

GEARSKINZ AMP CASES

PRICE
£148PRICE
£151

This range of cases promises to be both lightweight and resilient. David Greeves checks out a new concept in amp, cab and combo protection

For those of us who gig regularly, protecting our precious gear while in transit is a big issue.

Guitars are well catered for in this respect, with a massive range of gigbags and hard cases available in all shapes and sizes. Effects pedals are similarly spoilt for choice, with numerous different levels of pedalboard protection available at a range of price points. But when it comes to amplification, it's a different story.

The choice is pretty much limited to a soft cover or a flightcase. The former is cheap but offers minimal protection. In contrast, the latter will shield your amp from just about anything the road can throw at it, but flightcases tend to be expensive and add further to the weight and general unwieldiness of what is already the biggest bit of kit you have to carry around. The GearSkinz company reckons it has found a good compromise with a range of custom-made cases that are light, offer good protection and won't break the bank. Let's check them out.

Construction & Features

GearSkinz cases are made to precisely fit the head, cab or combo in question. The company's website lists an every growing number of products but if your particular model is not shown, you can order a custom case to fit. In contrast to a one-size-fits-all approach, this ensures that, firstly, your gear is not going to be rattling around inside and, secondly, it's not going to take up any more space when packed up.

The range breaks down into three levels – Lite, Standard and Plus –

increasing in price and features. However, all are made from the same durable, 2mm-thick polypropylene (a very tough, semi-flexible material, widely used for drum cases), with a foam lining, riveted seams and metal corner protectors. So, though the Lite cases are simple slip-over affairs, they still offer a good deal of protection. Rubber-reinforced openings in the relevant places allow you to use the head, combo or cab's own handles to transport it.

Stepping up to the Standard range (see cabinet case shown here), the slip-over case is augmented by a Velcro strap that passes underneath the amp or cab, and a metal rod built into the bottom rim, which adds a great deal of extra strength and rigidity. You also get a thicker foam lining and double-thickness seams.

Move up to the Plus range (see amp head case shown here) and the cases include a base tray, secured by four Velcro strap and reinforced with a metal rod in the same manner as the slip-over case. You can also opt to have the base tray fitted with castors.

To give you some idea of pricing, for a Fender Hot Rod DeVille 2x12 combo, a Lite case will set you back £89, a Standard case £146 and a Plus case £195. In this instance, we're reviewing a Plus case for a Dr Z Maz 18 head (£148) and a Standard case for the accompanying 1x12 cab (£151).

In Use

Fitting these GearSkinz cases for the first time, we're impressed by the precise, snug fit. Construction is both neat and exceptionally sturdy – considering that the additional weight these cases add

is minimal in the scheme of things, they offer a great deal of additional protection. Having used them to transport this head and cab to and from numerous gigs, we can really appreciate the extra peace of mind that comes from knowing your gear is sealed in a near-impervious covering while it's being heaved in and out of the venue or, worse, left sitting around inside it.

Conclusion

We're heartily impressed by GearSkinz, both in terms of the product and the approach. There's a good case to be made (no pun intended) that amps and cabs don't really need the level of protection that a flight case provides during regular gigging service. Compared to a flight case, these GearSkinz cases have numerous advantages – they're cheaper, lighter and less bulky, quicker to fit and easier to stash behind the stage when not in use – while the tough polypropylene 'skin' offers protection from dents, scratches and scuffs, not to mention being heat resistant and waterproof too. Both practical and sensibly priced, this is a great product. **GB**



GEARSKINZ AMP CASES

AMP HEAD CASE PLUS

Price: £148 as reviewed

Built in: UK

Features: Heavy-duty polypropylene slip-over case & base tray with velcro straps, high-density foam lining, metal corner protectors, reinforced seams & metal strengthening rods

SPEAKER CAB CASE STANDARD

Price: £151 as reviewed

Built in: UK

Features: Heavy-duty polypropylene slip-over case with velcro strap, high-density foam lining, metal corner protectors, reinforced seams & metal strengthening rods

CONTACT DETAILS

GearSkinz Ltd

www.gearskinz.co.uk

GB VERDICT

GOLD STARS

- ★ Light and portable
- ★ Custom made to fit precisely
- ★ Excellent level of protection

BLACK MARKS

- None

BEST FOR...

Anyone seeking a practical, cost effective alternative to flight cases

GB RATING

