

# KAM ILINK 500RGB

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MODEL NO: KML301

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Laser lighting is a Marmite subject for many DJs, some love it whilst others loath it. Traditionally, haze or fog have been key to an effective laser light show, but with restrictions on using atmospheric in so many venues now, the impact of these effects is lessened. Thankfully, the technology has progressed a lot, and the clever people who design and develop lasers are now producing effects that work just as well without a haze or fog machine in sight.

Established in 1987, Kam is a well-known brand in the DJ market, having forged a reputation for producing affordable, good-quality live entertainment equipment that caters well to mobile DJs and touring bands. The Kam iLink 500 RGB is part of a trio of laser effects, which as the name suggests, can be linked together to perform expanded and therefore, more impressive light shows. The unit is well built, comprising a tough metal chassis combined with sturdy polycarbonate, a tough adjustable hanging bracket, and four rubber feet. I love how neat and compact it is – perfect for mobile use, especially as it comes with a remote control for ensuring a quick and easy setup.

The back panel is well laid out for such a compact unit, housing mains input with integrated fuse holder, 3-pin DMX input and output, key switch (laser on/off), remote jack socket, built-in microphone for sound mode, safety chain loop and a decent-sized LED display with control interface panel buttons. Kam has kept the front neat and tidy with laser output aperture and the infrared remote receiver. Additionally, there are two pleasantly surprising features: a main power indicator light and a sound mode indicator that flashes in synchronisation with the music when sound mode is enabled – nice.

The light offers five functions: auto shows, sound active, DMX control, slave mode, and IR remote mode. There are modifications on each of the modes that you can adjust via the control panel.



Auto mode has seven auto shows, including beam, 3D, bursting and grating effects. Along with the 10-channel DMX control, you have master/slave mode and full control of X, Y, Z rolling, zooming and 32 shapes in a pattern library to play with. There is also a 'test' function that displays a cross effect, which can be used to help position and centre the laser (the lasers can sometimes shift slightly in transit). The cross is also useful for safety reasons, as the crosshair indicates the outer reaches of the laser's capabilities, helping you establish where best to position the effect.

The IR remote is extremely handy, especially when you need to set up quickly and throw in some laser magic without worrying about DMX enhancement. Entering IR mode is simple: just hold down the on/off button for two seconds. I love this feature – no reaching to adjust buttons on the back of the unit. The IR remote is a typical credit card-sized unit, and the functions are minimal but more than flexible enough to put on a good show. All seven auto shows can be selected by repeatedly pressing the auto button; you can also activate sound mode and adjust sound sensitivity. If you prefer to colour coordinate your effects, colours can be selected via the remote, as can your favourite shapes from the pattern library. There is even a 'repeat play' option where the current and last pattern will switch back and forth automatically.

Let's get technical for a moment – the effect is a laser, after all – because safety is paramount when using any laser effect. The laser power rating is Red 150mW/650nm, Green 50mW/532nm, and Blue

100mW/445nm, while the typical power output is 500mW and Kam guarantees 300mW. The power consumption is 12W, so not the drain on power that we know some lasers can be. The unit weighs in at only 1.6kg and the foot space is amazing, with the dimensions being just 170(w) x 145(d) x 80(h) mm (excluding the bracket).

The million-dollar question is how does it perform with and without haze? In my opinion, any lighting that points at a dancefloor looks more impressive with some added atmosphere. (It's no accident that TV entertainment shows use haze all the time; even when used subtly, it can dramatically lift the effects.) If you don't use haze or fog, the trick is to use flat spaces like walls and ceilings – even a marquee roof creates a great canvas. The patterns, bright beams and colourways can help create superb lighting atmosphere whilst doubling up as lighting for the dancefloor.

After testing it with haze, I can confirm that the Kam iLink 500 RGB is banging for this price point. What more could you want for under £200? The shows are striking, and it throws plenty of light for a party space of around 250 people. Thanks to DMX, you have a host of controls and options to create stunning and imaginative shows, all with a unit that's small enough to sit in your cable case.

Delivering a compact, lightweight, roadworthy laser effect with plentiful auto and manual options, adjustable hanging bracket and loads of punch, Kam has created a laser light that is extremely portable, adaptable and feels built to last. With clever use of up-to-date technology, whilst including full DMX control, the iLink 500

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RGB delivers high visibility, long-throw beam effects that look stunning alone or mixed with fog or haze. This is one of the few effects I would definitely keep in the van; perfect for when you need a little extra punch in your setup.

I'll have Marmite on my toast, thanks – I love it.

