

# RADIAL ENGINEERING TONEBONE TEXAS PRO

REVIEW BY **IAN GARRETT**

STREET PRICE **\$169.99**



Whenever I see an overdrive pedal with the label “Texas” on it, I think Stevie Ray Vaughan, which always feels a little gimmicky to me. When I got Radial Engineering’s Texas Pro to demo, I wondered if this would be yet another Tube Screamer clone or something more interesting. Thankfully, it turned out to be the latter.

Before the Texas Pro, was the Texas Bones—one of those pedals that flew under the radar, maybe because of the somewhat cheesy “bone” graphics. This new Texas Pro has a toned-down, grown-up look to it. More importantly, it sounds great, and it has several interesting

features: an effects loop, an independent footswitchable class-A boost good for 22 decibels of clean gain, and the overdrive itself has three different tonal options.

Radial references two familiar circuit types—an Ibanez TS9 and a Fulltone OCD. The Texas Pro approximates these tones, and is not an identical clone of those circuits. The third setting has increased gain and headroom for yet a different feel and tone. Controls consist of Level, Tone and Drive; all straightforward. A switch labeled “Range” chooses between the different settings. Of note: I used both the Fulltone OCD (latest

version) and an Ibanez Tube Screamer Mini to compare directly to the Texas Pro.

## VINTAGE SETTING

The “Vintage,” or TS9 setting, shares some of the characteristics of the classic circuit, but differences are plentiful. Without getting technical, a TS circuit typically cuts bass, making the mids much more prominent. It is also somewhat amp-specific. Most Fender amps often have a scooped mids tone to it, so this pedal works well in this application, hence the common use by SRV and others wanting to push an already-driven amp. The Texas Pro does have a Tube Screamer flavor to it,

but I found that my low end stayed intact, and so the mids did not come off as overly boosted. Compared to the other three settings, Vintage has a little less volume and gain on tap, but you can crank the Drive control for significantly more oomph and volume than the TS Mini. Interestingly, I actually preferred the Texas Pro's Boost option as a better way to boost my amp's crunch channel, and I liked the TS setting as an actual overdrive. Which is better? It totally depends on your amp.

### MODERN SETTING

Next up is the OCD-esque mode, featuring more gain, with more compression at higher gain settings, more volume than the Vintage mode, and a bit brighter overall tone. To be honest, it's not a radically different tone from the TS, but I liked it a lot. It did remind me of my OCD, but with less mids and a bit more bottom end. Increasing the gain past noon, Modern mode can really pack a punch suitable for classic rock and up to heavier rock tones. At lower settings, it

does a nice blues crunch too, giving a slightly different vibe from the Vintage setting. I'm not sure I prefer the Texas Pro over the OCD, they're just slightly different flavors, and both are very good.

### MAXIMUM SETTING

The third setting does not have a direct comparison to another classic circuit, but overall, it has more gain, more openness, less compression, and more volume than either of the other modes. At the highest gain setting, Maximum mode is a beast, best reserved for your guitar's bridge pickup because of the prodigious amount of bass—even my single coils sounded thick, rude and aggressive. The only setting I didn't like was on a humbucker's neck pickup, because the bass was overwhelming. Here, I would recommend turning back the Gain a bit, and add just a little more treble to avoid the typical flab you get with too much gain and in the neck position.

### EFFECTS LOOP FUN

The effects loop is not to be overlooked, which is a

rarity in overdrive pedals at this price point. With separate send and return inputs, a pedal in the loop is activated by turning on the boost footswitch. I tried an EHX Micro POG in the loop, turning it on and off via the footswitch for when I needed to add that lower and higher octave effect. The volume on the boost still works, making the POG's effect louder or quieter.

### WHAT WE LIKE

With three distinct and high-quality overdrive tones in one box, and a very capable class-A boost, plus an effects loop, a price under \$170 is a great deal. The chance for guitarists to simplify their pedalboard with less pedals, while still having a great deal of versatility should not be overlooked.

### CONCERNS

If you're looking for a TS-type overdrive clone that boosts mids and cuts bass in order to push your amp à la SRV, this might not be quite what you're after