



ESSENCE

Cardioid Condenser Studio Microphone

User Manual



Welcome

Thank you for choosing an Aim Audio microphone and welcome to our family!

In this User Manual, you can learn more about your Aim mic and its proper usage. In creating this product, we have put all our knowledge and passion for audio technology into a device that should last you a lifetime of creativity.

If you have any comments or thoughts about your new product, don't hesitate getting in touch with our team in Berlin. We'd love to hear from you.

Before you start

Please read the Care and Maintenance page in this manual. You will also need a good quality balanced 3-pin XLR cable and a sturdy microphone stand.

Make sure that your audio interface, mixer, mic-pre etc. has an XLR-input channel that can supply adequate 48 V phantom power, as the ESSENCE microphone requires this to function.

While Aim mics are built to withstand all sorts of situations, it is generally good practice to connect everything up first before applying phantom power to the microphone, to save the life of electronic components in your signal chain.

Package Contents

The ESSENCE package contains the following:

- Aim **ESSENCE** Microphone
- 5/8" to 3/8" Mic Stand Thread Adapter*
- User Manual
- Soft Carry Pouch/Dust Cap

** Region specific - not supplied/required in Americas*

Warranty

All products manufactured by Aim Audio feature a limited non-transferable 2-year Warranty from the date of original purchase. This covers any defects in manufacturing or for faulty components.

However, by **registering** your device on our website within 60 days of purchase, you can increase this to **5 Years***:



aimaudio.com/register

** Terms apply, check the website for full details.*

Before sending for service, please check the Support FAQ on our website, as many common issues can be easily solved with a little trouble shooting.

Conformity

ESSENCE is made in Berlin, Germany.

This product conforms to all applicable EU CE2 and WEEE standards.

This device also complies with Part 15 of the FCC Rules.

Operation is subject to the following conditions:

- (1) This device may not cause harmful interference, and*
- (2) This device must accept any interference received, including interference that may cause undesired operation.*

Declaration of conformity can be requested at:
info@aimaudio.com

Manufacturer Details

Aim Audio
c/o Tabbertstr. 10-11
12459 Berlin
Germany



Enrico Preuss - Head of Manufacturing, August 2025



Care and Maintenance

This microphone, including the capsule, is a sensitive, high-precision device. No user serviceable parts are inside. Do not attempt to modify or repair the microphone yourself, as it will void your product warranty. In the unlikely case of failure, contact your dealer and/or Aim Audio for advice.

To ensure the appearance and longevity of the microphone (and any accessories), a dry lint-free cloth should be used in day to day care. To clean any staining, you can damp that cloth with a **small** amount of water, but no other cleaning products should be used on any other part of the body or grill.

To make sure that the microphone's high sensitivity and sound reproduction quality is sustained, avoid any heavy mechanical stress and/or force, including dropping the mic from a height. Avoid exposing it to moisture, dust or extreme temperatures. Microphones which are not in use should not remain on a stand gathering dust or be unnecessarily exposed to humidity, only store it in a dry and safe space.

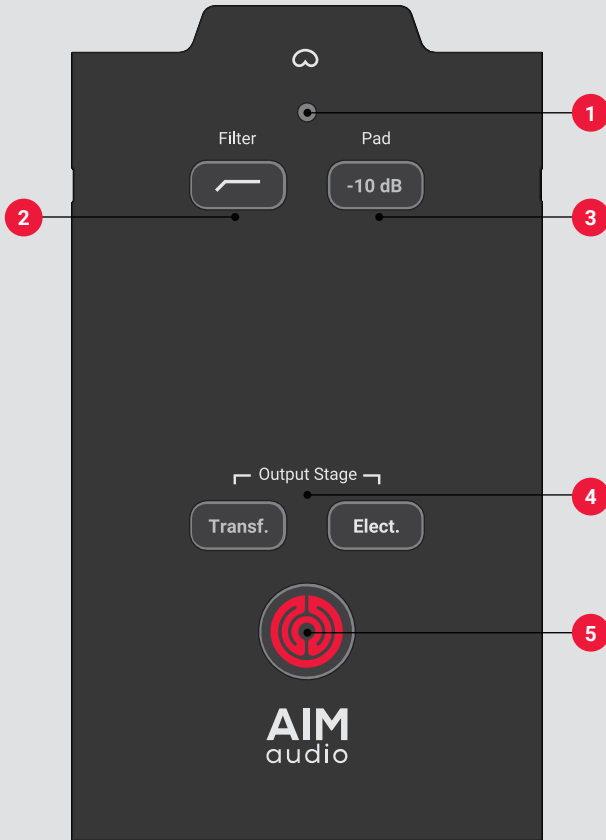
When disconnecting a cable, do not apply extensive force - you should always pull on the connector and not on the cable itself.

