



# V4 Series Pedal Preamplifiers



## User Guide

**Congratulations!**

...and thank you for buying a Victory V4 Series Pedal Preamp. We'll have you sounding great in a jiffy. But first, please be aware that it is NOT like a 'normal', everyday overdrive pedal. It is an all-valve preamp capable of far richer, amp-like tones and is primarily designed to sit in place of – not in front of – your guitar amp's existing preamp.

You can use it in to the front of your amp if you want – it won't damage anything and you might love it – but it's not how we designed it to work best. With that in mind, let's get going.....

#### **SAFETY FIRST**

We want you to enjoy your preamplifier to the best of its potential. So please...

Before you go any further, take a moment to read these SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

- Read these guidelines & keep them
- Follow all instructions, guidelines & warnings, especially those in **RED**
- Do not use this preamplifier near water or any other liquid
- Do not block any openings
- Do not attempt to clean the preamplifier with any fluids: use only a dry cloth
- Do not attempt to modify or service this product yourself
- Removing covers could mean you are exposed to dangerous voltages that may result in severe injury or death
- Refer all servicing to qualified service personnel
- Damage Requiring Service: Unplug this product from the wall outlet and refer servicing to qualified service personnel under the following conditions:
  - (a) When the power-supply unit, cord or plug is damaged;
  - (b) If liquid has been spilled, or objects have fallen into the product;
  - (c) If the product has been exposed to rain or water;
  - (d) If the product does not operate normally by following the operating instructions. Adjust only those controls that are covered by the operating instructions. Improper adjustment of other controls may result in damage and will often require extensive work by a qualified technician to restore the product to its normal operation;
  - (e) If the product has been dropped or damaged in any way;
  - (f) When the product exhibits a distinct change in performance - this indicates a need for service.
- Replacement Parts: When replacement parts are required, be sure the service technician uses replacement parts specified by the manufacturer or have the same characteristics as the original part. Unauthorized substitutions may result in fire, electric shock, or other hazards.

**What's included?**

Your new Victory Preamplifier comes with the following:

A 12V 2Amp 'Centre Negative' Universal Power Supply with interchangeable plugs for all countries.

This User Guide, (please check the website periodically as these owner's manuals are constantly being updated to give you more information about your Victory product). The issue number can be found on the last page.

There are 3 pedals in the V4 Series range and these are based on the popular 'lunchbox' amplifiers, the V30 Countess, The Sheriff and The Kraken. Operation is identical for all 3 pedals and they all have the same complement of Tone & Volume controls. The differences between them are to be found in the overall gain available and the tonal variations that set the amplifiers that they are based on apart.

So, the following connection guide is identical for all models.

### How to connect to your Amp

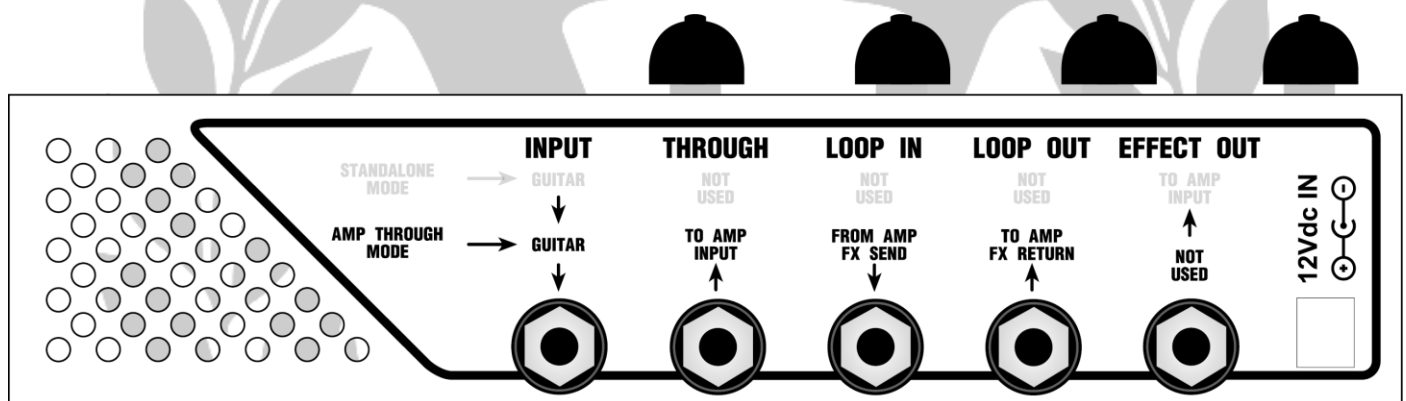
First, choose either 'Amp Through Mode' or 'Standalone Mode', details as follows

### Using your V4 Series Pedal Preamp in AMP THROUGH MODE

This puts the V4 in your amp's effects loop, but still gives you access to your amp's own preamp.

