

Test: Behringer Wave

Behringer Wave is a replica of the first wavetable synthesizers, the PPG Wave series. The housing, kept in a distinctive blue, is somewhat more compact and the connections are somewhat more modern, but both sound generation and operation are almost identical to the original – which is not only an advantage. **by Jan Wilking**

Features

- 8-voice synthesizer
- 49 keys
- 30 wavetables each with 64 waveforms
- 64 user wavetables, 32 transients
- 200 preset sounds
- Analog low-pass filter
- Dual arpeggiator and polyphonic sequencer

Facts

Manufacturer: Behringer
Web: behringer.com
Price: 599 Euros

- ▲ Characteristic hybrid sound
- ▲ Unique wavetable sound generation
- ▲ Powerful digital sound
- ▲ Very good analog filter
- ▲ Import of samples
- ▲ Split/Layer/Unison
- ▲ Polyphonic step sequencer
- ▲ Individual outputs
- ▲ Optional sound optimization
- ▲ Data encoder/OLED display
- ▲ Affordable price
- ▼ somewhat fiddly operation

Operation: ■■■■■■
Sound: ■■■■■■
Price/perf.: ■■■■■■
Rating: ■■■■■■

Alternatives

Korg Modwave
705 Euros
korg.com

Modal Argon8
699 Euros
modalelectronics.com

Waldorf M / Blofeld
from 515 Euros
waldorfmusic.com



With the Wave, Behringer presents its third polyphonic synthesizer. After the 12-voice debut synthesizer Deepmind and its derivatives, numerous monophonic and paraphonic synthesizers from Behringer were released on the market, but last year with the Oberheim replica UB-Xa, another polyphonic synthesizer was introduced with complete equipment including its own filter for each voice.

Hybrid wavetable synthesizer

On the timeline, Behringer has now reached the first digital sound generators. The LMDrum is inspired by the LinnDrum, one of the first sample-based drum machines. And the Wave is unmistakably a replica of the legendary PPG Wave, one of the first synthesizers with digital sound generation and the progenitor of wavetable synthesis, which is more popular than ever today thanks to EDM & Co. The special feature of the Wave, in comparison to other current wavetable synthesizers like Korg Modwave or Serum, is the 8-bit resolution for the powerful base sound with digital artifacts and its taming through an

analog low-pass filter. We have extensively tested one of the first available devices to see whether this is enough to integrate the Waves synthesizer into your studio, even given its bulky operation.

PPG Wave

I must confess that I have long been a fan of the sounds of the PPG Wave – initially, however, completely unconsciously. The sounds that fascinated me in early productions by Trevor Horn (Propaganda, FGTH), Depeche Mode, or NIN, I had attributed to other synthesizers. I suspected analog classics like the Jupiter-8 for the punchy basses and floating strings, and more digital sounds like Synclavier, Fairlight, or DX7 for transparent and hard digital sounds.

Compact housing from the Deepmind

For the housing, Behringer is using recycling, it corresponds to the Deepmind 12 in the keyboard version. The slightly inclined control panel and thus the entire device is therefore not very deep, which makes the entire synthesizer quite compact. This facilitates installation in smaller

studios and transportation to gigs. And due to the limited number of controls, the knobs and buttons are also large enough and have sufficient spacing between them, so the compact format does not pose a disadvantage when tweaking sounds. The housing is made of robust metal, cleanly processed, and the knobs and buttons feel good and respond reliably. The only downside: the whole thing doesn't look really chic in the rather squat housing, although the faithful blue paint doesn't help much.

49 keys with aftertouch

The keyboard also seems to have been taken from the Deepmind 12 and is of average quality. Velocity is not implemented very nuanced in the softer range, the four octaves are more designed for more robust playing. The aftertouch also reacts quite imprecisely, but at least the keyboard has this feature (albeit only monophonically). Playing on a good master keyboard with 5 octaves can significantly enhance the sound, but fundamentally the keyboard is fine.

Plenty of connections

The rear side is pleasingly connection-friendly, where you find no less than 17 large jack sockets. Eight of these are intended as

» Clear, bell-like sounds or harsh metallic tones, but also floating pads or experimental effects – sonically, the Wave is very flexible. «

