

IK Multimedia Tonex From €149



Wouldn't it be great if your amp emulation plugin could capture your own rig? Well now it can! Time to get toned up with IK...

> Amplitube is one of the most respected and flexible guitar amp and pedal modellers available. So when IK Multimedia announced they had developed a new amp modeller, Tonex (AU, VST, VST3, AAX, standalone), we were excited but also a little confused. Thankfully the confusion was short lived as not only is Tonex fully compatible with Amplitube 5, it also provides the long requested user capture feature. So then, we basically have two complementary plugins. But let's explain how

they differ. Amplitube 5 is a full rig design (plugin or standalone) with amp, cabinet, pedal, master effects and flexible routing. Additional modules need to be created by IK. Tonex is also a plugin and standalone application, and the standalone version allows you to capture your own guitar or bass amp rig and saturation or EQ based pedals (see boxout), using AI machine modelling to create realistic and adjustable tones. Tonex is available in three tiered versions with 200, 400 and 1000 factory Premium Tone

Models, respectively, and unlimited access to user-generated models via IK's ToneNet, which is integrated into the interface. There's also a free CS version with 20 IK Tones and 20 User Tones and also an iOS player app. As mentioned, Tones are compatible with Amplitube 5, where they load as a single Tonex module in the Amp section or Tonex specific pedal module.

Player

The Tonex Player (or plugin) can load either

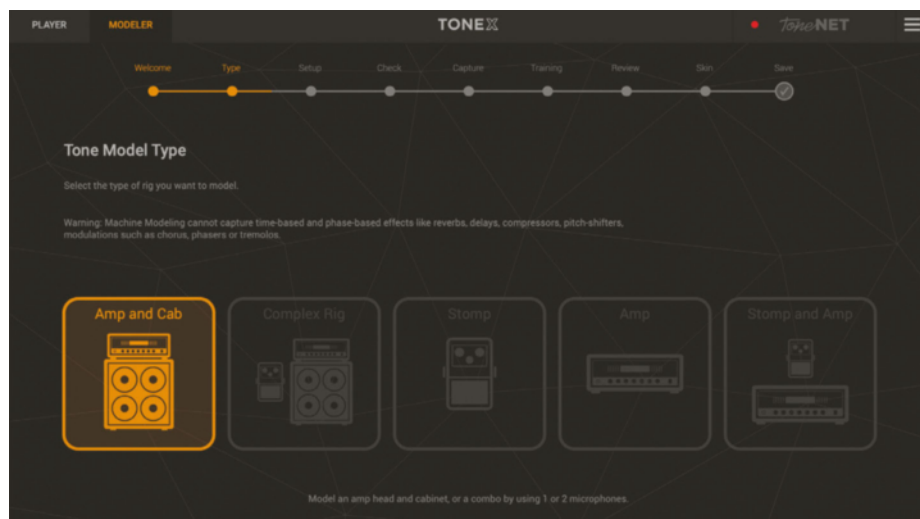
“Though the Tonex’ focus on amps and effects won’t be for everyone, IK have done a great job here”

pedal or amplifier Tone Models and amplifier Tones are split into amplifier and cabinet components. You can mix and match or even swap out the cabinet Tone Model for regular impulse responses or one of IK Multimedia’s many VIR (Volumetric Impulse Response) cabinets. One key aspect of Tonex is that Tone Models are adjustable, so even if you load up a shredding option (the Soldano sourced Super Shredding for example) you can adjust the gain and EQ. In the advanced parameter panel you can also specify EQ frequencies and apply an overall Mix blend. What’s more, the Tone Model section is bookended by a Noise Gate and Reverb with a Compressor that can be positioned pre or post. All told this offers considerable shaping, so although Tonex may not be able to build complex Amplitube 5-style rigs, it can certainly deliver an editable and production-ready sound.

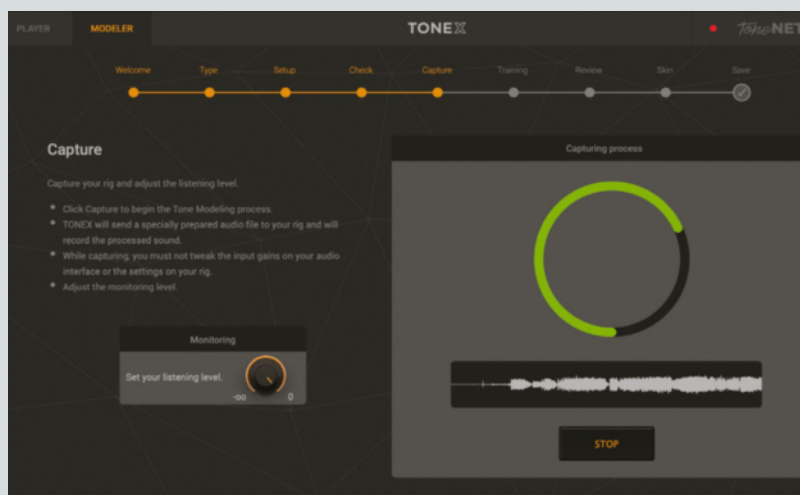
Using the modelling system we captured a very convincing representation of our Marshall JCM900 complete with vintage G12M cabinet and tried multiple mic types and positions to get a selection of track-ready tones. Each model took about 20 minutes to create and sounded really amazing. We also tested the full range of factory Tones in the Max bundle, which is sourced from 100 amps and 50 pedals. It includes some absolute gems sourced from amps such as Engl, Bogner, Mesa/Boogie and Soldano. You also get multiple examples from Fender and Marshall. We particularly like both the clean and driven tones from the Dumble Overdrive Special. Meanwhile, on a pedal tip, big names such as Boss, DOD and Ibanez are joined by highly regarded designs from the likes of Landgraaf and the great Fulltone OCD.

Overall, Tonex is a fantastic tool, and although its focus on amps and saturation effects won’t appeal to everyone, there’s no denying IK have done a great job. **cm**

Web www.ikmultimedia.com



Before capturing your hardware you need to specify its configuration



The modelling software sends out various tones and guitar parts to your hardware, capturing and analysing the resulting audio

Modelling

The standalone Tonex application lets you capture various aspects of your guitar or bass rig. It incorporates a step by step process, and we found this pretty straightforward. Options include choosing your rig configuration (Amp and Cab, Complex Rig, Stomp, Amp [head], and Stomp & Amp), and assigning all the required connections for your audio interface, including up to two microphone inputs when capturing cabinets. IK produce a dedicated interface for this

(Tonex Capture), but it's not a requirement. Once set up, Tonex sends and captures about five minutes of audio, including tones and guitar licks at various levels. To create the Tone Model, it then does some neural network training, offering three quality levels. You then get to 'review' the model against the hardware, and finally name, describe and tag your model. This is then automatically loaded to the Player tab and saved to the Tone library.

Alternatively

Studio Devil Amp Modeler Pro \$149

It can't model your amp but it can import your cabinet impulses and is a great sounding plugin

Waves Q-Clone \$99

Q-Clone can be used to capture all manner of hardware and software, including amps and pedals

Verdict

For Tone models include adjustable drive and EQ

Advanced parameters include more flexible EQ and overall mix blend
Integration with Amplitube 5

Against Options are limited to static, tone-based effects

IK Multimedia have placed their amp-capturing know-how in the hands of users and the results are impressive