*Pedal switched on:* V4 is bypassing your amp front end, hitting your amp's power section.

*Pedal switched off (bypassed):* Signal flows to your amp front end input as normal.



### A note on pedalboard placement and other effects

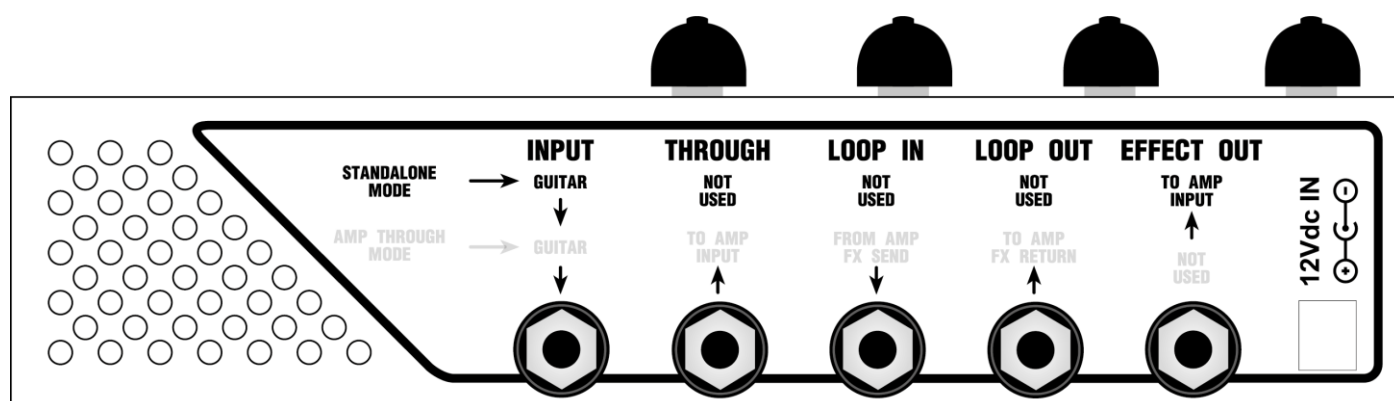
Think of the V4 Series Pedal Preamp exactly as you would the front end of your amp. You might want to run your regular drive pedals before the V4 input, for example. If you usually run anything in your amp's loop – reverb or delay for example – place those pedals between the V4 'loop out' and your amp's FX return jack. This way they're in your loop as usual and will work with the V4 pedal on or off.

### A note on the 'bright' switch and effects loops in amps:

Effects loops vary dramatically in terms of tone and level! Even our own – e.g. the V30 and VX loops – can vary significantly depending on the design of the amp. We have put enough scope in the bright switch and EQ pots to cope with the vast majority of amp FX loops. Please tweak to taste and don't be surprised if there are some less agreeable sounds in there too.

### Using your V4 Series Pedal Preamp in STANDALONE MODE

This is the same as using a 'normal' pedal. We find it works best into higher-headroom (cleaner) amps, but each to their own! You'd also use this if you were connecting to a standalone power amp or straight to an interface for recording.



### A note on pedalboard placement and other effects

Pedal placement is always a matter of personal taste regardless of what gear you're using. In our opinion, fuzz, boost, overdrive and distortion are 'best' placed between your guitar and the V4 input. Reverbs and delays can go anywhere, but the 'standard' placement is post overdrive. Place them after the V4 Series Pedal Preamp. This is relevant for both Standalone and Amp Through Mode. Modulations can be pre- or post-drive as you prefer.

### A note on the 'bright' switch and effects loops in amps:

This is the same as in the Amp Through Mode.

### Can I connect the Effect Out straight to my FX loop return?

You can, but your guitar will sound pretty thin and quiet with the pedal is turned off. It doesn't have the mumbo to drive the power section without your amp's preamp in play. See Amp Through Mode.

