

Tone Saver™

Owner's Manual

Introduction

Thank you for purchasing a Tone Saver audio buffer! The Tone Saver is a handy tool for preserving your guitar's tone when running through a guitar rig. Long cable runs, switching systems and true bypass pedals can all cause you to lose signal level and high end. An audio buffer decreases the signal's impedance, which makes the signal stronger and less likely to be adversely affected by the rest of your equipment. Correct usage of buffers will get you closest to the tone you get when plugging straight into your amp.

Controls and Connections

Input – connect your incoming guitar signal here.

Output – this is the normal buffered output. This is the output you'll typically use to connect to the rest of your rig.

Iso Output – this is a transformer isolated output. You can use this output to connect to a tuner, second amp, or a secondary effect chain. The isolation transformer prevents hum due to ground loops, which can happen when you split your signal into multiple signal paths. This jack also has a second function – if you plug a TRS audio cable into this jack, it acts as a balanced output. Plugging in a normal (TS) audio cable results in a standard unbalanced connection.

Power input – The Tone Saver takes a 9VDC supply, with center negative polarity. This is the same type of supply that most effect pedals take. The Tone Saver only needs a few milliamps of current.

Gain Adjust – this adjustment allows you to add some additional signal level boost if needed. Use a small Philips screwdriver to make the adjustment. By default, this adjustment is set to fully counterclockwise, which is the setting for no boost (unity gain). Turning it up allows you to dial in a boost from 0 to 15dB. **Note:** a buffer is fully effective even if it's set to unity gain. You will still get an increase in clarity, high end and possibly even a small boost in level when the gain control is turned all the way down.

Ground Lift – Inside the Tone Saver, there is a switch that can connect or disconnect (lift) the ground connection to the Iso Output jack. The switch is inside the case, near the Iso Output jack, and is labeled “GND LIFT ->” on the circuit board. Moving the switch towards the arrow lifts the ground of the Iso Output jack, moving the switch away from the arrow connects the ground. Normally, this switch is set to the lifted position, towards the arrow. If for some reason the signal coming from the Iso Output is noisy, try flipping the ground lift switch to the other position.

Usage

Traditionally, a buffer is placed as the first thing in the signal chain, right after your long guitar cable. However, you may wish to put it later in the chain. Some pedals like wah pedals, fuzzes and vibe pedals do not work properly with a buffer in front of them. If you're using any of those types of pedals, you'll want to put the buffer after those pedals in your effects chain. The buffer will still be effective in that position.

If all of your pedals are true bypass, you might even want to try putting the buffer at the end of the signal chain. We recommend experimenting with the buffer placement and see what sounds best to you.

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