

202412M-VA-1

09/23

Blackstar[®]

AMPLIFICATION



HT CLUB 40 MK III
HT CLUB 50 MK III

Owner's Manual

Blackstar Amplification Ltd, Beckett House, 14 Billing Road, Northampton, NN1 5AW, UK

For the latest information go to: www.blackstaramps.com

Whilst the information contained herein is correct at the time of publication, due to our policy of constant improvement and development, Blackstar Amplification Ltd reserves the right to alter specifications without prior notice.

the sound in your head

Designed and Engineered by
Blackstar Amplification UK 

IMPORTANT SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read these instructions.
2. Keep these instructions.
3. Heed all warnings.
4. Follow all instructions.
5. Do not use this apparatus near water.
6. Clean only with dry cloth.
7. Do not block any ventilation openings.
8. Install in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
9. Do not install near any heat sources such as radiators, heat registers, stoves, or other apparatus (including amplifiers) that produce heat.
10. Do not defeat the safety purpose of the polarized or grounding-type plug. A polarized plug has two blades with one wider than the other. A grounding type plug has two blades and a third grounding prong. The wide blade or the third prong are provided for your safety. If the provided plug does not fit into your outlet, consult an electrician for replacement of the obsolete outlet.
11. Protect the power cord from being walked on or pinched particularly at plugs, convenience receptacles, and the point where they exit from the apparatus.
12. Only use attachments/accessories specified by the manufacturer.
13. Unplug this apparatus during lightning storms or when unused for long periods of time.
14. Refer all servicing to qualified service personnel. Servicing is required when the apparatus has been damaged in any way, such as power-supply cord or plug is damaged, liquid has been spilled or objects have fallen into the apparatus, the apparatus has been exposed to rain or moisture, does not operate normally, or has been dropped.

“TO COMPLETELY DISCONNECT THIS APPARATUS FROM THE AC MAINS, DISCONNECT THE POWER SUPPLY CORD PLUG FROM THE AC RECEPTACLE”.

“WARNING: TO REDUCE THE RISK OF FIRE OR ELECTRIC SHOCK, DO NOT EXPOSE THIS APPARATUS TO RAIN OR MOISTURE AND OBJECTS FILLED WITH LIQUIDS, SUCH AS VASES, SHOULD NOT BE PLACED ON THIS APPARATUS”.



This symbol is intended to alert the user to the presence of important operation and maintenance (servicing) instructions in the literature accompanying the appliance.



This symbol is intended to alert the user to the presence of uninsulated “dangerous voltage” within the product’s enclosure that may be of sufficient magnitude to constitute a risk of electric shock to persons.



Warning!

Important safety information!

READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CAREFULLY. SAVE ALL INSTRUCTIONS FOR FUTURE REFERENCE!

Follow all warnings and instructions marked on the product!

Danger! High internal operating voltages.

Do not open the equipment case. There are no user serviceable parts in this equipment. Refer all servicing to qualified service personnel.

Clean only with a dry cloth.

Condensation can form on the inside of an amplifier if it is moved from a cold environment to a warmer location. Before switching the unit on, it is recommended that the unit be allowed to reach room temperature.

Unauthorised modification of this equipment is expressly forbidden by Blackstar Amplification Ltd.

Never push objects of any kind into ventilation slots on the equipment casing.

Do not expose this apparatus to rain, liquids or moisture of any type.

Avoid placing vessels filled with liquid on top of the amplifier.

Do not place this product on an unstable trolley, stand or table. The product may fall, causing serious damage to the product or to persons!

Do not cover or block ventilation slots or openings.

This product should not be placed near a source of heat such as a stove, radiator, or another heat producing amplifier.

Use only the supplied power cord which is compatible with the mains voltage supply in your area.

Power supply cords should always be handled carefully and should be replaced if damaged in any way.

Never break off the earth (ground) pin on the power supply cord.

The power supply cord should be unplugged when the unit is to be unused for long periods of time.

Before the unit is switched on, the loudspeaker should be connected as described in the handbook using the lead recommended by the manufacturer.

Always replace damaged fuses with the correct rating and type.

Never disconnect the protective mains earth connection.

High loudspeaker levels can cause permanent hearing damage. You should therefore avoid the direct vicinity of loudspeakers operating at high levels. Wear hearing protection if continuously exposed to high levels.

If the product does not operate normally when the operating instructions are followed, then refer the product to a qualified service engineer.

Only suitable for safe use under non-tropical climate conditions.

