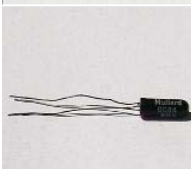


The Mullard OC44

Hobbyists and tone freaks have long known the secret of the Mullard OC44. This nifty PNP germanium transistor has been the beating heart of some of rock's classic tones. Its use in the Dallas Rangemaster and other notable effects is well documented. I get most of my supply pre-tested and I can tell you that there is nothing like the sound of an OC44 at its best, especially in boosts and fuzzes.

We get a variety of OC44s and derivatives from different places and points in history. My understanding of the history of the OC44 is that it was a well liked transistor but with some openly acknowledged flaws. Thus Mullard often made tweaks to make them more durable, consistent or whatever. The result is that there are a bunch of cool and different OC44s out there waiting to be dug up. Used in effects, OC44s transistors are known for having subtle tonal differences that sound great but vary literally from one to the next. The one quality they all share though, is that same thick screaming tone that makes them famous. This is why, according to Rangemaster folklore, no two Rangemasters sounded exactly the same, but none sounded bad. They are a testament to why so many old Mullard transistors and tubes, are collectible pieces of rock and roll vintage.

Here's a look at some of the OC44's we currently have in stock. One may end up in your pedal someday:

The Rangemaster OC44: The real deal NOS OC44 in the black glass package. Built by Mullard Great Britain. Highly sought after by hobbyists for both effect and radio applications. Each one delivers the thick, balanced and wooly tone that remains the standard for treble boosts 40+ years later.	
The "yellow dot" Mullard OC44: Also NOS Mullard Great Britain production. The four digit serial number dates these to the late 50's. They have the "bullet top" and each is marked with a yellow dot at the tip. I'm not even sure of the significance of the yellow dot (maybe some hobbyist can help me out), though I assume it to indicate a specific production, facility, or application. This is the transistor found in most of the Free Range Chickens we have sold so far and it has been a real crowd pleaser.	
The OC44K: This is a sister OC44 made in Denmark. The flat top black glass package, as opposed to the "bullet top" in the previous two, dates it to the same time that Dallas was producing Rangemasters. If you find an old Rangemaster (or pictures of one's insides), this is OC44 package you are most likely to see. The Danish do good work (I'm particularly fond of their breakfast baked goods), because these dudes produce hot tone just like their cousins from the UK.	
The Gold Can OC44: AKA "The Imposter". These have been a hard sell in the past. The lack of information on this particular version, along with people's fear of fakes has done this transistor a great disservice. The fact is this is a pre-CV7003 Mil-spec OC44. The can type package is known to be much more consistent than the black glass package which I assume is why Mullard made their mil-specs this way. It has "Mullard" stamped around the circumference which looks really cool. More amazingly though, it still sounds just like the black glass OC44s.	
The CV7003: The more commonly known Mil-spec OC44. Also in a metal can package for improved consistency. The folklore I have read says that during testing, the best performing 15% of all OC44's were segregated and labeled CV7003. Later the CV7003 became a separate item, but remained essentially a tighter spec OC44. It certainly sounds the part. We have many NOS CV7003s however please note that most of the CV7003s we get are Texas Instruments production and not Mullard. While there is no compromise in tone, I would never pull the bait and switch on you. And in any case they rule.	