

The 8-Ball





Congratulations.

You have just purchased a very unique and innovative condenser microphone – *The 8-Ball*.™ Here at Blue, we are known for designing and building the finest microphones available for studio, stage, film and broadcast use. Our microphones represent the next step in leading-edge technology, innovative engineering and inimitable styling. The 8-Ball is the product of our unrestrained imagination and our years of microphone design and manufacturing experience. There is simply nothing else like it. But don't just take our word for it...

"This thing is smooth baby, and I do mean smooth. There's not enough 'o's' in smooth."
— The Chairman

"Though not approved for tournament play, we feel this 8-Ball will make an excellent addition to any mic collection."

— Vincent "Snookie" Carbona, President, International Poolhall Association
(and freelance loan "specialist")

"This is one 8-ball I WON'T put in the corner pocket . . . but I WILL put it on a mic stand . . . behind my back . . . blindfolded!"

— Mississippi Biggs, World-Renowned Pool Player

"Yeah, it sounds totally awesome, but, like — where are the 'yes' or 'no' answers when I flip it upside down?"

— Perry Nuttal, lead singer, *The Purple Foam*



We know you hate to read manuals. So do we! But because The 8-Ball is such a unique recording and sound-reinforcement tool, we really hope you take the time to familiarize yourself with its features. And be sure to try the suggested application tips that are designed to help you get the most out of The 8-Ball. You might just learn something too! With proper care and feeding, The 8-Ball will reward you with many years of recording and performance enjoyment. Now on with the show! (No chalk required.).

8-Ball suggested applications

The 8-Ball was designed for both stage and studio use. Because of its rugged construction, cardioid pickup pattern and high-frequency extension, you can use The 8-Ball anywhere you'd use a traditional condenser mic where clarity and high frequency detail is essential: snare drum, acoustic and clean electric guitars, mandolin, banjo, drum overheads, hihats, strings, orchestral recording, and male and female vocals.

The 8-Ball features a unique swivel mount located on the bottom center of the mic body. Be sure to mount The 8-Ball on a standard-thread counter-weighted tripod mic stand. Though The 8-Ball is extremely durable, we would hate to see it fall due to an inadequate stand. Also, be sure to position The 8-Ball over the center leg of the tripod to further prevent tipping. Once mounted, you can gently pivot The 8-Ball back and forth for optimum positioning in front of the sound source. For greater isolation from low frequency resonance, mount The 8-Ball in the optional Ringer™ shock mount available from your authorized Blue dealer.



HEADS UP!: Forceful positioning of the swivel mount can result in damage not covered by the warranty.

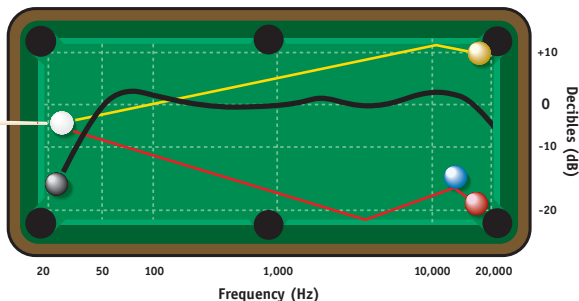
The 8-Ball requires +48 volt phantom power which most FOH consoles, recording consoles and outboard mic preamps supply. If your preamp does not have a phantom power facility, several external power units are available from various manufacturers. It is important to note that some units, though



8-Ball Frequency Response

This frequency chart is only a start. It gives the recorder 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.



rated at +48 volts, may supply insufficient or unstable power which can result in distortion or degraded performance when used with The 8-Ball. To avoid damage to audio components when connecting phantom power, always follow this simple procedure:

1. Set mic preamp gain to its nominal position (“off”).
2. Mute console master, stage monitor and mains feeds, headphones or foldback sends, and studio monitors.
3. Connect the female end of your balanced XLR microphone cable to The 8-Ball’s output jack located on the back of the mic body directly opposite the Blue logo. Connect the male end to your balanced console input or balanced mic preamp input.
4. Switch on phantom power.
5. Un-mute all previously muted signal paths and adjust mic preamp gain as necessary.

