

**NEW PATCH**  
Hit the 'New' button to default a patch

**PRESET SELECTIONS**  
Access the bank of 400 preset patches

**FILTER TYPE**  
Flick the switch to move between the PS or classic MS Filter types

**CABLES**  
Hide or show the virtual cables

**FOCUS MODE**  
The ever-useful Focus mode, zooms right in to your working area

**VOICE PANEL**  
The first of three individual voice panels

**EQUAL TEMPERAMENT**  
Adjust the scale tuning of each octave, at the voice panel level

**MOD GENERATOR**  
Extensive modulation source, available within each voice panel

**MIXER**  
Mix and pan the three voice panels, across the stereo image

**FX**  
The backend effects section provides excellent final detailing



# Cherry Audio PS-3300

\$49



Cherry Audio's latest software adaptation recreates a mythical beast, Korg's PS-3300. **Roland Schmidt** goes hands-on with a legend reborn

> A long time ago, or 1977 to be precise, Korg made a synthesiser which might have taken the world by storm. The only problem was, the company only made about 50 of them, securing its status as one of the most difficult to locate synthesisers on the planet.

## Cherry Audio to the rescue!

The vintage Korg PS-3300 is a desirable and expensive affair, originally used by the likes of Vangelis, Jarre and Emerson. Tracking one down was never going to be easy, let alone one with all its faculties in good working order, but thanks to Cherry Audio's collaboration with EMEAPP (Electronic Music Education and Preservation

Project) it has managed to pull off the coup of recreating a PS-3300 in software form, with all of the brand's usual design flair and kudos.

## The full 48

The original machine was quite the behemoth; it was a semi-modular synthesiser, with polyphony up to 48 notes. It was equipped with a 48-note keyboard, which meant that you could play all 48 notes simultaneously, at least if you had enough fingers to do so!

Cherry Audio's plugin reduces the voice count to 24-note polyphony, which isn't likely to cause any issues. The purpose of this note reduction has everything to do with

reproduction quality. You'd rather have 24 better-sounding voices, than 48 inferior replications, especially as you're unlikely to ever need the additional 24. There's some wonderful visual trickery at play, by providing an interface which looks amazingly three-dimensional on a flat computer screen. Much like the sound it emits, there's depth in the detailing, with graphical help from the applauded Focus mode, which blows up a portion of the working area for detailed adjustment.

Since it's semi-modular in design, the vast majority of sound creation and editing can be performed without the insertion of virtual patch cables. Nevertheless, if you do find



This facsimile can sound reedy, sweet and raw, while inviting incredible amounts of creative distraction

yourself shimmying in the modular direction, cables are easy to manage and can be removed from view, while continuing to fulfil their workflow function.

## Synth x3

The signal path make-up begins with three independent synth panels. Each panel includes a VCO with six subtractive-style waves, PWM control of the pulse wave, and a low-pass filter, which can be switched between PS or MS-style filters. The difference between these two filter modes is very evident. Regrettably, we didn't have an original PS-3300 to compare (we wish), but the musical nature of the PS filter is sweet and very usable, reminiscent of other Japanese filters from that era. It's also a wonderful juxtaposition against the voracious and gnarly MS filter, which compared admirably to our very own MS-20.

The three synth panels amalgamate at the signal mixer, where the sources are blended and panned across the stereo image. Cherry Audio has also included Chorus, Echo and Reverb at this stage, adding a final layer of veneer.

Amplitude control, along with LFO modulation, is performed at the panel level, creating a vast degree of flexibility. However, the semi-modular nature of the instrument invites many degrees of separation, where you can easily divert modulation signals to suit your purpose.

## A rare find

The original PS-3300 is a unique and very rare instrument. Cherry Audio has created a brilliant facsimile which has some serious depths in its detail. It's got many layers, and it'll take a little

time and encouragement to really get to grips with it, but as you will hear from the extensive collection of superbly curated preset patches, it can sound reedy, sweet and raw, while inviting incredible amounts of creative distraction. **cm**

**Web** [www.cherryaudio.com](http://www.cherryaudio.com)



Complete with virtual patch cables, the PS-3300 provides total patching flexibility



Focus in on the working zone, with Cherry Audio's brilliant Focus mode

## Tiny Tempered

There are many unique facets to the original PS-3300, not least its apparent ability to handle 48-note polyphony. This was impressive at the time, but not without its caveats. Korg employed Divide-Down technology to split the oscillators. This means that each voice was not party to its own individual oscillator, however Korg added another unique function, which Cherry Audio has carried forward to its version. Equal Temperament is the system of tuning that effectively means we can play

music in any one of 12 keys, without them sounding out of tune.

The PS-3300 plugin duplicates the original Temperament adjustment function, meaning you can effectively re-tune each note of your scale. This is carried across each octave of the instrument's range. This version allows you to alter the scale on each of the three voice panels, which could translate to some weird and wacky synth lines, much like modulation, but at the source tuning level.

## Alternatively

**UVI UVS-3200**  
**\$79 (or as part of the SonicPass subscription)**

UVI's sampled PS-3200 is characterful and production ready

**Korg MS-20 plugin**  
**\$99**

Packs a two-oscillator punch, with high and low filters that can rip through a mix with ease!

## Verdict

**For** The subtractive elements, at the panel level, are extensive  
The GUI offers real depth  
It's semi-modular  
A total bargain!

**Against** It's only 24-note poly, not 48, but we are being very harsh!

Cherry Audio's plugin synth brilliantly recreates a genuine hardware experience and sounds utterly amazing

**10/10**