

THE POSITIONING & USE OF MICROPHONES & SPEAKERS

VERY IMPORTANT: When using a mic, especially with a weak voice, KEEP IT CLOSE! Having the foam windscreen touching the lower lip is best - ideally not more than 1/4" away.

LET THE MIC DO THE WORK FOR YOU. With the mic close, you can get the greatest amplification with the least tiring effort and the least problem with feedback. You can get the full effect of any dynamics of your speech. And you can get natural, consistent sound without the amplification dropping off and coming back up if the mic and your mouth sometimes come close and sometimes are farther apart.

The mic should be positioned just at or just below the lip-line. Keeping the mic to one side, not in the middle, will cut down on windy, hissy sounds as from "s" and "p" and make your voice much more pleasant to listen to. You may find a dramatic difference in pick-up from one side of the mouth to the other. EXPERIMENT to find your best placement.

Many mics sound better if you talk over the top or across the face, not directly into them. And then listeners can see your mouth movements and facial expressions, an important part of any conversation.

People often find that the easiest way to use a **hand-held mic** is to put the cord around the back of the neck and let the mic dangle down in front, where it can be picked up and used when needed. **Be sure to start out, right at the beginning, holding a hand mic in your non-dominant hand.** The tendency is to pick up the mic with your "good" hand, but it is very difficult to switch later to the other hand in order to leave your dominant hand free for writing and other tasks.

SHAKY HANDS?? POOR GRIP?? You may be able to use a handheld mic by bracing 2 fingers or the palm or the heel of the hand on your chin. This often works quite well.

An amplifier's own handheld mic will often provide the best sound quality and greatest amplification at the least expense. However, those who cannot hold a mic or need both hands free will be able to get good results by choosing among several alternative mics and mic supports.

When a **headset mic, headband mic, or collar mic** is being tried for the first time, the user or therapist should hold the mic in the hand and experiment to find the best pick-up position first, before putting the mic on the head or neck. Once you know the spot you are aiming for, it is much quicker and easier and less annoying to adjust the mic and/or support than if you just put it on immediately and then start experimenting.



People at the same location much of the time (desk, chair, bed, etc.) and people using wheelchairs - may want to use a **gooseneck support** for the handheld mics. A pinch clamp allows mic insertion or removal in just a few seconds. For those with reasonable head control, this arrangement allows easy use of the mic, free of connecting wires and supports attached to the head. A slight turn of the head puts the lips near the mic to speak and a slight turn the other way will reduce the amplification of breathing, coughing, sneezing, etc.

For those special situations in which a **contact/throat mic** is being used, experimentation will be needed to find the best pick-up spot on the neck.

When POSITIONING AN AMPLIFIER'S SPEAKER, remember that it must face into an open area - not into a wall or piece of furniture or someone's body. In small rooms or elevators, the volume may have to be adjusted down to avoid feedback. Wheelchair users, with an amplifier mounted on the chair, must be careful not to stop to talk with the speaker facing right into a wall, cabinet, etc. If sitting at a table or desk, a waistband amplifier may have to be moved around to the side or removed and set on the table/desk.

If using a wireless system where the mic is using a transmitter and not plugged in to the speaker, the mic and speaker must be separated by at least several feet to avoid feedback.

NOTE: POSITIONING IS IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE, TOO! A person who is positioned, as much as possible, with head erect, airway open and shoulders back to allow full use of the lungs will be able to produce a louder, clearer voice with less effort than someone who is slumped over.

MICROPHONE HANDLING AND CARE

REMEMBER, IF HAND-HOLDING THE MIC, USE YOUR NON-DOMINANT HAND.

MICS AND MIC CORDS WILL OFTEN TRANSMIT SOUNDS FROM TOUCH, BENDING AND VIBRATION. **DON'T HANDLE THEM ANY MORE THAN NECESSARY.** If the mic is hand held, hold it steady. If you rub your hand up and down on the mic or fiddle with the cord, your listeners will hear very annoying scritchies and scrunches. If the mic is on a gooseneck or stand, keep your hands off the mic and mic support once you have them adjusted. And don't drum your fingers on the podium or table top.

DON'T CUP YOUR HAND OVER THE MIC. Actors or singers may do this to get a special effect - and they are usually using a mixing system. If you do it, you'll just have feedback and pick-up problems.

MICS AND MOISTURE AREN'T A GOOD COMBINATION. Spit happens! So if your mic has a removable windscreen, use it faithfully. If your mic has no wind screen, get one if possible. (It will improve sound quality too, by cutting down on windy and hissy sounds.) Meanwhile, check the mic covering or end of the voice tube for accumulation of food particles or hardened saliva. Clean them out gently with a softish, dry brush—don't get water into the mic or scratch it. (NOTE: Wash windscreens often for hygienic reasons. After washing, blot dry and then wait until well air dried before putting back on the mic. If a windscreen fits too loosely and drops off to easily fasten it with a small rubber band - or use a tiny dot of Prit-type paste or glue. Be sure the paste/glue does not get into any of the mic openings. Replace windscreens if they begin to break up.)

MIC CORDS ARE SENSITIVE TO CRUSHING - more sensitive than lamp cord, for instance. Take care to avoid cords being walked on or having something set on them or pinched in doors or drawers.

IF YOU HAVE TO REMOVE THE MIC PLUG, PULL ON THE PLUG, NOT THE CORD. On most mics, the cord and plug pull apart fairly easily. Also, use care not to kink or fold the cord sharply, especially at the mic and plug connection areas, which are the most vulnerable.

IF YOUR MIC CORD IS LONGER THAN NEEDED coil the excess amount loosely (around 4 fingers is a good size)and fasten gently with a twist tie. This is much safer than letting it dangle and get caught in things, which might pull it out of your hand or off your head.

MANY MICS CAN BE PERMANENTLY DAMAGED IF DROPPED ON A HARD FLOOR, SO IT PAYS TO BE CAREFUL. In general, the larger the head of the mic, the more likely it is to be damaged by dropping.

ALL EXTERIOR PARTS OF YOUR AMPLIFIER CAN BE CLEANED by wiping with a cloth just dampened with Lysol or similar disinfecting spray. DO NOT spray the instrument itself. DO NOT get actual drops of moisture into the mic, speaker or any other openings.

DEVELOP GOOD MIC USE & HANDLING HABITS TO BEGIN WITH - IT WILL BE WORTH THE EFFORT!

**IF YOU HAVE ALREADY ACQUIRED POOR HANDLING HABITS,
YOU WILL FIND IT WORTHWHILE TO WORK AT IMPROVING THEM!!!**

**Most of these suggestions should apply to the use of any mics or amplifiers, ours or others.
We hope they will help and that you will have easy and trouble-free use of your amplifier.**

If you have any questions about general mic or amplifier use and care,
or problems with equipment purchased from us, please contact us.

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