



Tanglewood T6 Acoustic Combo

£399 | www.tanglewoodguitars.co.uk

Sam Wise checks out Tanglewood's first acoustic amp. Will it live up to the high standards set by its guitars?

Since 1988, Tanglewood has been a significant and ever-growing presence in the guitar market. Its acoustics offer fantastic value for money, and make up a large chunk of the stock on offer in many music shops, but until now, it had not ventured into the world of amplification. Now it has done so with a full-featured 60-watt acoustic combo, with the spec to compete with the big players.

Pre and Power Amp

The overwhelming visual impression of the T6 is very smart, functional and minimal. There's the simple cubic form of the cabinet, the controls at the rear of the top panel, and the black foam in place of a grille cloth; it even comes in a padded gigbag for extra value. The quality here is a bold statement

of intent for where Tanglewood intends the T6 to do battle; it's not supposed to be compared with the rivals at the same price point, but with the top guns. The amp is a classic two-channel singer-songwriter's amp: channel one has a jack input, gain control and three-band EQ on a row of simple, modern plastic knobs. There's also a high/low impedance switch for different pickup types, and a contour control for altering the default EQ settings. Channel two is either for vocals or a second guitar, and is accordingly equipped with a balanced input which can take either a jack or an XLR; it's a two-band EQ this time, and the impedance switch is labelled 'mic/line'. There's an effect section, with a choice of hall or plate reverbs, a chorus with a room reverb, or a delay. These can be panned across

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The back panel, too, has a comprehensive array of inputs and outputs; there are footswitch, headphone and line-out jacks, a balanced DI-out XLR, an effects loop and a tuner out. There's also the usual stereo-phono aux input, but, encouragingly, also a mini jack for plugging in your iPod. The bottom of the T6 even has a recessed 'top hat', for mounting the amp on a speaker stand. It really is everything you'd expect from a professional amp, but at a decidedly part-time price. The presentation smacks of quality, and while the lack of corner reinforcement might hint at fragility, coffee shop stages and

the two channels and adjusted for the amount of overall mix, though the lack of a parameter control renders the delay, in particular, less useful than it might have been.



The list of features is very impressive for the money.

acoustic shows are generally relatively sedate places. What's certain is that, a notch filter aside, it has everything you'll need for a guitar and vocals combo in small venues, and with that DI out, would make a great backline amp for bigger venues too.

Sounds

Quite simply, the T6 sounds fantastic for the price; there's really no question that it holds its head up among the AERs and Fishmans of this world. Test number one for any acoustic amp is how it sounds with the EQ set flat, and plugging in a good-quality guitar reveals that the Tanglewood has a fine tone right off the bat. There's punch, but not so much that it sounds over-piezo-like (even though that's exactly what is being amplified here), and an excellent representation of the tone of the guitar. Punching the contour button appears to scoop the mid and emphasise the top end, flattering the tone of our mahogany-top guitar without losing the warm darkness of the mid and bass tones. The EQ, should you need it, provides plenty of scope for tone shaping, and is easy to handle.

Plug in a decent-quality mic and you find that this is also one of the better amps for high-



quality vocals. The sound is clear and crisp, and even pushing the amp towards the limits of its power with both guitar and vocals doesn't begin to muddy the sound. The effects section is not quite the revelation that it can be on more expensive amps, but it's nonetheless impressive; the hall reverb is spacious, and used delicately really brings the tone to life. The plate reverb is less satisfying, but the chorus, lightly applied, adds sparkle, and the delay is fine if it's the right sort of length for you. What's particularly nice about the effect section is the pan control, which allows you to mix the wet signal anything from 50/50 between

the channels to 100% on one with the other dry.

Conclusion

This is a simply excellent amp for the money, on a par with most amps twice the price, and better than some. You have to keep reminding yourself of the price, and that small details like the lack of a notch filter, or a parameter control for the effects – which would feel a mild let-down on an £800 amp – would be asking for a lot here. Even if you do have double the money available, and were thinking of shelling out for one of the big brands, we'd recommend you give the Tanglewood a spin, and certainly you ought not to buy anything else in this price range until you've tried it. **AB**



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Extra Features

Footswitch support, headphone and line-out, balanced DI-out, XLR, FX loop, tuner out

The Guitar Tech

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Technical Specification

Price: £399
Built in: China
Type: 1 x 8" combo
Power: 60 watts
Features: Vocal and guitar channels, reverb, chorus, delay
Dimensions: 346 x 280 x 346mm

Contact Details

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What We Think

What did our test results reveal?

Pros: Great tone, very well equipped.

Cons: A parameter control for effects would be nice.

Ideal For: Pro-quality coffee house gigs on a budget.

gB Rating

Rating out of five stars

Tanglewood T6	£399
Build	☆☆☆☆
Sound	☆☆☆☆
Value	☆☆☆☆
Overall	☆☆☆☆

Also Consider

Freshman AC60R
Price £250

Can't compete on tone or features, but a lot of amp for the money.



Ultrasound DSX
Price £450

An extra 40 watts and twin speakers, but marginally less tone.



Headway Shire King SK60
Price £570

A slight edge in tone, and loaded with effects and features.

