



Reverend Billy Corgan Signature Drop Z

The Smashing Pumpkins frontman's latest signature collab with Reverend is built for drop tunings. Is this the ultimate grunge machine?

By Chris Gill

▶ WHEN I FIRST received the new Reverend Billy Corgan Signature Drop Z, I thought Reverend sent a Corgan Z-One like the one I reviewed two years ago.

The Drop Z looked and felt similar, but immediately my ears noticed that its voice is much deeper, more throaty and more resonant. To my surprise when I checked the specs I discovered that it has a longer scale length (26.25 inches compared to the Z-One's 25.5 inch scale) and a 24-fret neck instead of 22 frets.

The reason why my eyes deceived me is because the Drop Z measures about the same overall length as a Les Paul from the tip of the headstock to the lower strap pin.

The bridge is moved down lower on the body so you don't end up with a neck that extends out further like you do with most longer-scale/extended range instruments. As a result, the Drop Z feels and plays almost exactly the same as its regular 25.5-inch scale Z-One counterpart.

Most of the Drop Z's specs are identical to the Z-One. It's equipped with Railhammer Billy Corgan Z-One Bridge and Z-One Neck humbucking pickups, with the hotter bridge pickup measuring 14k ohms resistance while the neck measures about 8.3k ohms.

The chambered body is alder while the bolt-on neck and its fretboard are roasted maple. Other neck specs include .110 (w) x .050 (h) frets that are slightly wider than typical medium jumbo frets, a medium oval profile and 12-inch radius.

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Controls consist of a three-way blade pickup switch and master volume, master tone and bass contour knobs, and hardware includes a Strat-style six-saddle hardtail string-thru-body bridge, Reverend pin-lock tuners, low-profile aluminum knobs and six-bolt neck plate.

Usability and sounds

Reverend's specs says that the Drop Z ships with 11-49 strings but to me they felt more like 9s thanks to how well the tension matches with the 26.25-inch scale length.

I tuned it down 1-1/2 steps to C#, but the strings still felt slinky and comfortable even with the guitar tuned up to standard pitch. The tone is honking and resonant with a wonderfully expressive midrange that reminded me of playing a semi-hollow in open G tuning.

Although the bridge pickup is about twice as hot as the neck pickup, the volume output is balanced. The wah-like master tone and beef-boosting bass contour controls allow users to dial in a wide range of tones with minimal effort.

GUITAR VERDICT



The Reverend Billy Corgan Signature Drop Z's longer scale length combined with standard body dimensions and measurements allows guitarists to use drop tuning while maintaining the same exact feel and comfort of a standard scale guitar.

PROS

- + Longer scale length accommodates drop tuning while maintaining standard body size.
- + Chambered body provides expressive, resonant tone.
- + Numerous deluxe upgrades like treble bleed circuit, bass contour, six-bolt neck and +/- 10% pots and caps

CONS

- None.

SPECS

BODY: Chambered alder
NECK: Roasted maple bolt-on
FINGERBOARD: Roasted maple
NECK PROFILE: Medium oval
RADIUS: 12"
SCALE LENGTH: 26.25-inch
FRETS: 24, medium jumbo
NUT WIDTH: 41mm
PICKUPS: Railhammer Billy Corgan Z-One bridge and Railhammer Billy Corgan Z-One neck humbuckers
CONTROLS: Master volume, master tone, bass contour, three-way blade pickup selector
BRIDGE: Six-saddle adjustable thru-body hardtail
TUNERS: Reverend Pin-Lock