Maximum ambient temperature for operation: 35°C

Always make sure that the power cable is connected to a socket/outlet with an earthed connection.

Mains Voltage: 100-240V~ 50/60Hz

This amplifier is only designed and evaluated for safety at a maximum altitude of 2000m.

If the product does not operate normally when the operating instructions are followed, then refer the product to a qualified service engineer.

The U.S. Government's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has specified the following permissible noise level exposures:

Duration Per Day In Hours	Sound Level dBA, Slow Response
8	90
6	92
4	95
3	97
2	100
1½	102
1	105
½	110
¼ or less	115

According to OSHA, any exposure in excess of the above permissible limits could result in some hearing loss.

Ear plug protectors in the ear canals or over the ears must be worn when operating this amplification system in order to prevent a permanent hearing loss if exposure is in excess of the limits as set forth above. To ensure against potentially dangerous exposure to high sound pressure levels, it is recommended that all persons exposed to equipment capable of producing high sound pressure levels such as this amplification system be protected by hearing protectors while this unit is in operation.



All electrical and electronic products should be disposed of separately from the municipal waste stream via designated collection facilities appointed by the government or the local authorities.



Introduction

Thank you for purchasing this Blackstar HT Venue MK III amplifier. Like all our products, this amp is the result of countless hours of painstaking Research and Development by our world-class design team. Based in Northampton (UK), the Blackstar team are all experienced musicians themselves and the sole aim of the development process is to provide guitarists with products which are the ultimate tools for self-expression.

All Blackstar products are subjected to extensive laboratory and road testing to ensure that they are truly uncompromising in terms of reliability, quality and above all TONE.

The HT Club MK III's flexible two channel design features the unique patented ISF (Infinite Shape Feature) control and although it has a comprehensive control set, it is still simple and intuitive to use. Please read through this handbook carefully to ensure you get the maximum benefit from your new Blackstar product.

If you like what you hear and want to find out more about the Blackstar range of products, please visit our website at www.blackstaramps.com.

Thanks!

The Blackstar Team

Features

This HT Venue MK III is a highly versatile amplifier suited to a wide range of playing styles and situations.

The Clean Channel has two voices; one based on a classic American circuit and the other based on a classic British tone. The Voice switch reconfigures the preamp voicing, EQ and valve gain structure, as well as the power amplifier damping. This produces a clean, bright, solid bass response for the American tone and a highly responsive 'chime' with looser bottom for the British tone that can be pushed into a midrange overdrive when driven hard. The Voice setting can also be selected via footcontroller.

The HT Club MK III also has two voices on the Overdrive Channel, which share a common EQ section. These two voices provide a broad palette of overdriven tones.

As with the Clean Channel, each of these voices can also be selected by footcontroller. When switching between channels, the amplifier will recall the specific Voice setting last used on that channel.

The Overdrive voices are characterised by a tone which is high in gain, but avoids any of the detached top-end 'fizz' often found in other designs. This is a result of unique preamplifier and power amplifier shaping techniques, which also benefit the player in the way the overdrives clean up beautifully as the guitar volume is reduced. Even at the most extreme settings, the Overdrive voices remain natural sounding.

The patented ISF (Infinite Shape Feature) control is unique to Blackstar Amplification and represents a major step forward in tone shaping flexibility. The ISF control shifts the response of the three control tone stack between, a US type response at one end, and at the other, a UK type response. Importantly, in between the two extremes lie an infinite number of alternative tone choices that would be otherwise unavailable.

The amplifier features naturally sounding digital reverb that can be adjusted via the Reverb control on the front panel or turned on and off via the optional 5-way footcontroller. A switch on the rear panel selects between 'Dark' and 'Light'. The Dark setting is based on a room reverb and the Light setting is based on a plate reverb.

The reverb decay times can also be adjusted differently for each channel by connecting via USB to our proprietary Architect software.

A Power Switch is provided on the front panel to switch the amplifier between full power and 10% power. This means that the full tonal depth of the valve power stage can be enjoyed at any volume, retaining the distinctive sound of power valves working hard.

A USB connector allows for sending up to 4 channels of the guitar signal (dry, preamp out and stereo emulated out) into a computer for recording purposes.

It also enables the connection to the previously mentioned Architect software for deep editing of not only the reverb, but also extensive control of CabRig parameters for power amp/speaker/cabinet/mic/room emulations from the USB, balanced DI and stereo headphone/line outputs, for practicing, recording and live use.

