

DSM HUMBOLDT ELECTRONICS

DUMBLIFIER
OVERDRIVE SPECIAL

USER MANUAL

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DUMBLIFIER USER MANUAL	3
INTRODUCTION:	3
MAIN FEATURES:	3
INPUT SECTION	4
Input Jack	4
Input Boost	4
TONE SHAPING CONTROLS	4
3 band Tonestack	4
Rock/jazz Switch	4
Mid Boost Switch	4
Bright Switch	4
Presence	4
GAIN STAGING CONTROLS	5
Volume Knob	5
Drive Knob	5
Ratio Knob	5
Master Knob	5
PAB Boost	5
REVERB	5
CABINET SIMULATION	6
Size Switch	6
Speaker (spkr) Switch	6
EFFECTS LOOP	6
FX Send	6
FX Return (Left (mono) & Right)	6
OUTPUTS	6
• Left & Right Balanced DI outputs:	6
• LEFT & RIGHT ¼" Unbalanced outputs :	6
• Headphone Amp Out	7
• AUX Input	7
FOOTSWITCHES	7
Bypass Footswitch	7
Channel Footswitch	7
Reverb/PAB footswitch	7
QUICK SETUP:	7
TECH SPECS:	8

DUMBLIFIER USER MANUAL

INTRODUCTION:

The **DSM Humboldt DUMBLIFIER ODS** is our heartfelt homage to the late Howard “Alexander” Dumble—one of the greatest amplifier designers of all time. While every Dumble unit was meticulously tailored for its original owner, the ODS models shared a core architecture and sonic character that made them legendary.

The DUMBLIFIER draws inspiration from the renowned **Dumble #102**, supported by extensive research into every available detail of these rare amps and the qualities that make them so coveted. We tested genuine Dumble amplifiers in both Japan and the USA, giving us a clear understanding of the “magic” behind their sound. These amps react to your playing with remarkable immediacy: the attack is quick and punchy, yet seamlessly blends into a rich, singing sustain that invites you to linger on each note, savoring every transient like a sip of fine wine.

Beyond their unmatched feel, the tonal versatility of these circuits is extraordinary. With the clean gain and tone stack placed *before* the overdrive section, you gain exceptional control over gain staging and voicing. Subtle adjustments can yield a vast range of textures, dynamics, and expressive possibilities.

By combining the genius of this classic design with our vision for an all-analog, practical, stereo, zero-watt amplifier, the **DUMBLIFIER** was born. We carefully replicated the circuit stage by stage, including the most common speakers it is paired with. And the most important thing, the FEEL, given by the interaction of the power amplifier section with the preamp and the power supply sag was painstakingly developed to obtain those glorious tones that players like Joe Bonamassa, Steve Ray Vaughan, Robben Ford, John Mayer and a few other privileged players can achieve. Now YOU can get those tones with the DUMBLIFIER.

MAIN FEATURES:

The DUMBLIFIER is an all analog, Two channel, zero-watt guitar amplifier with stereo reverb, fully packed with routing and tone sculpting options. These features include:

- 2 Channels, Clean and Overdrive
- Bright switch
- Mid Boost Switch
- Jazz/Rock Switch
- Pre-Amp Boost (PAB)
- Input Boost switch
- Mono FX loop send
- Stereo FX loop Return
- Stereo Reverb with three modes (room, ether and plate)
- Power amp simulation
- Cabinet simulation with cab type and Speaker color for each channel.
- Two Balanced DI outs with ground lift.
- Headphone amplifier with volume control.
- Auxiliary input that can be routed to the main output or headphones only.

- 2 ¼ inch outputs with Cab Bypass option.
- Footswitchable channel selection, Reverb/PAB and Bypass

INPUT SECTION

Input Jack

This is the input of the Dumblyfier. Connect your guitar here.

Input Boost

The ODS features a JFET boost. Use this switch to compensate for different guitar pickups output levels, or for a little “extra” gain. For Single Coils, the Low boost works like a charm, Normal for Humbuckers, and High if you want extra input gain.

