



bluebird ^{SL}

LARGE-DIAPHRAGM STUDIO CONDENSER MICROPHONE

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR PURCHASE

Congratulations on your purchase of the Bluebird SL! Here at Blue, we're known for designing and building the finest microphones available for studio, stage, film and broadcast use. Our microphones unite the heritage of the world's most respected classics with leading-edge technology, innovative engineering and inimitable styling.

With pristine sound and highly versatile performance, Bluebird SL flatters any sound source. Bluebird SL's proprietary hand-tuned capsule and transformerless design delivers extended upper clarity, smooth mid frequencies, and rich lows that make every detail of your sound come to life. Featuring a 100Hz high-pass filter and -20dB pad, Bluebird SL helps you capture standout vocal performances, express the true tone of guitars, piano and percussion, and enhance the warmth of stringed instruments and brass.



In order to familiarize yourself with the Bluebird SL's specialized and unique features, please read this manual thoroughly and try the suggested recording tips. With proper care and use, the Bluebird SL will reward you with many years of recording enjoyment. Unlike other Bluebirds you may know of, this one requires no feeding and there's no mess to clean up!

The Bluebird SL is a pressure gradient large-diaphragm condenser mic that employs an edge-terminated 6μ pure gold-sputtered mylar capsule membrane. Bluebird SL employs a transformerless Class A amplifier circuit to insure the most accurate and noise-free signal possible, with minimal distortion and coloration. What you hear at the input is what you get at the output. The Bluebird SL's tonal character makes it an ideal microphone for recording vocals, drums, electric guitar, piano, and

most acoustic instruments including difficult sources like saxophones, flutes, and strings.

The Bluebird SL includes a custom shockmount designed to isolate the microphone body from low frequency resonance (rumble).

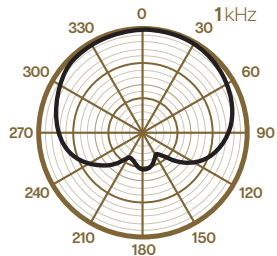
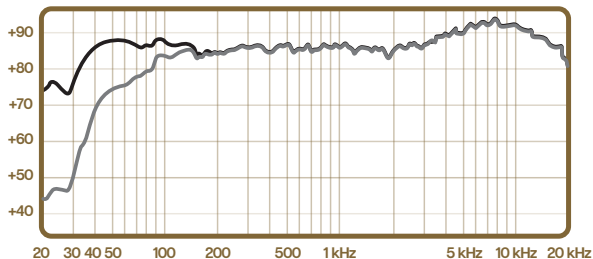
The Bluebird SL requires +48V phantom power and works great with audio interfaces, mixers and mic most mic preamps. For best performance and to avoid damage to the microphone's audio components, we recommend the following procedure:

- *Set mic preamp gain to its nominal position ("off").*
- *Mute the input channel in your DAW or mixing console.*
- *Connect the female end of your balanced XLR microphone cable to the Bluebird SL's output jack.*
- *Connect the male end to your balanced console input or balanced mic preamp input.*
- *Switch on phantom power.*
- *Un-mute all previously muted signal paths and adjust mic preamp gain as necessary.*

The Bluebird SL is a cardioid mic, and is designed to reject off-axis sound arriving at the back of the capsule. Once the Bluebird SL is on the mic stand and powered up, make sure that the active, on-axis side of the capsule (the side aligned with and directly above the Blue logo) is facing the desired sound source. Engage the -20dB pad if you're recording a loud sound source with sharp transients like a snare drum, toms, electric guitar amp, or a powerful vocalist. Unless you're recording a very low frequency instrument, like a kick drum or a bass amp, it is typically good practice to engage the 100Hz high-pass filter to make sure that very low frequency and subsonic rumble or peaks don't compromise the headroom of your recordings.

BLUEBIRD SL CAPSULE FREQUENCY RESPONSE & POLAR PATTERNS

These frequency charts are only a starting point to give you a basis of the sound provided. How the microphone reacts in a particular application will differ greatly because of many variables. Room acoustics, distance from sound source (proximity), tuning of the instrument, and mic cabling are only a few of the interacting issues. For an artist or an engineer, how the microphones are used creates the basis of the sound.



Here are some application tips that will help you get the most out of Bluebird SL.

VOCALS



Here's a little-known secret – vocalists love singing into unique and impressive mics like the Bluebird SL. For a “big” vocal sound, position the vocalist within one to six inches of the capsule depending on the volume of the singer's voice. Tilt the microphone upward (toward the forehead) for more projection and head tone, straight on at the mouth for maximum brightness and intelligibility, or down toward the chest for more robust full lows and smoother highs. Engage the high-pass filter as necessary to make sure low frequency and subsonic rumble don't compromise the headroom of your vocal track.