### Are there other ways to connect the V4 Series Pedal Preamps?

Yes, absolutely. Just think of your V4 Pedal Preamp in exactly the same way as you would your guitar amp's front end. It's doing exactly the same thing, but it's in a box outside of your amp. That means you have a bunch of other ways to connect it up. For example, as part of a wet/dry rig; a stereo rig; feeding a recording device; some kind of more complex four-cable method than AMP THROUGH MODE (see p3). It could be buried somewhere deep in your pedalboard, and so on.

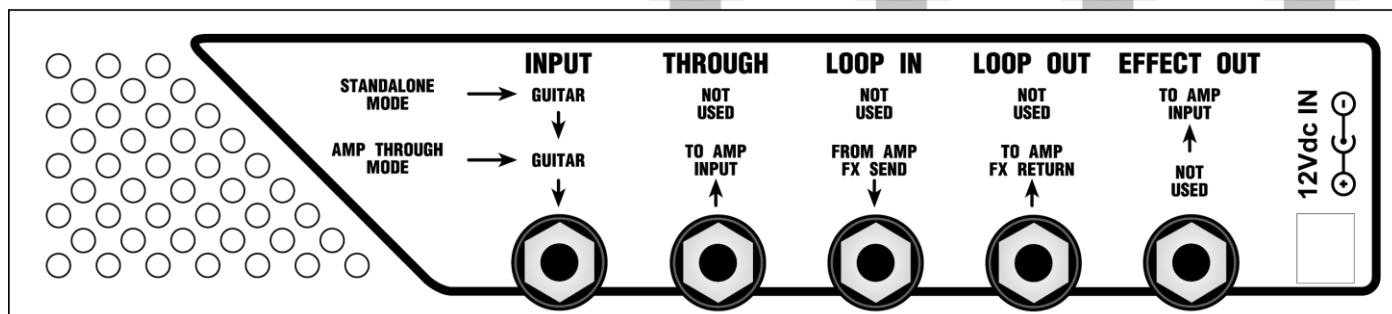
It's all possible and we urge you to experiment. You won't damage the front end of your amp or indeed the power section as long as you follow all the usual guidance with levels: start at zero and go up from there.

If you have a very complex rig you may well find the need for signal splitters, buffers, isolation and phase reversal in exactly the same way that you would when running two amps, multiple signal paths and everything else that goes along with them. V4 Series Pedal Preamps are simply the front end of a valve amp... in a pedal. They're not regular overdrive pedals. Have we said that enough yet?

### Controls & Connections

Understand what does what in your V4 Series Pedal Preamp





### INPUT

Plug in your guitar here, or connect in line with your front-end pedals. In terms of other pedal positioning, think of the V4 Series pedal in the same way you would think of your guitar amp's own preamp section.

### THROUGH

When using AMP THROUGH MODE (see page 3), connect this to your amp's regular, front panel input. When the V4 Series Pedal Preamp is in bypass mode, the signal flows to your amp as normal.

### LOOP IN

When using AMP THROUGH MODE (see page 3), connect this to your amp's FX loop send or 'preamp out'. When using STANDALONE MODE (see page 4) nothing needs to be connected here.

### LOOP OUT

When using AMP THROUGH MODE (see page 3), connect this to your amp's FX loop return or 'power amp in'. If you are using the V4 Pedal Preamp straight into the front of your amp, you don't need anything plugged in here.

### EFFECT OUT

When using STANDALONE MODE (see page 4), connect this to your amp's normal front-end input. It's the same as the output jack you'd find on any normal pedal. You can also connect it to the FX loop return or 'power amp in' of your amp, but be aware that your own amp's preamp is out of the game if you do this.

### REMOTE SWITCH (on side, not shown)

Accepts a 6.3mm / ¼ inch TRS jack for remote switching. The tip connection switches the pedal on and off (Bypass) and the ring switches between channels 1 & 2. You can use any TRS latching footswitch for this, or the control jacks on your pedalboard switcher etc. The official Victory Remote Switch is available from our online store: [www.victorystore.co.uk](http://www.victorystore.co.uk)

