

New Orange Cable Line

In a segment where newcomers aim for anything but generic, British amp icon fits the bill

Whether it's the screaming orange surfaces or just the psychedelic logo, an Orange amplifier is impossible to mistake for any other. Now Orange is betting that if standing out from the crowd is good for amps, it's going to be great for cables. This summer the 44-year-old British manufacturer will begin shipping a range of Orange-branded instrument, mic, and speaker cables, all constructed from a premium, ultra-high-conductivity copper. In the manufacturer's view, cables make a logical next step for Orange, which has spent the past decade highlighting accessible, multi-use products as a gateway to the Orange brand.

"We had been toying with the idea of accessories for quite a few years, and cables in particular kept coming up," says Orange Managing Director Damon Waller. "It would have been easy to simply find a cable in China and add some packaging, but we knew that would not be the right approach. We knew that when we did this, it had to be something special, something that truly represented the brand's values."

As Waller details, every offering in the Orange Professional Cables line will be made from a material known as Electrolytic Tough Pitch (ETP) copper, created through a process that removes 99.9% of the oxygen from the metal. The result is a length of pure copper engineered for high conductivity, low impedance, and prime sound quality. Each cable is outfitted with gold-plated Neutrik connectors, "which we chose, simply, because we feel they are the best," says Waller. Topping off the feature set is a durable double jacket—a layer of PVC under a layer of "armor-

woven" nylon. "As the name suggests, this adds extra toughness to the cable," says Waller, "but it also makes the cable particularly resistant to tangling." Orange Professional cables will be available in the manufacturer's trademark orange, as well as in black.

As longtime Orange fans will remember, this is not the first time the Orange



A new line of Orange-branded cables will hit stores this summer.

name has been linked to something other than amps. Founder Cliff Cooper's London shop once boasted "Orange Publishing," "Orange Agency," "Orange Records," and "Orange Recording Studios." When he zeroed in on amp-making in 1968, Cooper embraced Les Paul's maxim that "people see with their eyes," transmuting the tones of psychedelic rock into orange coverings and a groovy logo. Fleetwood Mac became one of the first top bands to "go Orange," followed shortly afterward by stars as varied as Stevie Wonder, BB King, John Mayall,

Tina Turner, and James Brown.

By the late '70s, however, the Orange brand had fallen on hard times, beset by financial problems and a crowded field of low-cost competitors. Orange largely fell off the map until its trademark was licensed to Gibson Guitar in the mid-'90s, producing a series of reissues that put the amp-maker back on the world stage. By the late '90s, Cliff Cooper had reclaimed the Orange brand, leading it to a comeback that would continue over the next decade. Orange's landmark AD series Class A combos, introduced for the company's 30th anniversary, were followed in 2001 by the wildly popular Crush series, which opened the Orange brand to the entry-level market. 2006 brought both the Thunderverb, which combined a bass and a lead amplifier into a new concept in valve amps, and the 15-watt Tiny Terror amp head, which put Orange sound and styling in its most compact package to date.

"Since the introduction of the AD series amplifiers we've been listening to our customers, fitting products into our range with features such as an effects loop, higher gain, and dual channels and boosts," says Waller. "This opened doors to different types of players to try Orange for the first time. We really do have an Orange amp for everyone these days."

In its cable line, Orange sees an extension of the trend that could introduce Orange into countless new applications. Scheduled to hit stores in June and July, Orange Professional Cables will retail for between \$45 and \$76. "It's important that everything we make offers value to the consumer, which does not mean it's cheap, but that it's an investment—something to buy and keep for good instead of having it replace it in six months' time," says Waller. "With Orange we feel the brand is our strongest asset, so one thing we will never do is simply badge a cheap product. That's a good way to kill a brand. We feel that by combining great products with a great brand name, we can offer a very strong, fresh line that the industry will welcome. I would also like to think that, as musicians ourselves, we are very aware of what our consumers want from us."

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