

The Rock Slide

The old blues guys used bottlenecks, sawn off pipes, maybe even a piece of bone. Duane Allman used a medicine bottle and Lowell George used a socket wrench, but most of us end up with whatever our local music shop happens to stock.

Dedicated slide players can be as fussy about their slides as their guitars. Their material is important too. A thin piece of chromed steel will sound weedy and scratchy because slides need mass to produce a fat and sustaining tone. But if they're too heavy they become cumbersome and it's hard to avoid pushing skinny strings against the frets.

The marketing blurb assures us that these are 'not just a piece of pipe'. Rock Slides start out as solid bronzed brass rods with a high nickel content. The inside diameter tapers towards the end so it slips securely over your finger without wobbling about. So there's more mass and the



bottom is notched away on one side to stop it pinching the base of your finger. The designers have even flattened off one side of the outer surface to provide a rests for adjacent fingers to grip these slides a little tighter for more controlled vibrato.



Verdict

We tested three sizes, a small slide for the pinky, a medium slide for pinky or ring fingers and a large slide for middle or ring digits. The large slide was the heaviest and produced the deepest tone, especially on bass side, the little one felt very secure, although it had the thinnest tone and won't cover all six strings. But the medium version offered the best balance of tone, comfort and playability on acoustic and electric. So if you struggle to slide, buy a Rock Slide and make things easier for yourself.

Huw Price

Specs - bronzed brass slides engineered to fit all sizes

Controls - one input socket

RRP - £14.95 (chrome), £16.95 (gold)

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