Aim Audio shall not be liable for any consequence of inappropriate use of the product that does not comply with the technical information in this user manual. These include, but are not limited by handling errors, mechanical damage, incorrect voltage and using external equipment that is contrary to other than recommended devices.

Any liability of Aim Audio for any damages including indirect, consequential, special, incidental and punitive that may be based on said user's non-compliance with the user manual or unreasonable utilisation of the product is hereby excluded, as to the extent permitted by law.

ESSENCE

Cardioid Condenser Studio Microphone



Mic Controls

The **ESSENCE** is a trailblazing Cardioid studio microphone, which features a high-end capsule and unique audio technology, in a sleek and distinctive chassis. While it's LED backlit controls make it easy to spot what the settings are at a glance.

- 1 Peak Level LED - *page 8*
- 2 LP Filter - *page 9*
- 3 -10 dB Pad - *page 9*
- 4 Output Stage Selection - *page 10*
- 5 Aim Key
LED dimming, Key Lock - *page 12*

1 Peak Level LED

The Peak Level LED can help you better catch the levels of your audio, in conjunction with with your mic-pre settings. This will help you get the best use out of INSPIRE's built-in Pad functions, when working with extra-high audio levels.


Essentially, we designed the indicator to not show where the mic itself is clipping, after all INSPIRE can handle much more than a whopping 140 dB internally!

However, many interface pre-amps, mixers and meters in DAWs just can't detect and show clips fast enough, at least when things are maybe going awry. These nasty and often unseen peaks in your signal can seriously impair a good recording, consequently making things harder to mix, even more so when you are operating the entire recording process by yourself.

If the LED flashes **ORANGE**, you are in danger of reaching a nominal peak level.

If it flashes **RED**, this indicates the level when many mic-pres may start to clip on the input side.

The LED will hold for a short time to indicate you should apply a Pad etc.

 *Tip: for those who don't need this feature or have mic pre-amps with extended dynamic range, we have added a way to turn the Peak LED off.*

*To disable the feature, simply hold both the **OUTPUT STAGE** keys (Tranf. and Elect.) Together for 2-3 seconds. The Peak LED will flash twice to confirm it is disabled. To re-enable, repeat this process in reverse. Settings are stored until changed, no matter if the mic is powered down.*


3 LF Filter

ESSENCE has a Cut Off Filter fitted that is handy for different applications.

To activate, push the key for the Filter and it will illuminate. Pressing the same key will deactivate the Filter and the LED behind the Key will turn off.




activates a Cut Off at 80 Hz

 *Tip: useful for removing unwanted low-frequency noise like road rumble, AC systems or overall floor vibrations.*

4 Pad

The -10 dB Pad in ESSENCE can help you set your gain structure and levels better for louder sources, to help minimise input distortion and clipping.

To activate, push the key and it will illuminate. Pressing the same key again will deactivate the Pad and the LED behind the Key will turn off.


 *Tip: use the Peak LED to best determine when to select the Pad.*

6 Output Stage Selection


Toggle between Aim Audio's two distinct output topologies here. For the first time ever, our patent-pending design allows you to compare each stage directly, without changing mics.

To activate the Stage you wish to use, push the respective key and it will illuminate.

Transf. activates Transformer Output Stage

 *Tip: our custom Toroidal Transformer gives a slightly thicker and richer LF, plus a slightly airy top end and a slower transient response. This can be useful for all sorts of audio - from aggressive or velvety smooth vocals, heavy electric or finger-picked acoustic guitars and right to a brass section, without resorting to having to use more compression or other processing to fit your signal in a mix.*

Elect. activates Electronic Output Stage

 *Tip: an Electronic (or FET) Output Stage generally reacts much faster with transients and can handle higher sound pressure levels, even at ultra-low frequencies. This mode is perfect for catching fast moving audio like drum overheads or tracking strummed acoustic guitars, without any sense of 'smearing' to the audio.*

Notes: despite uniquely presenting the same output level, our two independent Output Stage circuits are still electronically different as to what is presented on the XLR, so to manage this and not interfere with the audio purity, an internal electronic relay switches between them.

This may give a 'pop' sound on the output when a different Output Stage is selected. It won't have any effect on other equipment in your signal chain, but we advise you to turn down monitors or headphones while switching.

If the relay was just supplied by regular 48 V phantom power, it would use way more current than most mic pre-amps/ interfaces/ mixers can normally provide.

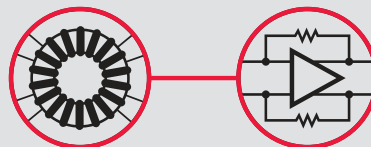
Therefore, we fitted a 'charge pump' to the mic so it can power and drive the relay without an external supply.

This means that when you initially connect the mic to a 48 V source and initialise it, the mic will require 30-40 seconds of charge, so it can give enough power to the relay.