ELECTRIC GUITAR



Because of its robust characteristics, the Bluebird SL is an excellent mic for any clean guitar sound. Position the capsule toward the center of the speaker to capture more highs, or toward the edge of the cone for a fuller sound with more bottom end. Engage the high-pass filter as necessary. For overdriven or distorted tones, move the mic towards the outer edge of the cone, or back it away from the amp a foot or more to add a little room sound and soften the extreme high end. Give the Bluebird SL a try on electric bass, blues harmonica, and organ too!

ACOUSTIC GUITAR



Large diaphragm mics typically require careful placement when used on acoustic guitar, but the Bluebird SL's shimmering high end is well-suited to this job. For a balanced sound with plenty of sparkling high end, place the microphone facing the guitar neck, right where the neck joins the body (usually around the 12th – 14th frets). For starters, keep the mic as close as possible, and tilt the capsule toward the soundhole to capture a blend of low end and pick sound. If you need more lows, move the microphone closer to the soundhole. For more high-end detail, move the Bluebird SL farther from the guitar, either at the same neck position, or above the instrument up by the guitarist's head. Engage the high-pass filter as necessary to make sure low frequency and subsonic rumble don't compromise the headroom of your guitar track.

STRINGS



Because of its natural highs and soft midrange characteristics, the Bluebird SL is an excellent choice for miking all members of the bowed string family. In general, the capsule should be positioned toward the instrument's bridge to pick up a blend of resonance and bow sound. On bass and cello, placement from 3 to 6 inches in front of the bridge is usually ideal. Engage the high-pass filter as necessary. For violin and viola, it is preferable to position the microphone 1 to 2 feet above the instrument. Angle the capsule toward the bridge for more bow sound and low tones, or move the microphone toward the tuning pegs to capture a more diffuse, bright, and blended sound.

DRUMS



The Bluebird SL's slim profile and fast transient response offer numerous advantages when recording drums. For kit and hand drums, begin by placing the microphone two to four inches above the rim or hoop (where the head is secured to the shell). Angle the capsule toward the player's stick or hand to pick up more attack and definition. Positioning the capsule toward the shell will soften the sharp attack of a hand drum, or pick up more of the bright, crackling buzz from a snare. Engage the high-pass filter as necessary. Moving the microphone closer to a drum generally increases the low end, shell resonance, and separation from other sound sources, while more distant placement emphasizes the interaction of the drum and the environment, producing a blended, airier sound.

SAXES, FLUTES AND REEDS



The extended high-end response of the Bluebird SL makes it an ideal choice for modern tonality when miking saxophones and other wind instruments. For soprano sax, clarinet, and related instruments, position the capsule directly above and in front of the keys between the middle of the horn and the lowest pads. Engage the high-pass filter as necessary. Try moving the mic up or down along the length of the body to adjust the balance of airy highs (toward the mouthpiece) and cutting midrange (toward the bell). On flute, start by placing the Bluebird SL above the middle of the instrument, and move the capsule closer to the mouthpiece if more highs and breath sound is desired. For other members of the saxophone family, start by placing the Bluebird SL two to six inches in front of the lip of the bell. Angle the capsule up toward the mouthpiece to capture more air, brightness, and high notes. For a mellower sound, orienting the capsule toward the floor emphasizes the low range of the sax, and tames the biting upper mids that project straight out of the bell.

We hope you enjoy your purchase and find the Bluebird SL to be an ideal mic for a wide spectrum of instrumentation and recording needs.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS:

- Transducer Type: Condenser, Pressure Gradient
- Polar Pattern: Cardioid
- Frequency Response: 20Hz-20kHz
- Sensitivity: 28.5 mV/Pa at 1 kHz (1 pa = 94 dB SPL)
- Output Impedance: 50 ohm
- Rate Load Impedance: not less than 1k ohm
- Maximum SPL: 138 dB SPL (1k, THD 0.5%)
- S/N Ratio: 82.3 dB-A
- Noise Level: 11.7 dB-A
- Dynamic Range: 126.3 dB
- Power Requirements: +48V DC Phantom Power
- Weight: 455g
- Dimensions: 222.5mm x 47.5mm
- HPF: 100Hz, 12db per octave
- PAD: -20dB

WARRANTY

Blue Microphones warrants its hardware product against defects in materials and workmanship for a period of TWO (2) YEARS from the date of original retail purchase, provided the purchase was made from an authorized Blue Microphones dealer. This warranty is void if the equipment is altered, misused, mishandled, maladjusted, suffers excessive wear, or is serviced by any parties not authorized by Blue Microphones. The warranty does not include transportation costs incurred because of the need for service unless arranged for in advance. Blue Microphones reserves the right to make changes in design and improve upon its products without obligation to install these improvements in any of its products previously manufactured. For warranty service or for a copy of Blue's Warranty Policy including a complete list of exclusions and limitations, contact Blue at 818-879-5200. In keeping with our policy of continued product improvement, Baltic Latvian Universal Electronics (BLUE) reserves the right to alter specifications without prior notice



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