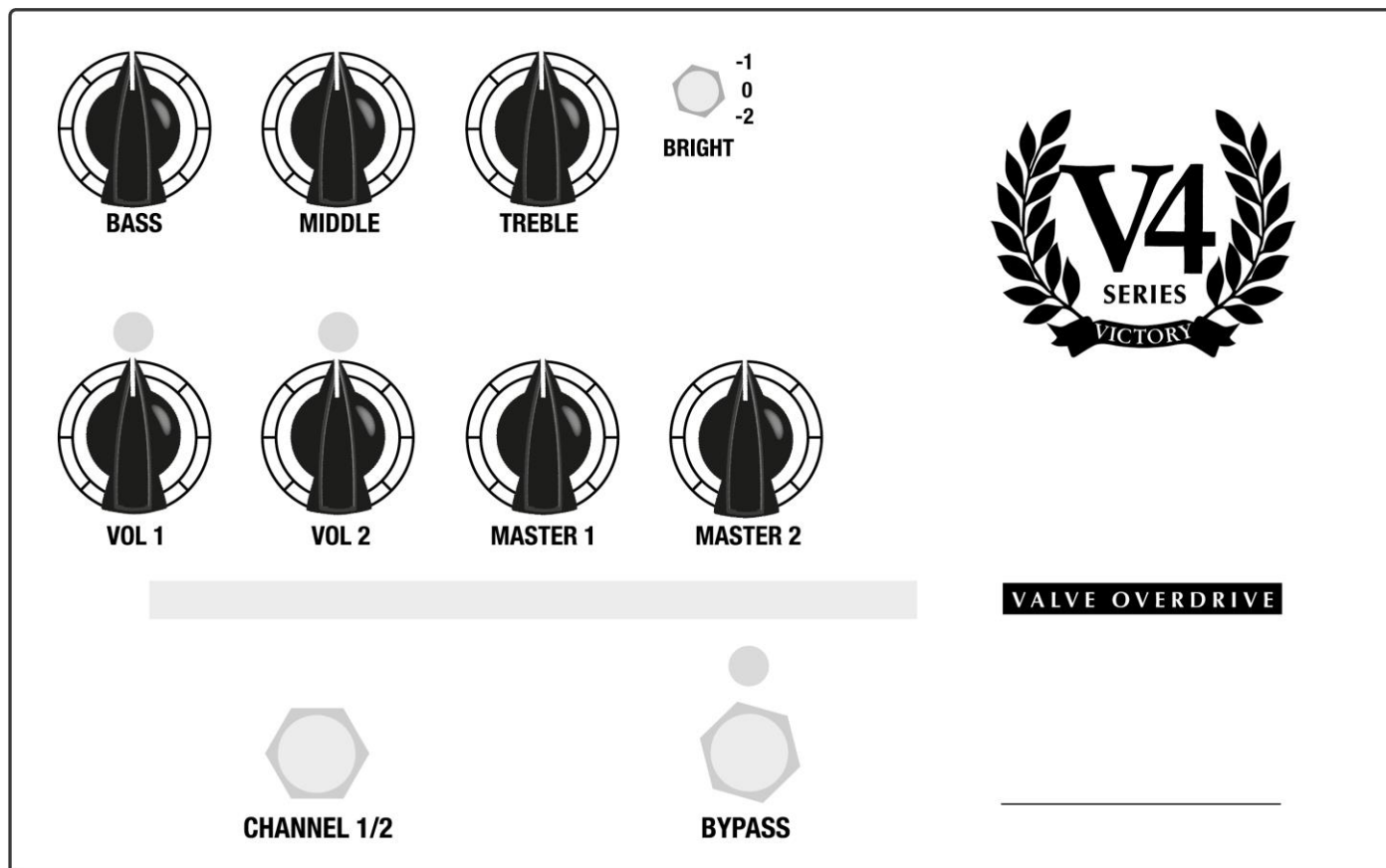
### Power, (12Vdc IN)

Yes, 12V DC and 800mA. 800mA is a lot for a pedal and not many power supplies will put that out, so please don't try daisy chaining this off your standard wall-wart. It's why there's one supplied with the pedal: four valves running at decent voltages. The PSU is capable of delivering

over 2Amps so has more than enough headroom for your Preamp Pedal. We don't recommend using a PSU with less than 2A capability as the initial current draw as the heaters warm up can be as much as 3 times the 800mA running current and could send a lower-powered PSU into a fault condition.

A proper all-valve preamp needs plenty of juice!

### Control Panel



#### VOL1 / VOL2, (GAIN1/GAIN2 on The Kraken)

These control the gain in each channel of the V4 Series Pedal Preamp. More Vol, more overdrive. As with any amp or pedal, simply balance this with the EQ and relevant Master for a gain level, tone, feel and response that suits your style and needs.