TONE SHAPING CONTROLS

3 band Tonestack

Identical to Dumble’s SKYLINE tonestack. A brilliant design, very effective and versatile that allows two different modes with the Rock/Jazz switch.

Rock/jazz Switch

The Rock/jazz switch modifies the tonestack circuit. The Rock setting is closer to a Fender style tonestack, with a thicker, louder tone. The Jazz setting converts the EQ into a James/Baxandall style, which is more precise and has more range, at the expense of some gain.

Mid Boost Switch

When activated, it shifts the tonestack’s mid notch down to around 200Hz. This effectively produces a noticeable mid boost effect. This works VERY nice to thicken up single coils and get fat singing leads.

Bright Switch

The Bright switch activates the high frequency bypass cap from the Clean Volume Knob. The amount of extra brightness depends on the Volume knob setting, being more noticeable on lower gains.

Presence

Controls the final amount of High and mid High frequencies. It has a wide range, enough to adapt the output to different amplifiers.

GAIN STAGING CONTROLS

Volume Knob

This is the volume of the first gain stage that feeds the rest of the circuit. It is shared by the clean and Overdrive channels and sets the overall gain level. It also has a tone shaping effect if the bright switch is activated. The best settings are definitely above 2 o'clock, where the power amp compression starts to set in, and responds to playing style.

Drive Knob

Adjusts the gain of the Overdrive Channel. Adjust to get the desired amount of preamp distortion. Remember that gain also depends on the Clean volume control, you'll have fun playing with both to find the balance between Clean and Overdrive gain that you like. Different balances will give a different response, that's the magic of gain staging that Dumble amps gives access to.

Ratio Knob

Adjusts the output level of the Overdrive Channel, to compensate for the different levels with the Clean channel (hence the name, Ratio). But that's not all. Higher ratio settings (above 12 o'clock) start to overdrive the power amp stage, adding an extra layer of drive and changing the feel of the note attack and sustain.

Master Knob

Adjust the overall volume level. The Power amp volume is internally fixed and set to 70%. That's the sweet spot for max clarity, subtle power amp compression and sag, without adding much muddiness or unwanted distortion. **Counter intuitively, for more power amp drive effect, lower the Master level, and raise the RATIO and Clean Volumes.**

PAB Boost

The Dumblier includes a PAB boost (Pre Amp Boost) function, like the original, that can be activated via footswitch. This boost bypasses the tonestack, adding around +9dB of gain boost to the preamp. Note that the Tone control will make no effect when the PAB is active. The amount of boost will be given by the tone controls positions, and it is most notorious on the JAZZ setting, since it has more losses than the Rock setting.

REVERB

The DUMBLIFIER integrates a stereo digital reverb with mix control, and 3 modes of reverb:

- Room: Short and warm decay
- Ether: Very long and spatial reverb
- Plate: Mid length decay

CABINET SIMULATION

Size Switch

A three way toggle switch allows you to choose independent cabinet SIZE for each side:

- 2x12: An open Back mid-rich, punchy cab for jazzy smooth tones.
- 1x12: Balanced and versatile, with more presence and controlled low end.
- 4x12: Big and open sounding with a resonant low end and extra bite for rock.

Speaker (spkr) Switch

A three way toggle switch to select the speaker type for each output:

- G12M: A classic Greenback speaker, bright but not piercing with smooth mids.
- G12H: Creamback speaker, smooth with present midrange, great for fusion rock solos.
- EV12L: The mythical EV. Extended range with a lot of presence and glass like highs.

Note: The effect of this control is quite subtle on clean tones, but very noticeable with overdriven tones.

EFFECTS LOOP

The DUMBLIFIER features a stereo FX loop. The FX loop is placed between the power amp output and the Cabinet simulation modules. This is to avoid unwanted clipping if using high power amp drive gains. You can set the appropriate send level via the MASTER LEVEL knob.

