

FIRST PLAY



DANELECTRO SPRING KING JUNIOR
£199

WHAT IS IT? A real spring reverb that's easy to cram onto your pedalboard

Bounce Back

Danelectro brings back its real spring reverb pedal in a more compact 'board-friendly form

Words Trevor Curwen **Photography** Phil Barker

1. The footswitch is a soft switch so you don't need to give it a hefty wallop. This means you can generally turn the effect on without an unwanted thump through the springs
2. The rubber Kick Pad has an adhesive backing so you can place it anywhere on the pedal, although the small end by the footswitch is recommended for the closest proximity
3. The Spring King Junior is quite a tall pedal with the socketry high up on the side – this allows more space for the springs, which are suspended just above the baseplate

There's no doubting that spring reverb and electric guitar go together exceedingly well, and those players who have it built into their amps can take full advantage. If you don't have this setup, however, but still want the real electro-mechanical thang, rather than a digital emulation, there's always the option of an amp top-box or a pedal – usually one with a large footprint due to the space needed to accommodate the springs. Now, for anyone who has passed on having real spring reverb on their 'board because of size restrictions, Danelectro has come up with a solution in the Spring King Junior, which is housed in a chassis that's slightly narrower than a Boss Compact pedal and about an inch longer.

The Junior is based on the original Spring King that first appeared in 1999. That was a much larger pedal at about five times the width and equipped with Volume, Tone and Reverb knobs as well as a Kick Pad for anyone who might enjoy the sound of the springs crashing. Of course, anyone can knock a reverb tank, violently disturbing the springs to get that thunderous sound, and that's certainly true of the Spring King Junior. But Danelectro has revived the Kick Pad idea with a rubber stick-on illustration of a boot, which the brand encourages you to attach to the small end of the pedal near the footswitch.

Inside the pedal is an Accutronics-Belton spring tank with three short springs, aided with a delay chip in the circuitry. While it doesn't give you the expansive depth of a large spring tank, such as in a Fender 6G15 outboard unit or certain amp models, it does give the Spring King Junior a consistent sound with plenty of vintage flavour. That sound is dialled in with just two knobs: Reverb adds the 'verb into your dry sound through amounts that'll add depth to a non-reverb amp (up to a maximum that works fine for those Dick Dale-style heavy surf sounds); while the Tone knob tempers the overall sound very effectively, travelling from the darker end of things to bright and splashy.

Verdict

What's not to like about proper spring reverb that should easily fit on any pedalboard? In our view, not a lot: the Spring King Junior is a solid implementation of a great idea. **G**



DANELECTRO SPRING KING JUNIOR

PRICE: £199
ORIGIN: China
TYPE: Spring reverb pedal
FEATURES: True bypass
CONTROLS: Bypass footswitch
CONNECTIONS: Standard input, standard output
POWER: 9V DC adaptor (not supplied) 50 mA
DIMENSIONS: 68 (w) x 151 (d) x 70mm (h)

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PROS Compact size for a real spring reverb; standard nine-volt operation; soft-touch switch

CONS We'd be mindful of placement due to the risk of springs crashing during any onstage disturbance