#### MASTER1 / MASTER2

Set these to zero before plugging in! They control the output level of each channel and can result in some serious output from your amp. Some effects loops bypass the amp's master volume so you're straight in on 10 (or 11, or 12). Please be careful!

#### BASS / MIDDLE / TREBLE

The three-band EQ section is shared across both channels. Adjust to taste along with the Bright switch. These controls aren't just about EQ, they have a big effect on gain and overall feel too, so please experiment with them.

### BRIGHT SWITCH

This sets the global output EQ for your chosen amp. Pick the setting that sounds best to you. You probably won't believe that the sound furthest from your favourite could work in any amp at all. In fact, you might even think the pedal is broken. It's not – the fact is, amp effects loops vary drastically so we needed to put a lot of scope into this control. Find the setting that works best for your rig – it will vary greatly from amp to amp.

### CHANNEL1/2 Footswitch

Switches between VOL1 / MASTER1 and VOL2 / MASTER2. You can also use the 'remote' jack on the side of the pedal to perform this function. (See p5.)

### BYPASS Footswitch

Turns the pedal on and off. The bypass mode depends on how you connect to your amp. (See p3&4.) Bypass is also 'remote' switchable.

### VERY IMPORTANT WARNINGS!!

In certain countries, (specifically, Nordic countries), is it totally forbidden to open up any electronic equipment or to work on them at all unless you are a fully qualified and approved technician. Please check the laws in your country and do not attempt to change valves/tubes or re-bias the amplifier if the law forbids this. In this case, please take your amplifier or piece of electronic equipment to a qualified and approved electronics technician.

In certain countries it is also totally forbidden to keep or place any liquids on top of the amplifier, (e.g. beer, water bottles, glass, drinks etc). This may cause serious electric shocks and/or dangerous situations.

Also, it is totally forbidden to use the preamp in the event of rain splatters/water drops getting into or onto the amp.

Even if it is not a law in your country, you should never allow liquids near the amplifier or attempt to use the amplifier if it has been subjected to any moisture as this could result in a fatal electric shock.

### FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

The most common questions we've been asked so far...

**Q: What's best: Amp Through or Standalone Mode?**

**A:** If you're using it with a guitar amp, you'll get optimum results using 'Amp Through Mode' in our opinion because you still have the option of using your own amp exactly as normal. However.....

**Q: What if my amp doesn't have an effects loop?**

**A:** You can run the V4 Pedal Preamp straight into the front of any amp in 'Standalone Mode' though some more extreme settings of EQ on both amp and pedal may be required. To hear the pedal in its most 'natural' state, we find higher headroom, cleaner amps work best.

Nevertheless, you may very well love it slamming the front of your overdriven amp too. Please try it all because the 'best' setting is undeniably the one you like most!

**Q: If I'm running into the FX loop return, does that mean I can't use the front end of my amp?**

**A: 'Amp Through Mode' is a four-cable connection method. When the pedal is on, you're bypassing the front of your amp. When the pedal is bypassed (turned off) your amp's front end works entirely as normal. The only thing you can't do in 'Amp Through Mode' is hit the front end of your amp with the V4. If you want to do that, please use 'Standalone Mode'.**

**Q: Can I still use my amp's FX loop for other effects if I'm using a Victory V4 Series Pedal Preamp?**

**A: Absolutely! Just treat it exactly as you would your own amp's preamp. You may want to run your delays and reverbs after the V4 Pedal Preamps in your amp's loop. You may want to run other overdrive pedals and boosts wherever you normally run them: between your guitar and the Pedal Preamp or – less common – in the loop of the amp. Either works just fine.**

**Q: Will my reverbs and delays in the loop still work with the V4 pedal turned on... and off?**

**A: Yep. You're using your amp exactly as normal with the V4 pedal turned off in 'Amp Through Mode'.**

**Q: What is the current draw: will the V4 Series Pedal Preamps run off my DC Brick?**

**A: Probably not – remember there are four valves in there running at proper plate voltage with current-hungry heaters inside. That requires some serious juice. You need 12V DC and a minimum of 800mA. Each V4 Series Pedal Preamp comes with an included power supply rated at 2Amps.**

**Q: Some of the settings of the 'Bright Switch' are extremely sharp/dull. Is that normal?**

**A: Yes, it is and it depends entirely on your amp. Effects loops vary drastically from amp to amp depending on how the loop and the power stage of the amp are configured. In fact, you won't believe how different they can be... so we included the three-position 'Bright' switch exactly for that reason. There will be one setting that is optimum for your amp. There's no best, no worst – just use the one that sounds and feels best to you, and don't worry if one of the others sounds broken!**

