



The Grosh 327 humbucker shares the same form as the Small Block 302.

Fralin Hum-Cancelling P-90s. The uncovered example on the left shows the inward facing coils.

Lindy Fralin Hum-Cancelling P-90s and Grosh 302 and 327 Humbuckers

TESTED BY DAVE HUNTER

LINDY FRALIN HUM-CANCELLING P-90s

If you judge your replacement pickups by the specs, throw any preconceptions out the window where Lindy Fralin's Hum-Cancelling P-90s (\$130 each) are concerned. Other than the covers and polepieces, nothing about these pickups bears much resemblance to traditional single-coil P-90s. But this popular replacement pickup uses Fralin's vast experience to bring in a humbucking pickup that retrofits a soapbar or dog-ear mounting and cops the sound of a classic P-90, without the noise—which is what really matters here.

The use of finer 43-AWG wire ups the impedance readings, while also enabling the use of relatively small amounts of "rare earth" samarium cobalt magnet material, and that's just the

beginning. Lift the traditional cover and the pickup looks nothing like a vintage P-90, and far more like a PAF-style humbucker with the narrow coils rotated 90 degrees inward until they face each other, rather than upwards.

Fralin points out that this isn't a new design as such, rather a new application of the technique Gibson used for its own EB-0 bass humbucker, and one that makes a great alternative to "stacked" noiseless P-90s, which have a bad rep in some circles.

Tested in place of the standard Fralin P-90 in a Fano Alt de Facto JM6 guitar, the Hum-Cancelling P-90s offered the silky yet slightly edgy treble, authoritative midrange punch, and notably gritty texture that P-90 fans love in traditional examples, with a blessed absence of the (ofte

considerable) hum. As such, they're great for anything requiring a little rasp and snarl, but clean up sweetly for jazz or country with a little taming at the guitar's Volume knob. This set might have a hair more glass to its attack than vintage P-90s, which works great for cutting contemporary tones, but Fralin offers a set with ceramic magnets for a softer leading edge to the note, and will also tailor wind strength to each customer's requirements. In all, it's a great replacement unit for anyone bothered by single-coil noise.

Kudos Eliminates hum while maintaining authentic P-90 tone

Concerns None.

Contact fralinpickups.com

GROSH SMALL BLOCK 302 AND 327 HUMBUCKERS

Grosh Guitars has been rolling its own for a few years, and the Small Block 302 and 327 humbuckers (\$150 each) are among the latest out of the box. Befitting of Grosh's raison d'être as

a guitar maker, these pickups follow the "vintage modified" line of thinking, using the halved Gibson PAF as a template and updating the form for versatility.

The 302 for the neck position uses an Alnico V magnet (Alnico IV in the uncovered version) and traditional coils loaded with 42-AWG wire to a reading of 8.12kΩ on my meter; the 327 for the bridge also carries an Alnico V magnet, with over-wound coils that take it to 9.66kΩ. Both have four-conductor wiring, and are wax potted to combat microphonic squeal. Note that either type is available calibrated for both neck and bridge position, although Grosh says this mixed set is proving the most popular.

Our test set came loaded into a pickguard for use in a loaner Grosh ElectraJet Custom, complete with push-pull Tone pot for coil splitting, but I also swapped them into a Gibson SG Faded to hear them in a more traditional context. Both pickups lean toward the hotter side of the vintage range for their respective positions, but in either guitar their clarity and

impressive note-to-note definition stormed through. The ElectraJet Custom, formerly loaded with P-90s, retained plenty of twang when played clean, but when pushed roared with that smooth, creamy thickness that only a good humbucker achieves. There was even more jangle and chime on tap with the coil split engaged, which offered a useful tone alternative, if not a sound entirely comparable to great standard single-coil pickups.

Swapped into the SG—without coil splitting this time—the Grosh humbuckers hit a more classic stride. The 302 in the SG's neck position gushed pure buttery goodness, a tone so juicy you want to slurp it off your chin before diving in for more, and the 327 in the bridge excelled at barky rock crunch and singing leads. All tasty stuff from a well-made set of humbuckers.

Kudos Excellent sound and enhanced versatility for fans of PAF-style tone.

Concerns None.

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