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## Polytone mini brute review

This Mini Brute III from Polytone is a rather sought after amp by jazz guitar players. You can easily find a wide range of tones with this, from dark and warm to bright and chimey. This amplifier is in good use. 110 watts rms 15 speaker Treble, bass and middle controls Three ways Bright, Med, Dark Tone Boost Switch High (guitar) and Low (bass) 1/4 Input Jacks Master Volume Polarity Power Switch 1/4 Main Output Jack 1/4 Output for Extension Speaker 1/4 Headphone Jack In-Store Pickup Only. Only logged-in customers who have purchased this product can submit a review. This is a solid state amplifier primarily designed for jazz guitar and bass. It has high and low volume inputs, a total volume dial, dual tone controls (treble and bass) for low volume inputs and an overall tone control for the high volume input. There is no manual available for this, and the control panels vary considerably from what I have seen on pictures so this has been concluded by trial and error. There's an output for a satellite speaker on the back. The power output is rated at 110 watts in the literature. It's probably correct but the speaker isn't super efficient so it's not as loud as some 100w amps I've used (like a Twin Reverb or Jazz Chorus). The weight, for an old school SS amp is really nice, about 28# IIRC. I'm tempted to let in a lighter and more efficient neodymium speaker to see what it would do. I got it with a Polytone extension cabinet, which is a weird little beast. It is also rated at 100w, and includes dual cooling fans. It requires a speaker leveling! So, I guess what it does is padding down the total output of amps for a more accurate representation of that sound (instead of a line out). It works like a biggenor for small amps. I ran a 5w amp speaker output into it and got something more like the 50w worth of sound out, so it's pretty cool. Again, no manual so I'm guessing how things work.