**Q: Can I change the valves?**

**A: You can but we don't recommend changing them just for the sake of it as the Mullard CV4014s are arguably one of the best quality valves ever made. The valves comprise 1 x EC900 triode and 3 x CV4014 pentode, both have 7 pins rather than the normal 9. Please replace only with valves of the same type. Replacements are available from [www.victorystore.co.uk](http://www.victorystore.co.uk) among others. They are NOT swappable with normal dual-triode types (12AX7/ECC83 etc). Valve changes should ideally be done by a qualified technician.**

**To change the valves, first unplug the power supply and leave the unit for a few minutes to allow all internal capacitors to discharge. Then remove the 4 x M4 Countersunk Posi-Drive bolts that hold the base plate on using a No.2 Point Posi-Drive screwdriver. The valve PCB is attached to a plate which needs to be loosened. There are 2 M3 Nylock nuts with flat washers holding this**



is place which can be loosened using a 5.5mm Nut-Spinner, socket or spanner – no need to completely remove them as we just need to angle the PCB & plate assembly upwards slightly to get hold of the valves. They are held very tightly in the ceramic bases so a slow circular motion is required to ease them out. When replacing, be sure to line the pins up correctly, (there is a gap between pins 1 & 7). Now re-tighten the M3 Nylock nuts but not too tight as the plate sits on rubber damping grommets to minimise microphony. No Biasing or setup is required when changing valves and the screenprinting on the base plate shows which type goes where.

**Q: Can I use the preamp pedals with a rack/pedal power amp?**

**A: Yes, you can. Wire the V4 Preamp in Standalone mode with every pedal you would like before the preamp between the guitar and the Input of the V4 Preamp. Connect every pedal you would normally have in the loop after the Effect Out of the V4 Preamp and the input of the power amp.**

**Q: Can I use the preamp pedals straight into an audio interface?**

**A: Yes, you can. However, most pieces of studio equipment have a low impedance input which can result in volume and/or high-end loss when used with the V4 Preamp. Make sure that you switch the interface to instrument input and if there is no option for that, connect a buffer or buffered bypass pedal after the V4 Preamp.**

**Q: Can I use the preamp pedals into a load box like the Torpedo Captor?**

**A: Sorry, unfortunately not, the V4 Preamps have around line level output and can't drive a load box. This will result in no output from the V4 Preamp.**

**Q: I have a multi-effects pedal (a Line6 Helix for example) which I use with four cables method. How can I integrate my V4 preamp into this setup in Amp-Through mode?**

**A: Connect the send of the multi-effects (which goes to the input of your amp) to the input of the V4 Preamp. Connect the Through output of the V4 Preamp to the input of the amp. Then connect the amp's FX Send, which goes to the return of the multi-effects' return, to the Loop In of the V4 Preamp. Finally connect the Loop Out of the V4 Preamp to the return of the multi-effects.**

**This way both the preamp of the amp and the V4 are in the loop of the multi-effects and the V4 works in Amp-Through mode. If your multi-effects pedal has a short-to-sleeve type switch output you can use it to switch the V4 Preamp's bypass and channels via the Remote Switch socket.**

**Q: There is a volume drop when I switch on my V4 Preamp in Amp-Through mode even if I max out the Masters.**

**A: This can be caused by either loading between the output of the V4 Preamp or the FX return requires high level signals.**

**First try a buffer or a buffered bypass pedal between the V4 Preamp and the return socket. Usually, delays and reverbs have switchable buffered bypass mode which eliminates the loading effect**

**Some amps require high send levels, for example some Mesa Boogie amps, and the volume difference comes down to the fact that the V4 Preamp can't put out such high levels. In this case**

you will need a boost pedal between the V4 Preamp and the return of the amp which you switch on when you switch the V4 Preamp on.

All Victory amplifiers are constructed using Posidrive Screws & Machine Bolts. These are an improvement on the Phillips type of fixing which uses a 4-blade screwdriver. The Posidrive uses an 8-Blade screwdriver which allows for more precision and higher torque. Please try to use Posidrive Screwdrivers when working on a Victory amplifier to avoid damaging any fixings. These are readily available from all good tool suppliers. We recommend having a No.1 and a No.2 Point Posidrive screwdriver.

