

EBS NEO110/112

- Loud lightweights

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Written by: Lars Arvidsson

Translated by: Lars Arvidsson and Mikael Linderoth.

Amplifiers grow increasingly powerful. With more power, speaker cabinets can be reduced in size without losing too much low-end response. EBS NEO speakers are equipped with the new kind of neodymium magnet lightweight speakers. As the earliest versions were plagued with troubles like overheated magnets, EBS did not hurry. They have now developed a third generation of neodymium speaker elements. These can handle long periods of hard use without any loss of capacity. The cabinet itself is constructed from a special, lighter kind of spruce plywood. Both cabinets, 1x10" and 1x12" have a tweeter horn accompanied by a level control at the back.



The springloaded handles are nice, one on the side and one under the cab. These handles can be used to lean the cab back for better projection. Unfortunately, the cabs also lean a little when carried, but EBS have placed the handles with playing position in mind. Overall, the cabs are sturdy and compact with a kick-proof front grille.

Big sound from a small cab

From the first note, it is clear that EBS have succeeded in getting a lot of sound out of a small package. The sound is not small but open and clear. There is a lot of warmth but still clarity and definition.

The ten-inch-speaker is more neutral and smooth compared to the twelve. With its pronounced low mids, the twelve has a more coloured character. The twelve sounds great with a dirty pick-style sound. It has more low end but there is not a huge difference, the ten inch-speaker gives it a

good run for the money. Without the tweeter horn, there is still sufficient treble for traditional finger-style playing. In my opinion though, a little treble added from the horn always sounded best. Slap sounds get great definition and clarity with these cabs, sharp but not harsh.

I kept the tweeter level below twelve o'clock most of the time, for a little shimmering clarity. If you like sharp high-tech sounds you can use more, there is certainly plenty of razor sharp modern sounds available. EBS use the same tweeter in their larger cabs so one is enough, even for a larger bass rig.

The cabinets are can take lots of power, which is also needed for a lot of low end and punch. They are very sensitive (and sounded great with my 5 W tube amp) but if you need tons of volume, it is best with a powerful amp providing a cleaner signal to the speaker. A single NEO cab can not keep up at rock band levels, but the two cabs together is a completely different animal.

A mini stack

Most of the review was done with the EBS HD350 amplifier. This made a nice mini stack with the two speaker cabs. With a total impedance of 4 Ohms, the amp puts out its full power (350 W) which results in an impressive sound level from these compact beasts. A small rig like this will be enough for most playing situations, including loud rock. I strapped the amp and cabs together with a heavy cargo strap. Lo and behold, I now had a powerful combo amp still possible to fit into a medium size car. With a small cart, it was also easy to transport the rig.

Even though the low end response from the NEO cabinets is impressive, there is of course more low end from a 15"-cabinet. When I connect a NEO-cabinet together with a medium sized E-V 15"-cabinet the result is tons of bottom end and punch. Both the 10"- and the 12"-cabinet sound amazing with a larger cabinet added. It should be noted however, that the fifteen cab used here is

almost three times the size of a NEO-cab.

I also tried the cabs with an vintage Ampeg V4 tube amp with impressive results. The classic tube sound got more clarity and focus. The big old amp also looks pretty cool on top of the side by side NEO:s.

The verdict

The EBS NEO-range are some of the most versatile cabinets available. Light compact cabs with impressive punch. Leave the big rig at home and bring your amp and a NEO cab for smaller gigs. When you need more power, a second NEO cab is useful or a larger cabinet if you need full blast. It also makes a great practice rig at home. The sound is very grown up considering the size. Now we can be even more proud of our Swedish bass equipment manufacturer.

Facts

EBS Neo 110 & 112

Type:	Bass speaker cab with neodymium magnets
Speakers:	10"+2" titanium-tweeter, 12"+2" titanium-tweeter
Power Handling:	250 W RMS and 300 W RMS respectively
Dimensions: (WxHxD)	490x340x340 mm resp 490x370x340 mm
Weight:	10,5 kg and 11 kg
Impedance:	8 Ω
Construction:	Bass reflex, lightweight plywood
Backpanel/Connections:	Two Speakon, two ¼ jacks and tweeter level control
Manufacturer:	EBS Sweden AB - www.ebs.bass.se