



YAMAHA FS-TA £676

Yamaha's acoustic innovation just got more affordable

Certain things will make us smile here at TG, and Yamaha's TransAcoustic is one of them. That is, once we'd got over the shock of hearing reverb and chorus effects coming out of an acoustic guitar that wasn't plugged into anything. But how?

If you peek inside the soundhole, just under the top there are the electronics of an actuator, and this responds to the vibrations of the strings as you're playing. These vibrations are pumped back through the guitar's body, moving the air inside and around it and... bingo! Controllable reverb and chorus sounds come from inside the guitar! It takes a little while to get your head

controls for a few seconds. That's also your level control, applicable for both when you're unplugged or playing through a PA. The other two controls select the level of room or hall reverb and chorus. We kept going back to the hall reverb because it's such an inspiring place to be – organic and cinematic. Like an instant church around you, fingerpicking takes on a new drama.

The chorus needs a little more subtlety when it's dialled in to prevent things getting too clinical and 80s. But balance it right and there's a really useful tool for thickening rhythm parts.

It's worth keeping in mind that the F Series model this is based on retails for £346. So, there's no

“IT'S ADDICTIVE TO HAVE REVERB AND CHORUS ON CALL”

around, and then you'll be smiling. Because it's really that good.

This technology first surfaced on two Yamaha models in 2016 – the all-solid wood LL-TA and LS-TA – but the guitar on review here is based on Yamaha's F Series instead (there's also the dreadnought-esque FR-TA). The more reasonable price point reflects laminate back and sides, rosewood instead of ebony 'board and bridge, and there's no gigbag. The lack of the latter is a shame because, as we'll find out, this is certainly something you could use in a live situation.

This concert size is a very nice player – action is low, no buzz thanks to a good setup – and its bright voice is measured by a welcome warmth in the low-end. It's a good foundation for the effects here, activated by holding down the middle of three rotary

getting around the fact that you're paying nearly double for the TransAcoustic technology and piezo. Whether that's worth it for you can only really be decided by trying this unique experience. We found it both addictive and inspiring to have the luxury of reverb and chorus on call wherever and whenever we wanted. This could be a superb creative tool, and the piezo here also represents the FS-TA's character well when we plugged in, so there's plenty of scope for live work with onboard effects too. The potential is all here for you to explore.

Rob Laing

SUMMARY	FEATURES	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
	SOUND QUALITY	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
	VALUE FOR MONEY	★ ★ ★ ★
	BUILD QUALITY	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
	PLAYABILITY	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
	OVERALL RATING	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

1 MODE

You enter and exit TransAcoustic mode by holding down the level rotary control momentarily and allowing for a brief delay before it kicks in. But there's no way of knowing if it's on or off until you play. The LED is a battery low indicator (it takes two AAs and battery life is quoted around 10 hours with TA mode in use)

2 FINISH

There are two other finishes available for the FS-TA besides this Brown Sunburst (Ruby Red and Vintage Tint) and the guitar's projection benefits from the scalloped bracing update Yamaha brought in for the FS Series in 2016

3 ELECTRICS

You can plug the FS-TA in and use it as an electro acoustic with level control, plus the effects via an end-pin jack and the battery compartment can also be found close by

AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Concert-size electro acoustic with reverb and chorus effects

TOP: Solid spruce

BACK AND SIDES:

Laminated mahogany

NECK: Nato

SCALE: 634mm (25")

FRETS: 20

TUNERS: Die-cast chrome (TM29T)

FINISH: Brown

Sunburst

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