Once it is charged from boot up, you can switch 2-3 times in quick succession. The respective LED will flash if there isn't enough charge to switch and the switching process is 'paused'. Once enough charge is available in the microphone, the relay will then switch modes.

In general use, the relay should switch in short order and is usually normally just a few seconds after multiple switches.

Toroidal or FET Output Stage?



Your choice!

7 Aim Logo Key

The Aim Logo Key allows for complete control over the microphone LEDs and is also the indicator for the Key Lock feature.

LED Dimming

For those times where you might find the LEDs too bright (for example on-stage or filming use etc.) or you may just wish to not have them active, there are 3 Brightness levels and an Off mode.

This is controlled directly by the Aim Logo Key:



To dim the LEDs, hold down the Aim Logo Key until it flashes.

Then push the key again until the desired brightness is achieved (toggles between 3 levels or completely Off).

If no other button is pushed or the Polar Pattern Wheel is changed within 5 seconds, the Aim Logo Key will flash twice and the setting will be stored (if the brightness is set to off, then the red LED will go out in a few seconds after too).

To revert, carry out the same procedure in reverse.

Key Lock

Locking the buttons can prevent inadvertent adjustment of the settings of the mic. Useful when it is unattended etc.

To Activate the Key Lock, push and hold the top **80 Hz LP Filter** and **-10 dB Pad** keys for 2 seconds:



until the red Aim Logo Key flashes twice.

When in locked mode, any key pushed will flash to show you have pushed a button, but the mode will not change.

To Unlock, push and hold the top two keys for 2 seconds until the red Aim key flashes again.

Notes: while the LEDs are set to Off mode, when switching modes or changing settings the respective LED will briefly illuminate to confirm operation and will go out after a few seconds. The Polar Pattern LED will also flash when changing capsule direction (Front or Back) in any of the 3 Cardioid modes, until everything is stabilised and optimum performance is achieved.

No matter which LED brightness mode is selected, the Peak Level Indicator will still function, unless that is separately disabled (see pg.9).

If you hold any buttons longer than 2 seconds, the mic will not change brightness mode or be able lock/ unlock (by design, in case something triggers these modes by accident).

All settings are stored until changed, even if the mic is powered down.

Take the Shock

Your ESSENCE is equipped with an integral direct-to-stand mount thread in the base of the microphone, which makes setting up in tight spaces a breeze.

Aim's custom capsule holder is also made from an anti-vibration synthetic rubber material, rather than a rigid plastic that's used in many other mics. This means it will protect your takes from most knocks and bumps that could ruin a recording.

But for the absolutely best shock-mounting experience and if you want additional mounting options, we've developed the **ORBIT**, our *optional* revolutionary and patent-pending multi-position Shock Mount.

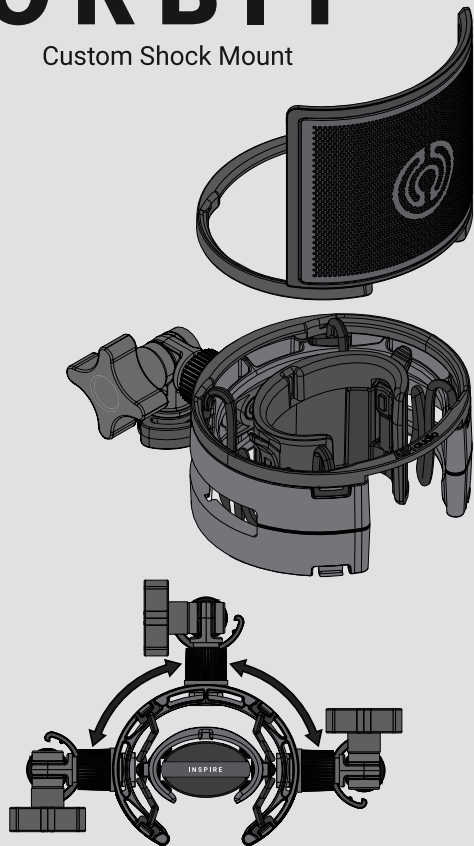
Many years in development, our team precisely worked out how to make the ultimate mounting solution for our mics. Unlike regular elastic, our Custom Lyres also give maximum attenuation of extraneous stand-borne noise, rumble and vibrations and without the potential for sagging over time - they're virtually indestructible too!

While Aim mics have a great integrated dual Steel Mesh pop filter, to help catch the very worst plosives we developed the **SENTRY** Pop Filter.

Made with coated stainless steel and acid-etched hexagonal holes that have been aligned precisely, our custom Pop Filter has been designed to catch great vocals, with an acoustic performance that's perfect for plosive control, without reducing top end clarity. Plus, placing it on ORBIT is simplicity itself - the integrated magnets means it just sits exactly where it is needed!

ORBIT

Custom Shock Mount



Find out more about ORBIT:
aimaudio.com/orbit





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follow us:

@aimaudioberlin

aimaudio.com

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