



CRYING GAME

For 35 years, Dunlop have been the major players in the wah-wah game. Here, *Guitar World* rounds up nine of the company's current offerings to help you decide which wah is right for you.

THE CRY BABY WAH IS ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC EFFECTS IN music history, and its creation was an accident. In 1966, Thomas Organ Company engineer Brad Plunkett was testing a new amplifier tone circuit when he and his colleagues heard the strange but alluring effect created when he moved the tone control from left to right. Plunkett's colleagues suggested putting the circuit into a volume pedal, and the Cry Baby Wah was born. Thomas Organ Company produced the pedal until 1981, when the company shut its doors.

In 1982, Dunlop acquired the Cry Baby name and everything that remained at the original factory, from schematics to parts and tooling. Since then, the Cry Baby line has grown to include wah pedals for virtually any tonal and functional need. They can be classed into three general categories: Vintage, Multi-Functional and Signature. Wahs in the Vintage category are designed to recreate classic sounds from the early days. Multi-functional wahs are all about tonal and functional options. Signature wahs are designed to accommodate the unique and specific needs of some of the world's top touring and recording guitar players. Below, we take a look at the most popular pedals in each category.

Vintage

After 40-plus years, the term "vintage" has come to describe a range of sounds. The pedals in this category are designed to recreate those classic tones as accurately as possible in a package that's consistent and reliable for modern players.



1 GCB95

The GCB95 Cry Baby Wah set a new standard for wah pedals in the Eighties with its late vintage tones and consistent production quality. Today, it remains the benchmark of wah pedals. Powered by the iconic Fasel inductor, the GCB95 is straightforward and easy to use—a basic signal chain necessity, with a sweet sound that fits into any genre or playing style.

2 CLYDE MCCOY CRY BABY WAH

The Cry Baby and Clyde McCoy wahs produced by Thomas Organ Company were often made with different parts, depending on local availability. The original Clyde McCoy has since become associated with the fabled Halo inductor and its uniquely vocal and expressive sound. The Clyde McCoy Cry Baby Wah is the result of Dunlop's effort to give players an authoritatively accurate recreation of the original Halo inductor-driven Clyde while accommodating modern gigging needs. Whereas the original Halo inductors had a nasty tendency to pick up microphonic noise, Dunlop's Halo inductor is built with a stabilized cup core to minimize the interference. This pedal gives you that classic Clyde McCoy wail in a much more reliable form, and you don't have to take your vintage piece out on the road.



3 CRY BABY MINI WAH

This wah is small, but it's built like a tank. And on top of that, it's got a Fasel-inductor and an internal Voicing switch with three different frequency ranges: GCB95, "Vintage," and Low. The GCB95 setting gives you the aforementioned "late vintage" Cry Baby tone, while the "Vintage" setting gives you a mid-centered frequency range for more of a throaty, early-Clapton sound. The Low setting brings the frequency center down for a darker Hendrix-style sound. That's a full wah range in a small, pedalboard-friendly package.

Multi-Functional

These wahs are all about sonic and functional versatility across different stage and recording situations.

4 95Q CRY BABY WAH

The 95Q takes the circuit of the GCB95 and adds a few upgrades for ease of use and versatility. First, there's the "Q" Control, which varies the shape of the wah effect just as it does with the 535Q. Then there's the Volume Boost, for up to +15dB added gain, and Auto-Return switching, so you can step in and out of the effect effortlessly.



5 MC404 CUSTOM AUDIO ELECTRONICS WAH

The MC404 was designed with Bob Bradshaw of Custom Audio Electronics to be a super versatile wah with high-end components. On the inside, it's got two selectable Fasel inductors with two distinct voices, essentially modern and vintage, each with its own Q control. There's also a built-in boost via the circuitry of the MXR MC401 Boost/Line Driver. Side switches on the outside of the pedal let you toggle between inductors and turn the boost on or off. LEDs on each side of the pedal show inductor, boost and bypass status.



6 535Q CRY BABY MULTI-WAH

Dunlop refers to the 535Q as the "Swiss Army Knife" of wah pedals, and the reasons for that are obvious. Released in 1993, the 535Q was Dunlop's response to feedback from numerous artists who had requested various modifications to the GCB95 over the years. The resulting pedal is famous for its chameleon-like ability to adapt to almost any playing situation.

The 535Q lets you choose from six different frequency ranges—from high to low, each based on a particular prized wah specimen—via the Range Selector control. Next, you also have control over the effect's "Q," or shape, from an extremely sharp quack to a thumpy band pass sound. Finally, the 535Q has an adjustable, switchable boost that can add up to +18dB with the Volume control. Kick the boost switch, and you'll soar above the mix.

Signature

These are some of the wahs that Dunlop has developed in close collaboration with guitar players who are known for their mastery of the effect, and we get to reap the benefits.

7 SLASH SIGNATURE CRY BABY WAH

The Slash Signature Cry Baby Wah takes the GCB95F Cry Baby Classic Wah circuit and combines it with a custom distortion circuit. On the outside of the pedal, there are volume and gain controls for the distortion circuit as well as on/off status LEDs for both the wah and the distortion functions.



Signature



8 JERRY CANTRELL SIGNATURE CRY BABY WAH

The Jerry Cantrell Signature Cry Baby Wah is modeled after Cantrell's own modified pedals: his techs shortened the sweep to stay at the lower, darker end of the wah range. Dunlop's engineers kept the full range intact, but they added a frequency control for darkening up the toe-down frequency.



DIMEBAG 9 SIGNATURE CRY BABY WAH

This might be Dunlop's most tweakable wah. It's got an extended sweep range and a bunch of controls and features to adapt to almost any situation. First, there's the Q control. Next, there's the toe-down frequency control, which works the same as the one on the Cantrell pedal, and an adjustable, switchable boost.

There's more: two outputs with Parallel & Pass Through modes allow you to split your wah signal or send out both a wet and dry signal at the same time, and there's on/bypass and boost on/off status LEDs so you know what's active on a dark stage. This design could only come from the mind of a seasoned, gigging pro.

TO SEE VIDEO DEMOS OF EACH PEDAL, HEAD OVER TO GUITARWORLD.COM!