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## KAT Percussion KT3 Digital Drum Set

By Joe Mullen

I have an affinity for that which demonstrates a pursuit of new ground – maybe not a totally re-invented wheel, but rather one that offers all the comforts of an expensive ride at a price that won't leave you working for the banks.

That's just what I found with the new digital kit offered up by KAT Percussion, the KT3. With 70 programmable kits, 100 play-along songs, very realistic and naturally responsive drum and cymbal pads, and a solid construction, it is a kit worth considering for anyone on the market – beginners, those wanting a solution for triggering sounds from plug-ins or virtual instruments in the studio, or for expanding your acoustic kit. Based in Bloomfield, CT, KAT has carved out a solid spot in the electronic percussion industry despite being relatively new players in this particular segment. The company's three digital kits – the KT1, KT2, and KT3 – are pushing the boundaries of what a budget level kit can do.

First off, the KT3 was a breeze to set up. When it arrived, I unpacked it right away and thought, "Finally – an electronic kit to play with in my studio. I was also interested to see whether or not a kit in this price range could deliver the goods, and let me tell you, it did not disappoint! As I unpacked the kit I noticed right away that the frame was made of thick aluminum pipe with a nice corrugated look to it. The brackets that hold the frame together are made of very heavy-duty plastic and clamp down with not one but two drum lugs and the drum and cymbal mounts have a heavy-duty plastic wing nut and lug.

As for the pads themselves, I have to say that for a non-mesh head, they have a very responsive and comfortable feel and the noise generated from the stick hitting the pad is quite minimal. In an attempt to relay how impressive these pads really are, I put my real snare

beside the drum pad and did a stick bounce test. I hit the snare once and just let to stick bounce until it stopped and then did the same on the KT3's 11-in. snare pad. The bounce on the snare pad actually lasted longer! There you have it – playing these pads feels like a knife through butter.

Also, most kits at this price point have the same size pads all the way around the kit. The KT3, however, has 9-in. dual zone pads for toms, 11-in. dual zone pads for snare and floor tom, 12-in. dual zone crashes with choke, a 14-in. dual zone ride with a bell trigger, and 12-in. single zone hats. The bass pad is a 9-in. single zone pad mounted onto a tower support structure.

In addition to the larger playing surface, the bigger pads give you a stronger sense of being behind a real drum set. The dual trigger zones also give the kit a lot of sonic flexibility. What's more, the KT3 definitely has a look that sets it apart from other digital kits out there with its white pads, gray cymbals, and red accents.

At this price range, you won't find the type of playability that these cymbal pads deliver. They have a unique silicone/rubber edge that is almost silent when hit. The boom stands are excellent, too. They have strong pivot points and are nice and compact. I enjoyed the simplicity of the drum module and how unobtrusive it was, mostly because it doesn't have a whole ton of cables coming out the back of it. Instead an innovative D-Sub-style connector is employed for all the pad and trigger connections – basically a breakout cable that allows all the pads and cymbals to be connected to the drum module with one connection. Each cable from there is appropriately sized and labeled, so it literally took me seconds to connect all the pads and get playing.



As a learning tool, the KT3 has it all. It has a layout of each drum and cymbal directly on the module, each one having its own LED that lights whenever a drum or cymbal is hit. There are 100 play-along tracks with adjustable tempo, a built-in metronome, and a handy aux input so you can plug in your favourite tunes and jam along.

As a heavy-hitting drummer with experience behind a number of digital kits, after giving the KT3 a thorough test drive, I have to say I'm sold. I was thoroughly impressed by its playability, realistic feel, diverse sounds, and ease of set-up and connectivity. The folks at KAT Percussion have indeed found new ground, offering a kit that has all the features and playability of the higher-end offerings at a price that is very inviting. I think KAT is going to make a lot of drummers very happy with the KT3's value and playing experience.

*Joe Mullen is a telecommunications technician who runs JDS Studios part-time and also plays drums in a heavy metal outfit called Odium. Odium is currently playing locally throughout Ontario and is in the process of writing their third album. For more info on Odium, check them out on Facebook at: [facebook.com/odiummusic](https://facebook.com/odiummusic).*