This Gadget Lets You Stomp Like a Giant Robot

If you're planning to dress up like a giant robot this Halloween [1], you need to know about the Mega Stomp Panic. About the size of an old-school portable cassette player, the Panic clips to your belt and bellows stomping noises, timed to your footsteps.

It's actually an ingenious idea, and it works extremely well. The main unit runs on four AAA batteries and connects to a belt clip sensor that helps sense your movements. The controls are dirt simple: just a volume dial/on switch, plus a selector for what kind of noises you want to make. Besides a robot, you can sound like you're stomping in a puddle, a pirate, a zombie, a gunslinger, a knight or my favorite, a low-res video game.

When I first switched on the Panic and started walking around, every reporter in the entire *Mashable* newsroom turned to see what was stomping around in their midst. It's certainly a head-turner and can play quite loud. The speaker quality isn't so great — it's basically on par with transistor radios — but we're looking for oomph here, not precision. Still, it has a tough time competing with other noise, so it's best for indoor use.

After a brief "intro" noise, which helps identify among the nine different noises (the Splash noise is introduced with a thunderclap, for example), the Mega Stomp is ready to rock you. It works best with simple forward movements — walking, basically — but exaggerating your movements seems to help the precision.

Some cool extras: When you run, the noises change depending on the mode, either getting more rapid or playing something else that's appropriate (in video game mode, it gets a little more Mario-esque). And every mode has a special "crashing" noise for when you jump in place.

The purist in me could do without the silly-sounding "ambient" noises (the giant monster mode, for instance, has the constant din of panicked citizens in the background). I just want the stomps, thanks. I also wish the intro sounds were

defeatable. Once you get to know the numbers, they're extraneous — plus they spoil any potential "sneak attacks" you might want to do.

Despite those quibbles, I adore the Mega Stomp. Anyone who's ever had big ambitions for Halloween will see the $40 asking price on ThinkGeek [2] as a bargain. And *Doctor Who* [3] fans finally have the perfect accessory for their Cybermen [4] costumes.

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