This is a momentary toggle switch that selects between the two voices of the OD Channel. When the associated white LED is unlit, this channel has a 'classic' but 'hot-rodded' overdrive, with medium power amp damping. With the white LED lit the overdrive sound has a more 'modern' voicing that includes a strong mid-emphasised pre-overdrive boost, as well as a looser, more aggressive sound due to reduced power amp damping.

Front Panel

1. Input

Plug your guitar in here. Always use a good quality screened guitar lead.

If no connection is made then the power amplifier will automatically switch to a safe 'standby' mode. In situations where the user wants to use the power amp (Return to Speaker Outputs) without the preamp(s) (Input to Send) – for example; when using the amp as a second amp in a stereo rig, or if connecting an external multi-effects or modelling unit to the Return – then, to un-mute the power amp, connect a jack plug (preferably shorted) or short 'patch lead' to the Input and turn the channel controls to minimum.

Clean Channel

2. Clean Volume

This controls the volume of the Clean Channel. Turning it clockwise increases the volume. At extreme clockwise settings the preamplifier will start to overdrive, particularly in the 'British' mode – with white Voice LED on.

3. Clean Voice Switch

This is a momentary toggle switch that selects between the two clean voices. The 'American' setting is very clean and bright but with a solid low end; this Voice is selected when the Voice LED is unlit. The 'British' setting has a looser bass response with warmer mid-range and is very sensitive to the output level of the guitar and the player's dynamics; this Voice is selected when the Voice LED is lit. The EQ voicing and valve gain structure is completely reconfigured between each voice.

4. Bass

The Bass control adjusts the amount of bass frequencies in your tone. Fully counter clockwise the sound will be tighter in character. Rotating the control clockwise will progressively increase the bass response of the channel.

5. Treble

The Treble control allows adjustment of the treble frequencies within the sound. At low settings (counter clockwise) the sound will be warm and darker in character. As the Treble control is rotated clockwise the sound will become brighter.

OD (Overdrive) Channel

6. OD Select Switch

Press this switch to select the OD Channel. When the red LED is on, the OD Channel is selected. When the red LED is off, the Clean Channel is selected.

7. OD Gain

The OD Gain control adjusts the amount of this Channel's overdrive or distortion. Low settings (anti-clockwise) will deliver a clean sound on the edge of break-up. As the Gain control is increased clockwise the sound will become more overdriven, moving through crunch tones until, at its maximum position, a full distorted tone is reached.

8. OD Voice Switch

This is a momentary switch that selects between the two voices of the OD Channel. When the small red LED is unlit, this channel has a 'classic' but 'hot-rodded' overdrive, with medium power amp damping. With the red LED lit the overdrive sound has a more 'modern' voicing that includes a strong mid-emphasised pre-overdrive boost, as well as a looser, more aggressive sound due to reduced power amp damping.

9. OD Volume

This control is for balancing the volumes between the three channels. Its setting will depend on the other Gain and Volume settings, as well as the specific needs of the user.

10. Bass

The Bass control adjusts the amount of low-end frequencies in your tone. This amp has an advanced tone shaping circuit which allows the tone to be varied from tight and cutting when counter clockwise, to warm and thumping when fully clockwise.

11. Middle

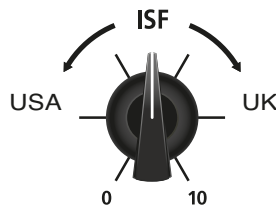
The Middle control adjusts the amount of middle frequencies in your tone. The middle frequencies are particularly important in setting the amount of 'body' your tone has. With the Middle control set to its minimum position (fully counter clockwise) the sound will be aggressive and scooped, a tone ideal for aggressive rhythm playing. As the Middle control is increased (clockwise) the amount of 'body' is increased, which is more suitable for sustained lead guitar tones.

12. Treble

The Treble control allows exact adjustment of the treble frequencies within the sound. At low settings (counter clockwise) the sound will be warm and darker in character. As the Treble control is increased (clockwise) the sound will become brighter. At the maximum settings the sound will be aggressive and cutting.

13. ISF (Infinite Shape Feature)

The patented ISF control works in conjunction with the Bass, Middle and Treble controls. It allows you to choose the exact tonal signature you prefer. Fully counter clockwise has a more American characteristic with a tight bottom-end and more aggressive middle, and fully clockwise has a British characteristic which is more 'woody' and less aggressive.