FX Send

The FX send is a mono TS jack. Connect into the input of the effects you will place into the fx loop.

FX Return (Left (mono) & Right)

If using a mono effect on the loop, use the Left (mono) jack, the effect will present on both outputs. If you want the effect on only one side, use the Right return jack. You can use both if you are using stereo effects.

OUTPUTS

- Left & Right Balanced DI outputs:

Low Impedance (150 Ohms) XLR outputs for left and right signals, with Ground Lift. These outputs carry the final output with cabinet simulation always ON. In Mode 1, both outputs have the same signal.

NOTE: The DI outs can withstand phantom power voltage without damage, but it will affect the quality of the sound, mainly causing low-end distortion and/or lack of bass frequencies. Make sure to have Phantom Power Off before using the unit.

- LEFT & RIGHT 1/4" Unbalanced outputs :

Unbalanced Left and Right TS output jacks. You can Bypass the cabinet simulation with the "Cabsim Bypass" switch if you want to go into a guitar amplifier or use an external cabinet simulator.

- ## Headphone Amp Out

The unit includes a stereo headphone amplifier with stereo AUX input, for those silent late night practice sessions, or even in-ear monitoring.

The unit works best with headphones impedances between 32 and 96 Ohms

NOTE: Ground noise issues may occur if the power supply used is not referenced directly to ground when using only headphones. Since the device will not have a reference to earth potential, unwanted noise may occur. Please use a ground referenced supply, a battery pack, or simply connect any output to a device that is connected to earth (like an amp or mixer input, even if powered off).

- ## AUX Input

Stereo 1/8" Input for an Auxiliary input, such as a player or phone. The Auxiliary signal can be heard only on the Headphones out, or both on Headphones and main output by using the Main HP out switch.

FOOTSWITCHES

The Dumblier includes 3 footswitches:

Bypass Footswitch

Bypasses the Dumblier effect (Amplifier and Reverb). The FX loop and Cabinet simulation will be still active even when the pedal is bypassed so the user can still use the effects placed in the loop.

Channel Footswitch

Selects between the Overdrive and Clean channels.

Reverb/PAB footswitch

Multifunction Footswitch. With the switch next to it, select the footswitch function to activate the Reverb (PAB will be always off), or to activate the PAB boost (Reverb will be always on)

QUICK SETUP:

Let's start with the simplest way of using the DUMBLIFIER:

1. Turn off or shut down the volume of the amplifying device (PA system, FRFR cab, interface, powered speaker, etc) before plugging the 9V DC cord and the pedal's outputs. This will avoid any unwanted popping or thump noise when powering up.
2. Connect the guitar to input.
3. Set Input boost switch according to your guitar output level. Use the "low" setting by default.
4. Set your Clean Tone volume high enough you can feel some compression.
5. Adjust the master volume to taste.
6. Set Bright, mid boost, jazz/rock and EQ to taste. These controls affect both channels.
7. Change the channel to Overdrive with the footswitch.

8. Set the OD gain to taste. The final gain will depend on the input boost and the clean volume setting, too.
9. Set the Ratio knob to balance the volume levels between the clean and OD channels.
10. Set the Footswitch select switch to "PAB". The Reverb will be activated.
11. Set the reverb type and mix.
12. Select the Speaker and Size types on the cabinet simulation section.
13. Compensate the final brightness with the presence knob

TECH SPECS:

- Operation Voltage: 9V DC (max 12V)
- Polarity: Center Negative
- Current Consumption: 150mA
- Dimensions: 12.5 x 10.5 x 6.5 cms (4.9 x 4.2 x 2.6 in)
- Weight: 490 gr (1 pound)
- Input impedance
 - Instrument: 680 k Ω
 - FX Returns: 470 k Ω
 - Aux: 50 k Ω
- Output Impedance
 - DI: 150 Ω
 - Fx Sends: 200 Ω
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ outputs: 200 Ω
- Headphone amp Output power::
 - 80mW @32 Ω
 - 40mW @64 Ω