b>TYPE:</b>	Overdrive effects pedal
<b>CONTROLS:</b>	Drive (0-60 dB) and volume
<b>SWITCHES:</b>	Passive/Active in/out and 3-way Flat/Standard/Tubesimulator
<b>POWER REQUIREMENTS:</b>	Battery 9 V DC, battery adaptor or EBS's Phantompower system