Unlike conventional 'contour' controls and parametric equalisation systems, the Bass, Middle and Treble controls remain interactive with each other just like in a traditional guitar amplifier tone stack. This leads to a very familiar, musical response.

Master

14. Reverb

The Reverb control sets the overall level of the reverb effect. With the control fully counter clockwise there will be no reverb. Turning the control clockwise will increase the amount of reverb.

The Reverb tone can be adjusted by the Dark/Light switch on the rear panel and the Reverb decay times can be adjusted for the Clean and OD channels by connecting to our Architect deep-editing software.

15. Volume

This controls the overall volume of your amplifier. Turning it clockwise increases the volume.

16. Power Switch

This switch allows the reduction of the output stage from full power down to 10% power. This means the full tonal depth of the valve power amplifier can be enjoyed at lower volumes, therefore making the HT Venue MK III ideal for recording, smaller gigs and even home practice use. Working in conjunction with the power amplifier voltages, this method of power reduction suffers none of the loss in tone of other power reduction systems.

17. Power Indicator Light

The Power Indicator will light when the amplifier is switched on.

18. Standby

This switch enables the output stage. Always turn this switch on at least 30 seconds after the Power switch (19) and preferably turn the Power switch off after switching to Standby. During short breaks in playing use just this switch to turn 'off' and 'on' the amplifier's output. To prevent any unwanted noise being sent to your speaker(s) we recommend always switching to Standby for a few seconds before switching the main Power switch to OFF.

19. Power

This switch is used to turn the amplifier on and off. You should always turn this switch on before turning on the Standby switch (18).

Rear Panel

1. Mains Fuse

The value of the Mains Fuse is specified on the rear panel. Never use a fuse of the incorrect value or attempt to bypass it.

2. Mains Input

The supplied detachable mains lead is connected here. The lead should only be connected to a power outlet that is compatible with the voltage, power and frequency requirements stated on the rear panel. If in doubt get advice from a qualified technician.

3. H.T. Fuse

The value of the H.T. Fuse is specified on the rear panel. Never use a fuse of the incorrect value or attempt to bypass it.

4. Speaker Outputs

The output marked '1x16 Ohm' is for the connection of a single 16 Ohm extension speaker cabinet.

The outputs marked '1x8 Ohm or 2x16 Ohm' are for the connection of either a single 8 Ohm extension cabinet or two 16 Ohm cabinets.

	'1x16 Ohm' output	'1x8 Ohm or 2x16 Ohm' outputs	
Internal 16 Ohm combo speaker	✓	X	X
Internal 16 Ohm combo speaker plus one 16 Ohm extension cab	X	✓	✓
One 16 Ohm extension cabinet	✓	X	X
Two 16 Ohm extension cabinets	X	✓	✓
Single 8 Ohm extension cabinet	X	✓	X

WARNING: The output marked '1x16 Ohm' should never be used at the same time as any of the outputs marked '1x8 Ohm or 2x16 Ohm'. Failure to correctly match the impedance of the amplifier and speakers will damage the amplifier.

5. CabRig Output – Mono Balanced XLR socket

This output provides a balanced, low impedance connection to a recording device, stage box or mixing desk using a standard XLR cable.

6. CabRig Output - Stereo Line Out / Phones socket

This output provides a stereo un-balanced connection to a recording device or mixing desk. Always use a good quality screened TRS lead. The stereo jack socket also accommodates connection of headphones, allowing you to practice silently.

NOTE: Both the XLR and Stereo Emulated outputs remain active even when in Standby mode. This allows for silent recording or practice when the amplifier is in Standby, regardless of any connected speaker.

7. CabRig Switch

The switch enables you to instantly select between one of the three stored CabRig patches. This will apply to both the balanced XLR, Line Out / Phones and the relevant USB outputs.

8. Reverb Dark/Light

With the switch in the 'out' position (Dark) the reverb is voiced to have a warm 'room' quality. Set to the 'in' position (Light), the reverb is voiced to have a bright, airy quality, typical of a 'plate' style reverb. The setting chosen will apply to all channels and voices.

9. Effects Loop Level

The Effects Loop Level switch sets the effects loop to either +4dBV/-10dBV, which enables you to use it with either professional equipment (+4dBV setting), or with guitar level effects such as effects pedals (-10dBV setting).

10. Effects Loop Return

Connect the (mono) output of an external effects unit here.

11. Effects Loop Send

Connect the (mono) input of an external effects unit here.