We have deliberately fitted the pedals with countersunk screws for fixing the baseplate. This is to allow for the feet being removed and the pedal then being Velcro'd flush to your pedal board should you so wish.

#### **Preamplifier Dimensions:**

SIZE (mm): 225(w) x 80(h) x 140(d) inc. feet. Unboxed. 342(w) x 122(h) x 208(d). Boxed. Weight: 1.7Kgs, (3.75lbs) Unboxed. 2.2Kgs, (4.85lbs) Boxed

#### **Output Level**

The following measurements were taken at 240V mains input using a 1 KHz Sine Wave with the output waveforms set just before clipping:

Max signal output: 0.9V or 1.5dBu

Valves: V1: EC900, (6HA5) V2, V3, V4: CV4014, (EF91),

#### **Warranty**

All Victory products come with a 5-year limited warranty. This covers any defects in manufacturing or faulty components. Normally, we warranty valves, (tubes) for 90 days in line with all other valve amplifier brands for guitar and HiFi.

However, the valves used in your new V4 Series preamp pedal were originally manufactured to NATO specifications. Due to the extremely high-quality construction and proven reliability, Victory have taken the unprecedented step of extending the warranty of these from 90 days to 2 years. They were designed to have a minimum life-span of 6000 hours which, if used for 2 hours every day, equates to over 8 years use.

The warranty is also transferable to a new owner in the unusual event that you wish to sell your Victory equipment.



### Valve Story:

For those that are interested, the 3 CV4014 valves in your pedal were manufactured in 1981 in the Mullard factory in Mitcham, Surrey, England for the British Ministry of Defence. They were then shipped to the Royal Navy Supply Depot at Spring Quarry in Wiltshire where they have been stored in a climate-controlled atmosphere deep underground for the past four decades. This depot is part of the vast underground cold-war nuclear bunker facility which thankfully was never needed and has just been an extremely expensive place to keep these valves very safe, just waiting for us to design products around them 😊

The EC900 valve in the first stage is a low-noise triode manufactured by E.I. (Elektronska Industrija) in the former Yugoslavia under license from Philips & Mullard using all of the Philips equipment they purchased when Philips shut up shop in Europe. These have also proved to be incredibly reliable so we have included them in the 2-year valve warranty.

Please contact your local dealer if you have any issues with your Victory product. Victory are setting up Official Service Centres around the world so please check on the Victory website to see where your nearest centre is located. These will have original Victory spare parts including the recommended valves for your amplifier direct from the Victory factory. They also have all technical details for your product and have been carefully selected to ensure you get the best possible service for warranty and non-warranty work.

Why a preamp pedal and not a normal overdrive or distortion?  
Martin's thoughts...

"We love overdrive pedals, distortions, fuzzes and boosts as much as anybody. Some of the most iconic guitar tones of all time have been made using them and it's always great to hear our amps pushed with stomp boxes new and old. As great as they can sound, however, they don't sound like great valve amps. A 'normal' pedal does one kind of job, but a whole separate preamp is something completely different.

"Victory amps are deliberately aimed at a particular slice of tonal goodness that suits an approach to playing and response as much as it does musical genre. Existing Victory amp owners will have been through at least one choice process already. Should you go for The Countess or The Kraken? The Duchess or The Sheriff? For the fortunate, a second Victory amp usually follows in time but it's not an option open to everyone either practically or financially. With that in mind, I designed the V4 Series Pedal Preamps to work as a whole extra 'front end' to your amp, whether that's a Victory or something else entirely. It comes on the back of discussions with friends and colleagues about players increasingly using preamp pedals on their pedalboards to drive various power sections in existing guitar amps, rack gear or even standalone pedal power amps, whether they're rented, supplied backline or otherwise.

The general idea of pedal-sized preamps is definitely not new. Yet to date – and to the best of our knowledge – nobody has done it with four preamp valves and an entirely valve signal path. Yes, they can be a little fiddly, potentially confusing and – this bit is important – they very often don't function like 'normal' pedals! Once you've got that in your head, however, a good pedal preamp gives you the option of an entirely new valve amp voice. Let's say you own a V30 The Countess and you want some Sheriff flavour in addition. You own V40 The Duchess and you

want some Kraken in the mix? Or maybe you have another brand of amp altogether that has a great clean channel, but decide that Dr. Jekyll needs a new Mr Hyde side. Well, now you can and unlike many others you can retain all the functionality of your existing amp and pedals too.

