

EBS MultiComp

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Bottom Line: Musical compression small enough to fit in a gig bag

CONSTRUCTION: 4.5

Removing the back of the MultiComp's steel box reveals a small circuitboard packed with ICs, pots, and other components. It's amazing just how much stuff you can pack into a tiny space with surface-mount technology. Overall, the components and assembly quality is very high, typical of the first-rate amplifiers this company is known for.

These two trim pots control the MultiComp's high and low threshold adjustment parameters

ELECTRONICS: 4

The MultiComp's electronics are all above average. The pots are smooth, the mode switch is sturdy, and the footswitch is solid. EBS also provides a passive/active switch, which attenuates the input signal from -4dBV to -10dBV.

Although the unit is primarily powered by a 9-volt battery, you can also use an external adapter or EBS's Phantom Power System found on a few of the company's amplifiers. [All EBS preamps, heads and combos. Webmaster's comment]

EASE OF USE: 5

Two knobs + two switches = easy to use. Plug in, select the compression mode, add the desired amount of Swedish compression, and then adjust the gain knob to compensate for the compressed output. The box offers three compression modes: normal (works as a standard compressor), multiband (allows bass and treble frequencies to be compressed separately), and tubesim (which according to the manual adds "warm and good sounding harmonics"). The LED indicates the amount of compression. You can also use the box as a boost by cranking the gain and turning down the compression.

SOUND: 4

Although the MultiComp is capable of compression ratios up to 5:1, "subtle" is the best way to describe the sound.



Even with the comp/limit cranked, the MultiComp always delivers soft compression. We frankly had to listen hard to detect the differences between the modes, though. Normal and multiband sound similar, while tubesim adds slightly more upper end and punch. Normal mode did a great job, however, at smoothing out a Fender Deluxe Jazz's aggressive top end.

VALUE: 4

The MultiComp ain't cheap. With a list just slightly over two bills, it's in the range of rackmount units, which frankly offer more flexibility. However, for those of us who don't prefer rackmount units, pedals are the way to go. Rest assured this is money well spent if you want musical compression that won't ruin your tone.

TYPE:	Analog compressor
MADE IN:	Sweden
WARRANTY:	One year limited
DIMENSIONS:	2 3/4" x 4 3/4" x 1 1/4"
POWER SOURCE:	9-volt battery or ac adapter (not included)
TOP PANEL:	Gain knob, mode switch (tubesim/multiband/normal), comp/limit knob
SIDE PANELS:	1/4" input jack, passive/active switch, 1/4" output jack, ac-adaptor input jack