Subject: Amp for bass guitars
Posted by Yurimi on Mon, 11 Apr 2016 14:19:38 GMT
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My boyfriend's brother likes to play bass guitar and he is looking for an amp. We have heard about tube amps and people say it provides better tone amplification. They also say that tube amps break easily due to heat. From your experience, would you still recommend tube amps over the transistor ones?

Subject: Re: Amp for bass guitars
Posted by gofar99 on Sun, 17 Apr 2016 02:43:41 GMT
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Hi, Well designed tube amps are just fine and have the versitility of being able to change the brand and often type of tubes used. This allows a lot of customization of the sound as the different brands and types sound different. SS amps can not generally do this type of swapping. Well designed tube amps are no more prone to failure than SS ones and unfortunately many of the newer SS amps are rather poorly constructed overseas. Cheaper for sure, better not IMO. The reason that tube amps are common is IMO pretty simple, they do what musicians want done. Most gigs are in relatively small areas and tube amps do great there. In huge venues a common practice is to use a tube head amp to get the sound you want and feed it to a bank of powerful SS amps to get the sound level needed. Since the SS amps are rather linear unless over driven (sounds really bad then) it is a good marriage.

Subject: Re: Amp for bass guitars
Posted by Thermionic on Sat, 23 Apr 2016 14:44:14 GMT
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Sorry I'm a little late posting to this thread.....I don't get to surf the forums much these days (too busy!)

Tube bass amps are among the most impractical of all musical instrument amplifiers. They're insanely expensive, both in initial purchase price and when it comes time to replace the power tubes. They're very, very heavy to lug around. They put out a LOT of heat.....and they sound glorious! Amps like the Mesa/Boogie Bass 400 and Ampeg SVT are spoken of in reverent whispers by serious bass players. But again, they're quite impractical.

We now have Class D PWM (Pulse Width Modulation) switching power stages. What that fancy terminology means is that the output transistors operate as electrical switches, somewhat as they do in computer logic circuits. This is in contrast to the more conventional and traditional musical instrument amplifier's output stage, which operates its tubes or transistors as "linear gain" amplifying devices.

Class D bass amps are much lighter in weight, run cooler, and (tada!) to my ears sound much better than conventional solid state bass amp fare. The Class D Eden WT800 head with Eden

cabinets is IMO the absolute best bass tone I've ever heard. The tube preamp lets you dial in some realistic, very Mesa/Boogie Bass 400-like growl, if that's your bag. The Eden WTX500 has fewer bells and whistles (and no tube preamp) but still sounds AMAZING, and weighs only 5 pounds!

A friend of mine just bought a new Peavey Tour TNT 115 (600 watts Class D) 1-15" combo bass amp. First, lemme say I have over 30 years of experience playing live music, both as a guitarist and a live sound tech, and for most of the last 20 or so years I've done one or the other at least once a week. So, I've used and heard a huge amount of different gear over that time frame, and am NOT a fan of Peavey whatsoever. I consider their very best stuff to barely be mid-grade gear. But, I was blown away by the tone coming from that $600 Peavey bass amp. It's light years ahead of their older stuff, and while it's not quite on par with the Eden WT800 or Aguilar ToneHammer bass heads, it's nevertheless an incredible bang for the buck.

IMHO, Class D gives you so much tonal goodness with so little weight and heat that it has obsoleted the tube bass amp altogether. This is coming from a die-hard tube aficionado who designs and builds tube guitar and hi-fi amps, and makes and plays back his music exclusively through tubes. I don't even consider solid state guitar amps to be real amplifers, but chintzy tinkertoys that I just wish would go away. I do not even recognize or acknowledge their existence, except when forced to because one playing nearby has launched its irritating, obnoxious, all-out sonic assault against my ears. But, Class D bass amps are da bomb; definitely not your ordinary solid state.

Just my two cents.

Thermionic

Subject: Re: Amp for bass guitars
Posted by dreamer13 on Wed, 08 Jun 2016 10:16:58 GMT
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I've heard that tube amps are more 'sensitive', as in they accurately represents the difference in how we play the guitar. The sound feels more natural and it works efficiently. Interesting info about the SS amps though, I didn't know there are so many choices.

Subject: Re: Amp for bass guitars
Posted by mamoss on Sun, 31 Jul 2016 21:20:14 GMT
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My cousin is a bass guitarist and he regrets ever buying the tube amp. He didn't give me the reasons because he was too angry to talk when we met but I guess it is because of the reasons stated above.