12. 5-Way Footcontroller Socket

The optional 5-way FS-14 footcontroller (not supplied) is connected here. This footcontroller enables instant access to all channels and voices, plus the global boost function and Reverb switching. This should be connected to your amplifier using the cable provided with the FS-14. Alternatively a good quality shielded guitar cable may be used.

Pressing the Clean switch on the footcontroller will select the Clean Channel. Pressing the Clean switch whilst the Clean Channel is already selected will toggle the Clean Voice. The previously selected voice will be retained when switching to the Clean Channel.

Pressing the OD1 switch will select the Overdrive Channel, Voice 1. Likewise, pressing the OD 2 switch will select the Overdrive Channel, Voice 2. Pressing either OD1 or OD2 switches on the FS-14 whilst that voice is currently selected will have no further effect.

13. 2-Way Footswitch Socket

The supplied 2-way footswitch is connected here. The FS-15 footswitch enables the selection of the Clean and Overdrive channels, and the two voices on each Channel.

Pressing the Channel switch on the FS-15 will toggle between the Clean Channel and Overdrive Channel. Pressing the Voice switch on the FS-15 will toggle between the two voices of the currently selected channel.

If the supplied FS-15 footswitch is unavailable then a generic 2-way latching footswitch with TRS jack connection can be used.

EXTERNAL SWITCHING MODE: To switch to External Switching mode: simply press and hold the Clean Voice and OD select switches for 5 seconds. The LEDs will then flash together to indicate the change of mode. The amplifier will retain this mode, even when switched off, until it is changed back to normal/footswitch mode.

Once in External Switching Mode the following settings will apply when a suitable TRS connection is made:

TIP	RING	CHANNEL	VOICE
Closed	Closed	Clean	Voice 1
Closed	Open	Clean	Voice 2
Open	Closed	Overdrive	Voice 1
Open	Open	Overdrive	Voice 2

NOTE: Both the 5-way (with FS-14) and 2-way (with external control) sockets can be used at the same time. This gives the ultimate flexibility of automated and instant manual control.

14. Emulated Output USB Socket

This C-type USB socket is for connection to a computer via a suitable lead (not supplied). It is capable of multiple simultaneous inputs and outputs. It is also for connection to our Architect software for deep-editing of CabRig and other functions.

Standard audio drivers are used to connect the amplifier to a PC, Mac or other applicable recording device. No specific drivers are required. For a guide on low-latency USB recording visit:

www.blackstaramps.com/usbreording

NOTE: Always connect the amplifier via a main USB port, often found on the rear of the computer.

The amplifier will appear as an audio capture device within recording software.

The audio output via USB from your amplifier directly to your computer is carried across four independent, simultaneous channels:

Channel 1: Stereo emulated, left channel – The fully processed guitar sound, with speaker cabinet emulation. This will include the left channel of the internal stereo reverb.

Channel 2: Stereo emulated, right channel – The fully processed guitar sound, with speaker cabinet emulation. This will include the right channel of the internal stereo reverb.

Channel 3: Preamp output – The preamp sound of the channels, voices and EQ stages, taken before the reverb and without any speaker cabinet emulation. Ideal for use with your own effects and cabinet emulation plugins within your recording software/DAW.

Channel 4: Unprocessed dry guitar signal – This is the direct signal from your guitar as received by the amp.

These audio streams can be recording simultaneously within your chosen recording software/DAW.

TIP: To record a stereo 'reverb' effected sound, pan the stereo emulated left channel 100% left in the mix and pan the right channel 100% right.

The HT Club MK III can also receive audio input from your computer:

Channel 1: Line input, left channel – Used for audio monitoring or backing track playback via the Emulated Output.

Channel 2: Line input, right channel – Used for audio monitoring or backing track playback via the Emulated Output.

15. Kensington Lock

Also known as a Kensington Security Slot or K-Slot this is a specifically sized hole for connecting a compatible Kensington Lock to secure the amplifier to a fixed point. For more information, please refer to www.kensington.com

Technical Specification

HT CLUB 40 MK III

Power (RMS): 40 Watts

Valves: 2 x EL34, 2 x ECC83

Weight (kg): 24

Dimensions (mm): 588 x 480 x 260

Footswitch: FS-15 included, optional FS-14 for control of channels, voices, boost and reverb

