

iZotope Trash £95

One of the all-time great distortion plugins returns but, as **Si Truss** discovers, long-time users may be disappointed...

CONTACT WHO: Native Instruments/iZotope **WEB:** native-instruments.com **KEY FEATURES**
FORMATS: PC/Mac – AAX, AU, VST3, iPad – AUv3





THE PROS & CONS



Available as an AUv3, and brilliantly designed for iPad

The combination of distortion and convolution is still as inspiring as ever

Clear and easy-to-use UI



Removes features of Trash 2 while adding little in the way of new ideas

Scream filter can sound fairly unpleasant

Limited modulation

Trash 2, which iZotope first launched back in 2012, is one of those Hall of Fame plugins that, for much of the 2010s, was an essential addition to any self-respecting producer's hard drive. With its combination of multi-flavour distortion, filtering and a customisable convolution module, Trash 2 let users flip a sound on its head and impart completely fresh characteristics to drums, synths, samples and much more besides.

Having retired Trash 2 back in 2022, iZotope has now rebooted the plugin with a slick new look and an emphasis on accessibility. It's somewhat telling that this latest iteration is named Trash, rather than Trash 3. While this is undoubtedly a modernised version, those looking for Trash to expand on ideas of its predecessor will be disappointed. In fact, in several areas, Trash actually strips away features of its predecessor, rather than add them.

Let's cover off the basics first though: as with the previous version, Trash is a multi-band processor with distinct distortion and convolution sections. The former offers 60 distortion types, taking in a variety of vintage, analogue and stompbox inspired tones, among others. On the convolution front, Trash has 600 IRs available, which include

straightforward reverbs and a wide variety of more unusual sources, from found sounds to reversed effects and vocal formants. Here, both modules are now configured via an X/Y grid that allows the user to assign four different flavours of distortion/convolution for each module and then blend between these or – to an extent – modulate the balance of sounds. The implementation of these modern pads is the best feature of Trash's 2024 redesign.

Beyond this you'll find an envelope follower – used as the plugin's modulation source – with attack and release controls, a resonant 'scream filter' that adds an additional drive stage, and an output module with limiter, auto-gain and oversampling functions.

What the plugin doesn't feature, however, are a number of Trash 2 features including delay, the ability to draw in custom distortion curves, dual filters or dynamics control.

This makes reviewing Trash an odd proposition. On the one hand, divorced from all external context, this is certainly a decent processor, capable of doing really interesting things to whatever audio you throw at it. Its stylish single-window UI is a joy to use, and has clearly been designed with a touchscreen in mind. Trash is available as an AUv3, and it's undoubtedly in this context

it shines brightest. For the most part it sounds great too – although I find the resonant 'Scream' parameter of the filter often unpleasant.

However, Trash doesn't exist in a vacuum. The legions of Trash 2 fans will no doubt find the lack of depth or new ideas disappointing. What's more, in the decade since the original arrived, rival plugins have done a lot to build on these ideas. The likes of Output Thermal, Arturia ColdFire or FabFilter Saturn 2 all offer more creative depth. In fact, users of the latest versions of Ableton Live or Bitwig Studio have better tools at their disposal from their DAWs' stock plugins.

If you're a Logic Pro for iPad user, Trash is a must-have AUv3 for mobile creativity. It's harder to make the case for desktop use though. **FM**

FM VERDICT

6.9

In its own right, Trash is a decent plugin. But in the wider context of the market and its own legacy, it's hard not to feel disappointed