



1620: brilliant blender

UREI 1620LE SIX-CHANNEL MIXER

SOUNDCRAFT HAVE PICKED UP THE UREI BRAND AND REISSUED CLASSIC ROTARY CLUB MIXER THE UREI 1620.

PRICE: £995 INFORMATION: WWW.UREIDJ.COM CONTACT: 01707 665000

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DURING the 1980s the Urei 1620 was the swankiest club mixer money could buy, making its appearance in the days when house music was being reared in clubs such as the legendary Paradise Garage. Today, you'd be excused for thinking it was a piece of old studio gear, but this is what club mixers looked like back then. This re-issue stays true to the original design and thankfully also stays true to the unmistakable sound that it became famed for. Above all else, the new 1620 puts the music first with its simple uncluttered control panel, hardcore connections and transparent sound. Despite the wonderful retro looks, the mixer is designed specifically for modern club installations, and while it doesn't have many modern DJ controls (it really only suits one style of mixing - blending), it still has what it takes.

IN CONTROL

The 1620 has six mixing channels on the front panel with a large rotary fader and a balance control for each. The input connections are a little more complicated and take a while to get your head around.

The first two channels - Phono 1 and Phono 2 - are simply dedicated to turntables and only one stereo RCA connection is available on each. The other four channels - labelled Aux 1 - Aux 4 - look after all the other inputs via an input matrix selector.

On the rear panel are five line-level inputs on stereo RCA connections. These are labelled Aux A - Aux E. These five inputs can be routed to any of the four Aux channels on the front using the

input matrix selector.

The four Aux channels on the front also have dedicated inputs - labelled Preamp on the input matrix. Each of these refers to a further set of inputs on the rear panel that are routed directly to that Aux channel.

Channels Aux 1 - Aux 3 each have a stereo RCA input plus an XLR input. Additional components can be bought and installed to customise these channels with either turntable or microphone preamps. True to the original design, the original preamps will still work too.

Channel Aux 4 does not have an RCA input but comes with a microphone preamp fitted as standard for its single XLR input, and therefore acts as the standard mic input.

The input variations allow club installers to easily customise the mixer for their requirements. Up to five decks can be connected alongside five line level inputs, or the 1620 can be set up to accommodate up to eight line-level inputs. The mixer could also be used for live PAs with many microphones connected.

It could be argued that the 1620 is seriously lacking in any DJ controls, such as EQ, filters, a crossfader and so on. However, the nature of this mixer is orientated to the professional and is designed to be used alongside a whole range of components, as its level of connectivity suggests. If an installer wants to provide DJs with additional controls such as an isolator, these can be routed between the decks and the inputs. There's also the FX loop, which can be

used for compressors, exciters, limiters or even effects and isolators. But the core function of the 1620 is to offer the best possible sound quality with the most customisable routing. The lack of gain control on the front is good news for installers but can be a pain when playing quiet records if the mixer is being driven to full volume.

CHANGES

The 1620LE has not changed much from the original on the front, but there have been some drastic changes around the back. Other than looking a lot tidier, four XLR input connectors are fitted as standard. There is now also balanced XLRs on the Booth output, plus five solid ground terminals instead of one, and gold plated terminals throughout. The rotary switches are also sealed at the front.

QUALITY

The sound quality is surprisingly transparent. The sign of true quality in a mixer is if the sound comes out sounding the same as when it went in. Using valves can really fatten up a sound by

INFO

T-SPECS

» Six channels » Individual balance controls » Sealed rotary volume faders » Two phono preamps » One microphone preamp » Eight line inputs » Four XLR inputs » Gold plated connections » Optional preamp » Two outputs with XLR and RCA connections » Master out mono on jack » Two tape outputs on RCA » FX loop on RCA » UK/US power switch » Mono two-band EQ on master » Headphone monitoring » Internal set-up controls » 3U 19" rack mounting

PROS

» Transparent sound
» Highly flexible for professional installs
» Slightly improved build quality

CONS

» Awkward mono EQ
» No crossfader
» Dated cueing feature

VERDICT

VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
USER FRIENDLY	★★★
SOUND QUALITY	★★★★★
BUILD QUALITY	★★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★★

adding harmonic distortion and rounding off the bass, but the 1620LE is simply one of the best sounding mixers available and dispenses with expensive components like valves. The build quality is undeniably solid. There were some complaints with terminals on the original, which have been improved on the re-issue. The terminals are now incredibly solid and all the controls are bordering on industrial strength - this mixer is a real workhorse.

IN THE MIX

The 1620LE sounds amazing, which is especially noted when blending sources together. Tracks seem to simply melt into each other without conflict or discolouration. The controls suit slow blended mixing with attention to the music rather than the cutting skills. And when used with top-notch isolators and other external DJ tools, the mixer shines. It's let down slightly by limited headphone monitoring options compared with modern mixers but for the club mixer it is, the Urei still stands proud.



The 1620: taken from behind