

[Go directly to the Review!](#)

Carl Martin Red Repeat Review

By Matthew Holliman / September 12, 2017



The original Red Repeat by Carl Martin was an elegant, bare bones, sweet-sounding, analog-voiced digital delay that made a lot of fans through its combination of sound, simplicity, rugged construction, and price. The newest version of the Red Repeat—the 2016 edition—

may have reduced the simplicity a touch, but the new tap tempo and modulation functions lend flexibility and dimension to what remains one of the more analog-sounding digital delays around.

Pushing depth and speed into the upper regions creates a robotic chatter that, while not especially useful for approximating tape flutter, adds cool experimental colors.

Tappin' and Flutterin'

The Red Repeat is painted with a nice oxblood sparkle finish, and while it lacks the original's Googie-architecture-inspired enclosure, this more space-efficient version still looks like a close cousin. The I/O jacks are located on the crown of the box with a 9V barrel adaptor located between. The unit cannot be powered with a battery.

Ratings

Pros:

Tap tempo. Good output clarity.

Cons:

No battery capability, but most delays chew through them anyway.

Tones:



Ease of Use:



Build/Design:



Value:



Street:

\$167

The modulation effect is shaped via depth and speed controls. And if you think about the effect in terms of tape warble, the depth increases warble intensity and presence while speed increases the rate of flutter. This effect is activated via use of the 2-way modulation switch. The tap tempo function is engaged by flipping up the corresponding manual time switch. In the down position, the time knob controls repeat rate (up to a very analog-like maximum of 600 ms of delay.)

The Red Repeat Speaks (Again)

Even though 600 ms of delay isn't much for a digital unit, the Red Repeat sounds and feels spacious. Simple slapback repeats are available with the time knob around 10 o'clock.

Turning on the modulation, meanwhile, adds texture that ranges from a gentle flutter to aggressive chorus and vibrato effects. (These combined effects sound extra spacious with the addition of reverb, by the way, creating huge three-dimensional spaces). Pushing depth and speed into the upper regions creates a robotic chatter that, while not especially useful for approximating tape flutter, adds cool experimental colors. You can adapt these colors more readily by turning down the echo presence—enabling unique shadings that won't dominate your fundamental tone. My own favorite set-and-forget modulation settings came with the depth around 9 o'clock and the speed and echo around noon, which lent an authentic halo of tape wobble that works seamlessly with the relatively dark and analog-like repeats.

Ultimately, I was most impressed with the range of the echo and tone controls on the Red Repeat—and in particular, the capacity of the latter to move the Red Repeat from a convincing dark analog voicing to clearer, more present echo sounds when I needed them.

The Verdict

At a little under \$170, the Red Repeat, with streamlined functionality, isn't a cheap digital delay. But it's a very good one if you like the darkness of an analog voicing and the flexibility to move into brighter, more classically digital zones. And with its subtle-to-rich modulation textures, it's got the goods to please tradition-minded players on both sides of the digital/analog aisle.



Having rambled across the globe for a few years, Matthew Holliman recently returned to San Francisco, CA. He has a minor obsession with succulents and loose-leaf tea, and major obsessions with silicon transistors and English Bulldogs. When not touring or recording various projects, he's likely to be found combing backwoods territories on Craigslist for the Holy Grail of guitar gear. The definition of the Holy Grail changes daily. His favorite color is aquamarine, and a few of his favorite books are *Dune*, *Play it as it Lays*, and *Sometimes A Great Notion*. Black licorice is his archenemy. Black Sabbath, on the other hand, rules.