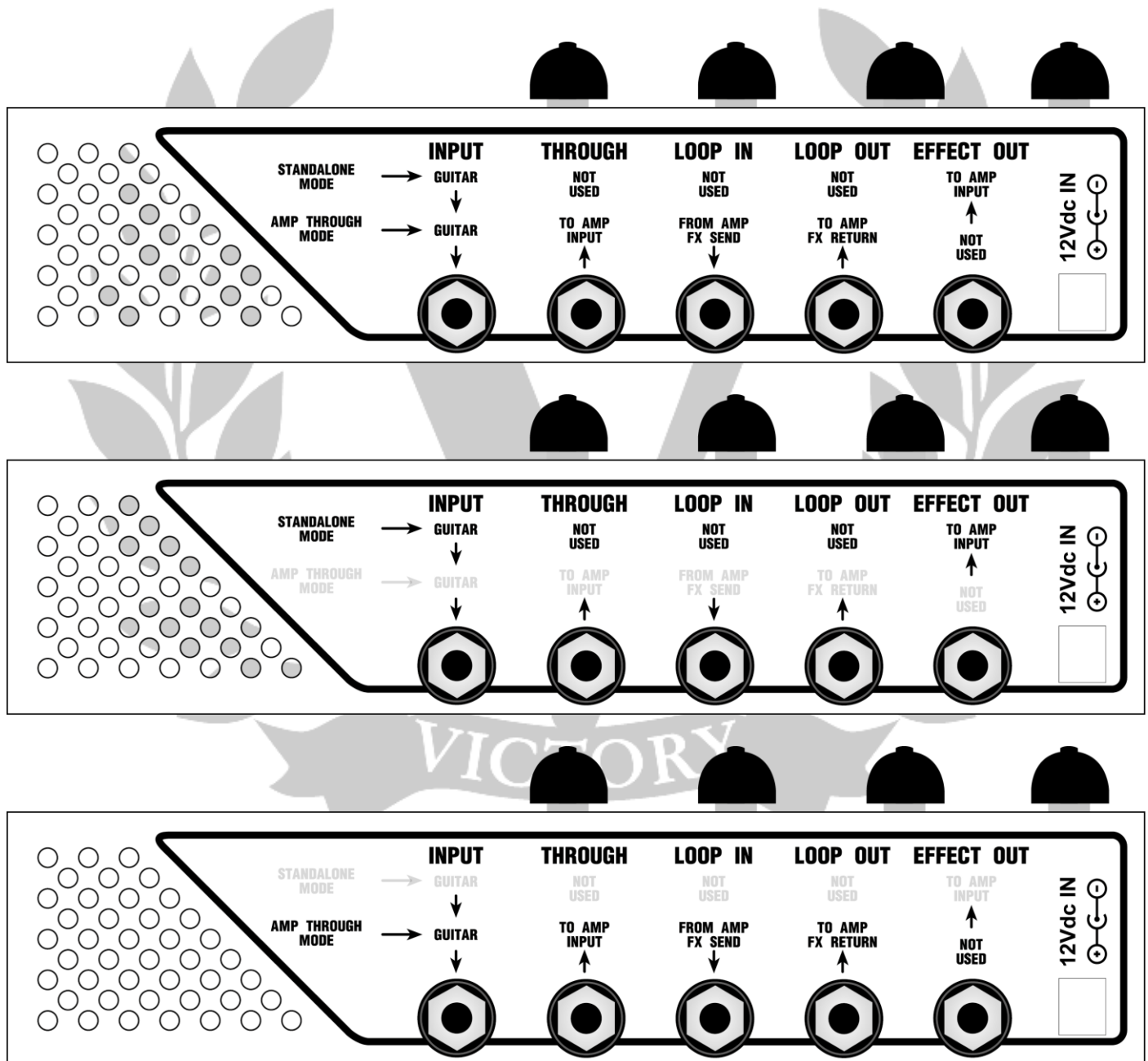
“However you end up using your V4 Series Pedal Preamp, I wish you great tones and plenty of fun along the way. Now go and make some noise!”

Martin Kidd, Chief Designer, Victory Amplification.

Contact info: [sales@victoryamps.co.uk](mailto:sales@victoryamps.co.uk) [service@victoryamps.co.uk](mailto:service@victoryamps.co.uk)

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**HAND MADE IN ENGLAND**

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