

# EBS HD350

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It is now six years ago since EBS released **Fafner**, their first (and until now) only bass amplifier head. With the new **HD350**, they offer a cost-effective amp with several commended functions borrowed from several earlier EBS products.

If you consider features, functions and the rated wattage the similarity to **Gorm ET** is striking. Some functions like the filters and amplification stage are directly lifted from the **Gorm ET**. However, there are also new features like the overdrive section that is more closely described later.

## FUNCTIONS

True to EBS's usual fashion the input can feed active pickups/electronics with their phantom-power system.

The gain control is updated resulting in a smoother operation, and a red LED indicates when the preamp section is overloaded.

The compressor is equivalent to the one found in EBS's **Classic-1** preamp. It has a control [knob] for compression, which is indicated with a blue LED when it is in use.

The filter section has a preset filter called **Character**. It increases the bass, dampens the mid and gives a slight boost to the treble [frequencies].

The adjustable filter section follows, a feature that was introduced on the **Drome** combo, a function that I think is both exceptionally simple and flexible [to use].



It includes a sweepable mid with an unusually large range, a wide treble filter, and a bright filter for the top frequencies.

The mid frequency register have a special notch function that reduces the width of the curve when you want a large reduction.

It is especially suited for removing those unwanted frequencies like "bass rumble" but without a big chunk of the sound disappearing.

There is a switch to turn the filter section in/out, the **Character** function excepted.

The **Drive** control is a brand new function, partially based on the **Fafner** [amp] and the **MultiDrive** [effects pedal].

It governs how much of the amplification that will affect the tube simulation circuitry - in maximum position it gives a tube distortion sound.

The [master] volume controls the power amp, which is based on **Gorm ET**.

The power amp is a 350 W MOSFET amp with a built in clip function that ensures that it will give some of the characteristics of a "hard driven" power tube amp.

A temperature-controlled fan ensures that the power amp does not become overheated.

The balanced XLR output have a switch for pre/post equalization, ground lift, and switchable speaker simulator that emulates a miked speaker cabinet.

At the back, there are two parallel [speaker] Speakon-outputs. The recommended load is 4 Ohms, something that in most cases is the use of two 8-Ohm speaker cabs.

The effects loop is mono and can be used in parallel or series. Normally it will be used in series but a parallel loop retains the bass frequencies and clean bottom end well.

Please note that not all effects will function in a parallel loop set-up. Examples of effects that work well are reverb, chorus, and octaver the latter if it has separate volume controls for the direct and the effected signal.

The loop can also phantom power battery operated effects pedals. Small micro switches at the back of the amp adjust the input and loop's phantom power functions.

This also applies to the loop function (series/parallel) and the speaker simulator XLR output.

Concluding the functions at the back are an unbalanced linear output to be used with another power amp or speaker cabinet plus a tuner output.

The chassis is two units high with a practically placed handle in front of each rack-handle, a feature that is "protective" since they protrude further out than the control-knobs. If you don't want to

mount the amp in a rack-case, it is still very stable with four heavy rubber feet.

## IN USE

It is really simple to dial in a good sound. All you have to do is push a button - the Character button.

It delivers a well-adjusted filter setting, which warms and opens up the sterile and flat basic sound that all transistor amplifiers have.

The filter function provides a lot of sound alternatives, but most of the time, it is enough to make small adjustments to get a good sound.

The generous bass filter gives warmth and softens the sound without any indistinctions creeping in.

The large operational range of the middle register is used for giving the sound character, but it can also be used as an extra bass or treble control.

The treble opens up the sound and gives it strength without any harshness. The bright filter is useful if you want a high-tech zing [sound] but if a more traditional is, what you are after it is most easily left alone.

The compressor sounds good and is so user friendly that you hardly have to think about it. If you would like a high quality slap sound, just employ the compressor and push the Character button.

The drive control is also excellent. It is an overdrive, not to be confused with distortion or fuzz.

The sound produced has texture and growl, something that almost makes me feel the smell of glowing tubes.

If the gain control is set to a slightly higher value and the compressor added, there is only a pick, missing from a truly wicked and dirty bass sound.

Concerning outputs and features I can only say that everything you need is there and works very well.

There is only one small thing I'm curious about: why isn't there a mute function when there is a tuner output?

The output is still valid since you do not have to plug in your tuner between your bass and amp and risk losing the punch and definition [in your sound].

## CONCLUSION

With the HD350 [amplifier], EBS has technically repackaged many goodies in a new arrangement. The small technical adjustments made are not noticeable at first. Nevertheless, EBS's HD350 is a strategically important amplifier. If you can't afford the Fafner amp with more than double the power but still wants an amp head with EBS's features, the HD350 is an excellent choice. Both the compressor and filter functions are admirably flexible and easy to use. The rated power is enough for most stage use and with the line and loop outputs included; you have got what you need, really. The Drive control is perfect for adding life and attitude to the sound and it makes it sound much more "tube like" than most hybrid-amps with a tube in the preamp. The EBS company has an unusually

good instinctive feeling for first-class sound and well-chosen functions and features.

It is not strange that well-known [musicians] like Marcus Miller, Stanley Clarke, Hugh McDonald, and Richard Bona falls like skittles in a bowling game when EBS unleash their new products on the marketplace.

## SIMILAR PRODUCTS

Ashdown ABM 300 - 2-01

Hartke 7000 - 12-91

Marshall DBS - 12-94

Trace Elliot AH250 SMX - 4-94

Warwick Wamp 300 - 8-94

Warwick Pro Tube IV - 10-97

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Excellent sound

Flexible and user-friendly filter section

Good overdrive function with tube emulation

Phantom power on input and loop

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None

<b>TYPE</b>	Transistor bass amplifier	<b>LOOP</b>	Mono serial/parallel with phantom power
<b>INPUTS</b>	1 with gain and phantom power	<b>LINE OUTPUTS</b>	Balanced XLR, unbalanced pre/post eq, ground lift, speaker simulator
<b>COMPRESSOR</b>	1-3:1, attack <10 ms, release 100 ms	<b>SPEAKER OUTPUTS 2</b>	Speakon
<b>FILTER</b>	Bass: $\pm 15$ dB @ 100 Hz 12 dB/okt shelving Mid: : $\pm 12$ dB @ 50 Hz-3 kHz Q=0,5, -15 dB notch Q=10 Treble: $\pm 15$ dB @ 4 kHz bell Q=0,5 Bright: 0 till 20 dB @ 10 kHz	<b>POWER</b>	300 Watt RMS, 350 watt dynamic
<b>DRIVE</b>	Class A tube emulation	<b>CROSSOVER</b>	No
		<b>OTHER</b>	Tuner Out
		<b>WEIGHT</b>	9 kg

