Positive Grid

1 GO YOUR OWN WAY
It's small enough to take anywhere, and even if you don't have your phone to hand, you can recall four of your favourite presets straight from the amp.

2 'APPY DAYS
A lot of the Spark GO's functionality hinges around the Spark app, which is easy to set up, connect and use.

3 SMART FEATURES
The Spark app can create custom backing tracks, figure out chords, and borrow your phone's camera to record video clips of you playing!

POSITIVE GRID SPARK GO

£129

PLATINUM AWARD

A tiny, take-anywhere guitar amp that's loaded with innovative tech

Positive Grid's Spark range of amps has changed the game for plugging in and practising, combining digital modelling, effects and audio streaming with its powerful Auto Chords and Smart Jam features. First there was the desktop Spark 40, next came the more portable Spark Mini, and now, we have the Spark GO. This diminutive box serves as a do-it-all practice solution, sharing the same tech spec sheet as the other two, only this time squeezed into a pocket-sized format.

We say squeezed in, but what's really going on here is that the Spark GO's settings are handled by the accompanying Spark app where you can create, edit and save sounds, jam along to music from your streaming service, play to backing tracks, and it even has a video capture function.

Back to the hardware and there's Bluetooth onboard, and control-wise things are kept simple with a button for recalling the four assignable presets stored into the amp, a volume control for your guitar signal and another one for adjusting the volume of incoming Bluetooth sound. The whole lot runs off an internal rechargeable battery which promises around eight hours of use when fully charged.

Getting started is simple – you download the iOS or Android app, pair the amp to your phone and you're away. Then you can start navigating the factory presets, which are made up from 33 amps and 43 effects, arranged into various categories by style. Simply tap and change settings using your phone or tablet's touchscreen.

The first thing we noticed was just how loud the Spark GO can be. Many tiny, battery-powered practice amps are loud, but few sound great. The Spark manages both, filling our room with impressive tone rather than fatiguing spike. This carries over to streaming music via Bluetooth. There's plenty of detail when jamming to songs, and getting a balance between the guitar/Bluetooth signals is a doddle.

Talking of jamming, the Spark app keeps your attention on playing rather than sounds with its AI-driven Smart Jam, and Auto Chords features. The first 'listens' to what you're playing, and delivers a stylised bass/drums beat to match. Auto Chords analyses music you stream to it, and produces a chord chart for you to follow. It's not infallible, and we found that it worked best with simple open and powerchords rather than extended chords, but it's still an impressive tool.

The Spark GO is your amp, effects suite, Bluetooth speaker, jam partner, audio interface and social media video rig all in one! It's hard to think of a more value-packed offering.

Stuart Williams

THERE'S PLENTY OF DETAIL WHEN JAMMING TO SONGS

Photography Olly Curtis

AT A GLANCE

TYPE: Ultra-portable practice amp

AMPS: 33

FX: 43

FEATURES: Bluetooth, Auto Chords, Smart Jam, USB audio interface, video capture (via phone)

CONTROLS: Guitar volume, Bluetooth volume, preset button, power/pairing button

DIMENSIONS: 125 x 85 x 45mm

WEIGHT: 346g

POWER: Rechargeable internal battery (8 hours use)

CONTACT: www.positivegrid.com

SUMMARY						
FEATURES	★	★	★	★	★	
SOUND QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★	
VALUE FOR MONEY	★	★	★	★	★	
BUILD QUALITY	★	★	★	★	★	
USABILITY	★	★	★	★	★	
OVERALL RATING	★	★	★	★	★	