HT CLUB 50 MK III

Power (RMS): 50 Watts

Valves: 2 x EL34, 2 x ECC83

Weight (kg): 14.6

Dimensions (mm): 558 x 220 x 245

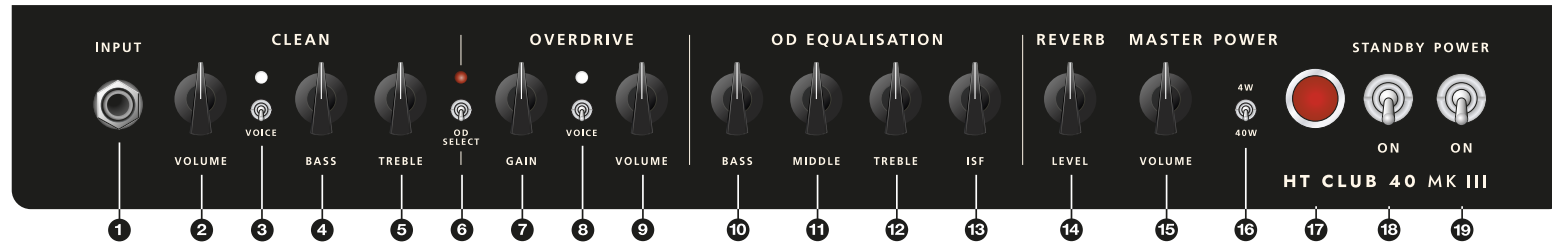
Footswitch: FS-15 included, optional FS-14 for control of channels, voices, boost and reverb

Please note: Although, the HT Venue MK III series is fitted as standard with EL34 type power valves, they also have intentionally been designed to be 'retro-fitted' with 6L6 power valve types instead. As is normal with power valve changes, this will require 're-biasing' of the valve power stage

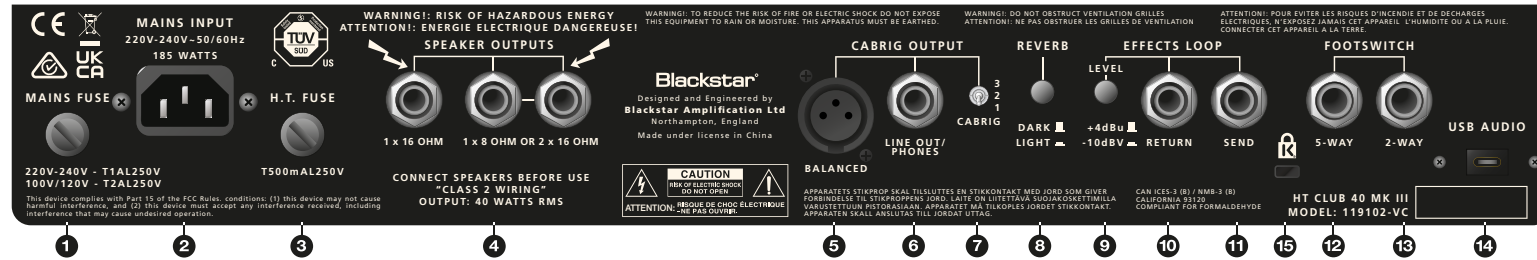
This is simple but will not be included in the scope of this user manual.

It will however be freely provided to approved Blackstar service centres

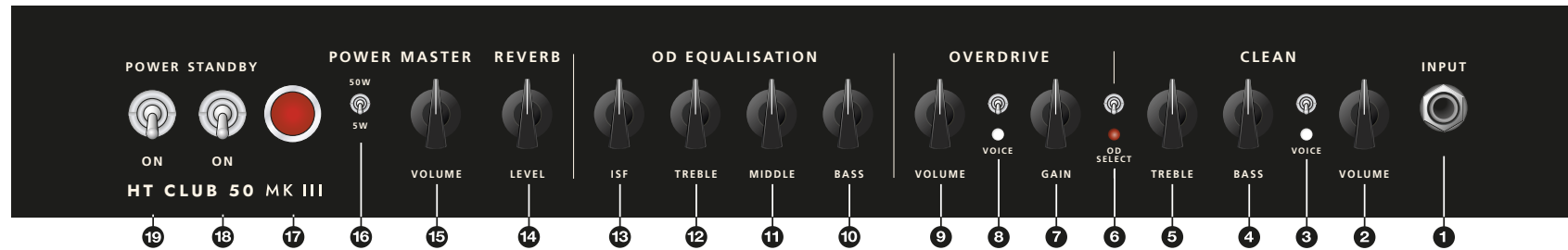
HT Club 40 MK III Front Panel



HT Club 40 MK III Rear Panel



HT Club 50 MK III Front Panel



HT Club 50 MK III Rear Panel