UTILIZATION For a basic guitar, bass or electric piano sound, it's perfect right out of the box. Which is good because the tone shaping is not well implemented. It gets a bit buzzing with lots of bass and the volume cranked, but reversing or using low input solves it. I had hoped the extension cab would allow me to use my Roland CE1 in stereo, and replace my Jazz Chorus, but since the output is speaker level and it requires speaker level input to the satellite, it won't work (unless I ran the chorus in another amplifier to give the input enough voltage? no, too much inconvenience). Again, no manual, no online PDF and no help from online searches. SOUND Initially, I tried it with a solid body guitar, humbucker pickups, straight in. Good sound. Joe Pass apparently consulted about these and it shows. Trying to match the Jazz Chorus I had next to it, I wasn't getting that light on high notes or when switched to a single coil, but JC has the aluminum dome speakers that are downright cut if you want it. I dropped a distortion distortion in front of it and it sounded MUCH better than JC which gets loud when handed distortion. This sounded like a decent tube guitar amp. I could see using this as my one amp. OVERALL OPINION I wish the controls made more sense. I wish there was a manual for this and especially for the extension cabinet. But overall, for what I paid it is a very good example of solid state sound, especially for smooth, clean tone. These used to be really expensive, \$1000+, but with modern Jazz amps being lighter and more flexible polytone stuff is in the \$200-400 range now, and a bargain on that. Roland, while more flexible and competent with onboard effects and two channels, is rarely seen for less than \$500 used. Hey Dudes, I'm a jazz guitarist. I play hollow body guitars. I need a little tone, damn it. I perform in a large band jazz ensemble twice a week (requires more volume), as well as gigin small intimate settings (requires less volume). Which of these Polytons would be best for me? (in your opinion) Anyone with lots of gigging experience got any suggestions? Thanks! Mini-Brute II is the classic guitar version. All polytons are basically the same amp in different size enclosures with different speakers. The 1-12 is the most popular for guitarists who need gigs with it. I played an old Polytone for years, until it started crapping out. I then got a Henriksen JazzAmp, 112 version, sounded much less boxy than the 110. Lots of space. I did replace eminence (bass!) speakers with a Jensen Neo, nice and light, and a little brighter too. I never looked back, much better than Polytone. check out acoustic image Clarus and Evans amps. I jumped the ship to these from polytons a long time ago. imo, these are superior amps to polytons in terms of build quality, versatility, customer service, and weight-to-volume ratio. if you don't want/like the polyton middle humps/smokiness, these amps can get you different types of cleans. among many polytons, I liked the mega brute head with Raesor's edge cabins. I'm a big one of Evans' amps. I keep going back to the one I bought new in 1999, a JE150. I highly recommend changing speakers. I really like my Ceramic Tone Tubby in it. With good pedals you can also make old rock and blues. The natural tone of amps is near Polytone. I wouldn't buy anything with less than a 12 speaker. I have an exception, I have an old Music Man RD50 with a 10 speaker and it is loud and full enough to use with a band. I also put a Tone Tubby in it for a tone enhancement. I've owned several Polytons over the years and they have a great jazz tone the reason I don't have them anymore is if the breakdown trying to get them fixed is the worst experience of your life as a guitarist. Maybe others have had a different experience but I had trouble getting Polytone to fix one of the amps under warranty and it took more than 6 months to get it back to me. You Can Consider a Tech 21 21 60, when I play my Benedetto I use tm60 and love the tone and feel amp gives. Stands! I forgot to mention my Evans. The reverb idea is the only thing that has ever broken. The new ones have a solid state reverb so even that won't break now! My opinion is to go for a Henriksen these days. I have and love their Jazzamp 110. I want to share my experience with the nyest polyton amp which I received from polyton instead of the one as I order. polyton has changed and the new amplifier is absolutely horrible. they have completed the electronics. you can't turn off the reverb and it makes a loud cracking sound when you turn it on and when there are minor oscillations in the power lines. thus the amp sounds like a popcorn machine with intermittent, very loud cracking when it is on. polyton, insists that this noise is intentional, so that the user knows it is on. they absolutely refuse to acknowledge the design defects. the whole story of trying to correspond with this company is the topic of another discussion. I strongly advise anyone consider a new polyton to get something else. feel free to contact me for details I had 80's mini-brute w/15 inch speakers. I didn't care about the tone - it was either really dark or way too bright. I agree with the post about how difficult it is to fix. .... You might consider a Tech 21 Trademark 60, when I play my Benedetto I use tm60 and love the tone and feel amp gives ..... I agree with this too- the TECH21 TM60 is good sounding & reliable amp. Gigged for years in everything from duos to big bands with that amp. w/big band or in larger room I used directly out to pa. Always sounded great w/archtop. I had a late 70s mini? brute with 15spkr. I liked the way it sounded. But it had some problems and had trouble getting it fixed. Rumor is they've been on the outs for years.... service info and parts are almost impossible to get.... die a slow death apparently. Do yourself a favor and don't buy a Polytone. As Andy said, they are notoriously unreliable (especially their reverbs) and service can be difficult. If you want a similar sounding solid state amp, try a Henriksen. Evans is also another SS option in the euphonic hot camp as well. If you want a small low weight neutral sounding SS amp consider an Acoustic Image. There are many other options but these three are used by many of today's gigging jazz guitarists. My \$.02 Everything said about Polytone seems more or less accurate. You probably wouldn't want to try to get the company to do any repair work for you. That said, I've owned many Polytone amps. I currently own four, Mini-Brutes from 8-inch baby brute (1980s) to 12 and 15 models. Whether you want them or not is a matter of whether you're trying to get the tone of Joe Pass, Jim Hall, Herb Ellis, George Benson, and a plethora of other great jazz guitarists from the 1970s-1990s. The formula at that time take archtop guitar and plug plug Polytone Mini-Brute amp, start playing. I have two old Polytons (1970s and 1990s model) that are virtually indestructible. I have another 1970s amplifier that's a little more finicky. Finally, there is the infamous Baby Brute. It's probably the best sounding amp Polytone ever made. On the other hand, a one-cubic foot, closed back 90-watt amp is a hot box. Almost every Baby Brute each made had heat-related issues related to the fact that there was nowhere for heat generated within the amplifier to disappear. I have to work to keep that amplification going. Still and all, to sound, these amplifiers are no brainers. I have two Baby Brutes from the early 80's and never had any problems with them. If you ever turn to find a Polytone 2 ohm extension cabinet the Baby Brutes can be made high enough to keep up with anything. I've taken to using Mesa Subway amps for jazz... just 'cause maybe I was tired of polytone sounds, God bless it. BTW I have a fond memory of hanging with Howard Roberts at the Polytone booth at the NAMM show in 1977, listening to Ray Brown jam with the owner/founder of Polytone, who played the be-bop accordion. For the most part, other than transformers (which could even be replicated or rewound) most parts and a large portion of service data are found around the web. A qualified technology should be able to sort out most corrections, unless boards are burned. They suffered from severe heat problems. They were transistor power amplifiers that were put in small boxes without ventilation. Eventually, the thermal cycle of cooling to hot to cold, catches up with transistors. They were a warm, decent-sounding solid state amp for the day. I think many newer methods (Evans, Hendrickson, and others) are better design methods and you benefit from companies that are much better at supporting their products. All polytons are basically the same amp in different size enclosures with different speakers. No. They're not. First of all, there are large differences between different models and these differences do not limit to solely nesting size and driver selection. Secondly, there are different revisions to some models so you will encounter differences even with the same Polytone models. Rumor is they've been on the outs for years.... service info and parts are almost impossible to get.... die a slow death apparently. They are pretty no frills solid-state amps so any qualified technician can service them with ease. Some parts naturally may have become obsolete (the most famous - and possibly the only one - is the LM391 PA driver used in some power amp on board revisions) but even these can still be found with sustained search because they were manufactured in millions and, albeit manufacturing has ceased, some sites still have many of them in stock. Yes, they've died a slow death for ages, as they have been around forever, so of course it will. problems in acquiring service information. Especially for the elderly This is the case with every amp and company out there in a similar situation. For an average person (e.g. not a certified warranty tech or equal) service info is still likely easier to get than it is with many boutique companies or like line 6, Blackstar, Behringer, Markbass, etc. who have a policy of not sharing service information unless you have a contract to perform warranty service for their products. The old MiniBrutes\_were\_ essentially the same amplifier regardless of cabinet or speaker, but there were many other amps besides the MiniBrute. Polytone even made an exceptionally complicated tube amp in the mid 80's that was neat. However, it had no chance to compete with today's biggies in the tube amplifier market and quickly faded away. Away.

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