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PRICE: £399

# Tanglewood T6

Tanglewood's new T6 acoustic amp looks like an AER but costs a lot less. Should we believe the looks, or the price tag? Sam Wise finds out.

**T**anglewood guitars are a great British success story. They're in just about every guitar shop, and a surprising number of pros count even some of the cheaper models among their arsenal. Slapping, tapping, songwriting wizard Jake Morley, for one, has made his name playing a £200 Tanglewood. Now, for the first time, they have forayed into amplification.

Like the guitars, the T6 is made in the Far East for the British company, and has just arrived on the market, breaking cover at the London Acoustic Guitar Show.

## Build Quality and Features

Opening the box on a T6 for the first time, there's a fair-to-middle chance that you'll think you've accidentally been sent an

AER instead. The resemblance is uncanny, but it sets the bar high in terms of expectations! It's almost a cube, with controls at the back of the top panel, black foam grille cloth, and a padded gig bag, which are all features of the high-end German manufacturer as well. The T6 is clearly aimed at the singer-songwriters' mini PA market, equipped as it is with two channels, clearly for guitar and vocals. Channel one has a ¼" jack input, gain control and three-band EQ, an impedance switch for different pickup types, and a contour control for the EQ. Channel two, being available for either another instrument or vocals, has a balanced input that takes either jack or XLR, and only a two-band EQ. The effect section allows you to select reverbs, chorus or delay, with a mix control and a handy pan pot that lets you assign as much effect as you would like to each channel. There's no parameter control, which limits the usefulness of the

chorus and delay, but one can't have everything.

The T6 also has a richly populated back panel, with footswitch, headphone and line-out jacks, a balanced DI-out XLR, an effects loop, and a tuner-out, plus phono and, unusually, mini jack inputs for your extraneous iPods and minidisc players (yes, some of those do still exist in the wild). One staple of amp design which is less than ideal for PA usage is the assumption that they'll sit on the floor, so it's a welcome discovery that the T6 is fitted with a 'top hat' recessed into the bottom for mounting on a speaker stand. All in all, the Tanglewood is handsomely outfitted for small-venue performance, with a fuller feature set than most of its competitors at this price point. If it's truly intended as a competitor for the high-end amps from the likes of LR Baggs, Fishman and AER, however, it's the sound that will make the difference.







Hall, Plate, Chorus and Delay are featured digital effects



T6 has 2 channels and both Aux and MP3 inputs

## Sounds

Employing the standard methodology for such tests, I set the EQ flat and plugged in a guitar which shouldn't need much, if any, EQ. Theoretically, all acoustic amps should sound exactly the same, since they're designed for transparency, so that no tone shaping is added unless you deliberately do so, but anyone

**“This is a good amp by any standards; when you factor in the price, it's spectacular.”**

who has tested a range of amps will know that they all have their tonal characteristics. There's lots of punch and projection, but despite the fact that the pickup used was piezo, there's none of that characteristic 'quack' that we so often hear. The dark, warm tone of my all-mahogany guitar was reproduced in impressive detail. Hitting the contour button seemed to provide a more scooped middle, with emphasis at the top and bottom end. This added some sparkle to my tone, without detracting too much from the natural sound of the mahogany. The EQ is easy to use when needed, so if your guitar sound needs a touch of tonal taming, there's all the flexibility required.

The effects section is similarly capable. The hall reverb, in particular, is very pleasing, and used sparingly, the chorus/room reverb works well. The delay would particularly benefit from a parameter control; you're stuck with one delay length, which limits the usefulness, but on the other hand, delay is hardly a staple of acoustic guitar players. It's a salutary lesson that one company's 60 watts doesn't necessarily equal another company's 60 watts, but the T6 certainly seems to have enough headroom to play any coffee house gig you care to mention, and will be fine for most pubs too. Tone is, of course, a wholly subjective thing, but for my

## What We Think

### What did our test results reveal?

**Pros:** Excellent sound quality at a low price.

**Cons:** A little more control over effects would be great.

**Overall:** Really a fantastic bargain.

money the Tanglewood holds its head up in the company of far more expensive amps.

## Conclusion

This is a good amp by any standards; when you factor in the price, it's spectacular. It really does compete with the boutique end of the market, and is head and shoulders above the competition at the same price. The look may be too clinical for some, and as with every other product we'd strongly suggest you try before you buy to avoid disappointment, but any shopping trip in this part of the amp market needs to take in the new Tanglewood – if you try one after you bought something else, you might end up with buyer's remorse.

**Sam Wise**

## Acoustic Test Results

### Our ratings explained

- 5 Stars:** Superb, Almost faultless.
- 4 Stars:** Excellent, Hard to beat.
- 3 Stars:** Good, covers all bases well.
- 2 or 1 Stars:** Below average, poor.

## Rating out of five

### How well did this guitar fare?

Build Quality	★★★★★
Sound Quality	★★★★★
Value for Money	★★★★★

## Tanglewood T6

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### Technical Specification

- Manufacturer:** Tanglewood
- Model:** T6
- Retail Price:** £399
- Made In:** China
- Power Output:** 60w
- Weight:** 11kg
- Number of Channels:** 2
- XLR Input or 1/4" Jack:** Both (Multi)
- Additional Inputs:** Aux in (RCA), MP3 in (3.5mm)
- Mono/Stereo:** Mono
- Speaker Size:** 8"/4ohm (+ 65mm diameter tweeter)
- Digital Effects:** Hall, Plate, Chorus, Delay
- Footswitch:** Single button footswitch from output
- Feedback Filter:** N/A
- EQ – Standard or Parametric:** Standard
- Outputs:** Tuner Out, Send/Return, Di Out (XLR), Line Out, Phones Out, Footswitch
- Floor Stand or PA Mount:** 35mm Recessed Speaker Pole Socket
- Cover Included:** Optional (£39.95)

### Contact Details

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