

Tascam Model 12 Mixer £569

Compact analogue mixers are usually pretty basic, but this one has some tricks up its sleeve as **Jon Musgrave** discovers

CONTACT WHO: Teac UK **WEB:** tascam.eu **KEY FEATURES** USB interface at 44.1/48kHz 16/24-bit, 12 track multitrack recorder using internal SD card, 44.1/48kHz 16/24-bit, 10 analogue inputs including 8 mic inputs **I/O:** 1 TRRS mini jack input, 2 independent headphone outputs, 6 mono channels, 2 stereo channels, main mix and sub mix, 12in/10out, MIDI in/out, Bluetooth



The Model 12 is the latest addition to Tascam's compact analogue mixer range and follows in the footsteps of last year's Model 20 and Model 16. Designed as a standalone mixer that also works in tandem with your DAW, it combines a mixer, USB interface (12in/10out), DAW controller (HUI/MCU protocol), onboard FX and even 12 track multitrack recorder (using SD, SDHC, SDXC). It's crammed with features and will appeal to a broad user base.

Although Model 12 behaves primarily like an analogue mixer, the small LCD screen accesses a comprehensive menu section where you'll find onboard multitrack functions, SD card setup, onboard metronome settings, DAW controller presets, and even various mixer settings such as channel phase invert and global solo mode (pfl, solo in place). Essentially there are plenty of extra features that aren't immediately obvious. Next up, despite its multiple functions, the mixer is laid out very much like a traditional analogue mixer, with input gain, compressor, three-band EQ, two auxiliaries, pan pot, mute, solo and fader on each channel. These are accompanied by controls such as the input source selectors (analogue input, USB return from computer or playback from SD card) and record enable. In the master section you'll find three-band EQ (switchable to either main mix or auxiliaries), two main faders (main mix and sub mix), two independent headphone feeds and the onboard FX processor that's hard wired to auxiliary 2. Also, here you can pair a Bluetooth device and route it to either main output or channels 9/10.

The channel configuration is simple but effective with six mono and two stereo channels. However, the stereo channels both accept mono inputs (including mics), and all channel inputs accept instrument level inputs – both handy and flexible. Also handy is the single knob compressor with auto gain make up. The three-band channel EQ (high and low shelves and swept mid band) sounds good but could benefit from a Q option like the one on the master EQ. That said, there is a 100Hz low cut filter at the preamp stage, which is welcome. Also welcome are the physical inserts on channels 1 and 2.



THE PROS & CONS



Up to eight mic or instrument inputs

Two independent headphone outputs

Proper multichannel USB interfacing with choice of signal tap points

Compressor on every channel

Mix-minus smart device integration



Channel EQ could be more comprehensive

It has plenty of extra features not immediately obvious

Desk signal routing is limited to the two stereo buses (main and sub) and two auxiliaries. However, if you're using Model 12 as a USB interface you can specify on a channel basis where the USB signal is sourced from (pre comp, post comp, post EQ). Model 12 also includes a Music/Talk TRRS mini jack on channels 9/10 providing either basic stereo input or for supported smartphones two-way audio. What's more this mode is mix-minus (sending the desk master mix without the phone input) making it ideal for broadcast and podcasting.

Model 12 uses Mackie Control or HUI for DAW control and in this state some of the audio functionality of the desk is stopped. However, alongside the fader and record arm buttons, the rather regular looking channel mute and solo can also control your DAW.

For a compact analogue mixer the Model 12's feature set is very good. Throw in the USB interface, recorder and DAW controller and it not only delivers very broad appeal but also amazing value for money. **FM**

FM VERDICT

9.1

It looks like a regular compact mixer, but Model 12 is packed with features and is one of the best units we've seen at this price