

Radial Engineering JD7 Injector Distribution and Routing System



Versatility is the name of the game

Re-amping is the rage lately; the trend is to record direct guitar, then later send the recording out to a miked amp or guitar amp simulation plug-in or hardware processor. While nothing beats recording a great amp tone on the original track, having the flexibility to re-amplify is very cool.

If such versatility is what you're after, Radial Engineering has a box for you to check out: The JD7 Injector. More than just a re-amplification interface, the JD7 is also a direct box and seven-way splitter.

Two guitar inputs are provided on the front panel; you can switch between them. The second input has a pad for high-output guitars. The inputs can be processed using a "Drag" control, which simulates the loading of guitar pickups by a guitar amp's input stage. With minimal Drag settings, you get the edgy, sterile guitar you'd expect from a DI. With more Drag, the sound gets rounder and less edgy. This control is a slotted post, not a knob; Radial expects you to set it and forget it. If you want to tweak it, it would be worth installing your own control knob. The Drag effect was quite impressive, whether with my single-coil-equipped Strat and Tele, or on my Les Paul's humbuckers. The effect was subtle on bass guitar, but still audible on the higher notes.

Arrayed across the JD7 front panel are six outputs for routing to guitar amps; each can be individually turned on and off. Using these outputs, you can route your guitar signal to multiple amps for layered tones. Output 1 is intended for routing to your main guitar amp. Outputs 2 through 6 are transformer-isolated, with polarity and ground lift switches. Outputs 5 and 6 have switchable effects loops on the back panel. These are at guitar level for connecting stompboxes.

Also on the back panel is output 7, which duplicates output 1. Next to it is a balanced XLR direct out with ground lift and polarity switches.

RADIAL ENGINEERING JD7

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SUMMARY: "Flexible" is the word with this versatile guitar direct box/re-amp interface/signal splitter/router.

STRENGTHS: Excellent sound quality. Outstanding versatility. Drag control. Two effects loops. Multiple isolated amplifier outputs.

LIMITATIONS: Can't re-route effects loops.

PRICE: \$750

Rounding out the back panel is a balanced XLR input with a level trim control and ground lift switch. This input is for use when re-amplifying (Radial calls it "Re-Mixing").

I cooked up some truly wonderful guitar tones with the JD7. I hooked up my hot-rodded Marshall, as well as my Mesa-Boogie, Fender, and Peavey amps, a POD Pro, my Strat and Les Paul, and a variety of effects boxes in the effects loops; the XLR input was fed from Pro Tools. Guitarist heaven! Not only could I audition amps individually, I could combine them however I wanted, add effects, throw various amps out of polarity — the options were almost overwhelming.

One minor gripe: It would be cool if you could assign the effects loops to different outputs without re-patching on the front panel.

I had a blast with the JD7. Radial Engineering has achieved their goal of designing a fun, creative tool for making new guitar sounds. It would be a great piece of gear if it only did one thing; the fact that it performs so many functions (and does them so well) is an amazing bonus. If you want to get creative with your guitar tones, this is a box well worth scoping out.