To disconnect or reroute The 8-Ball, be sure to mute all audio signal paths before you disengage phantom power. Wait 30 seconds to allow all components in the signal path to discharge before disconnecting the mic.



Once The 8-Ball is on the stand and powered up, make sure that the active, on-axis side of the diaphragm (the side with the BLUE logo) is facing the desired source.

“Ok, so how do I get the most out of my 8-Ball?”

The following application hints are intended to give you a good starting point to get the most out of this unique audio tool both in the studio and on stage. As with all applications however, there are no rules, only guidelines. Trust your gear and trust your ears. If it *sounds* good, it is good!



On Stage

These mic placement recommendations apply to the studio as well as the stage but with one caveat. Due to the lack of acoustic isolation in the live environment, it is generally desirable to employ “close-miking” techniques to achieve better separation between instruments and to avoid monitor bleed, which can cause feedback problems. However, you may want to experiment with The 8-Ball on stage as well. Due to its anti-resonant ABS shell and spherical shape, The 8-Ball exhibits excellent off-axis rejection and feedback suppression characteristics, opening up a whole new world of sound reinforcement miking possibilities.



Vocals

For a “big” vocal sound, position the vocalist within one to four inches of the diaphragm. There is no need to worry about overloading the microphone, but be sure to use a high-quality sonically neutral pop filter to control plosives and protect the diaphragm.

For lead vocals, tilt the microphone slightly upward (toward the forehead) for more projection and head tone, straight on at the mouth for maximum brightness



The 8-Ball is the result of countless hours of intense scientific research



and intelligibility, or down toward the chest for more robust full lows and smoother highs. For background vocals, position The 8-Ball 2 - 4 inches from the vocalist for an airier sound.

Electric Guitar

Because of its extended high frequency response and detail, The 8-Ball is an excellent mic for any clean or distorted guitar amp. Position the diaphragm toward the center of the speaker or dust cap to capture more highs, or toward the edge of the speaker cone for a fuller sound with more low end.

To experiment with overdriven or distorted tones, move the mic towards the outer edge of the speaker cone, or back it away from the amp a foot or more to blend room tone with direct pickup and soften high frequencies. Give The 8-Ball a try on blues harmonica and organ too!





Acoustic Guitar

Condenser mics require careful placement when used on acoustic guitar, and The 8-Ball's rich tone and detail are well-suited to this task. For a balanced sound with plenty of sparkling high end, position the diaphragm facing the neck where it joins the body (usually between the 12th and 14th frets.)

Initially, keep the mic as close to the instrument as possible, tilting the diaphragm toward the soundhole to capture a blend of low frequencies and pick sound. If you need more low frequencies, move The 8-Ball closer to the soundhole. For more high frequency detail, move The 8-Ball farther away from the guitar, either at the same neck position, or above the instrument near the guitarist's head.



Strings

Because of its detailed natural highs and slightly attenuated midrange characteristics, The 8-Ball is an excellent choice for miking all members of the bowed string family. In general, the diaphragm should be angled toward the instrument's bridge to pick up a blend of body resonance and bow sound. On bass and cello, placement from 3 to 6 inches in front of the bridge is usually ideal. For violin and viola, it is preferable to position the microphone 1 to 2 feet above the instrument. Angle the diaphragm toward the bridge for more bow sound and low tones, or toward the tuning pegs to capture a more diffuse, brighter sound.



Drums

The 8-Ball's high SPL capability and excellent transient response offer numerous advantages for 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).





*The world famous
Giant 8-Ball, Route 60
south of Zanesville, Ohio*

Angle the mic toward the player's stick or hand to pick up more attack and definition. Orienting the diaphragm toward the shell will soften the sharp attack of a hand drum, or pick up more of the bright, crackling buzz from a snare drum. 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. For hihat, place the 8-Ball directly above the hats, or aim it at the rim for a little more sizzle. And don't forget to try a pair on overheads! We're sure you'll be delighted with the results.



Saxophones, Flutes, and Reeds

The smooth, natural high frequency response of The 8-Ball makes it an ideal choice for contemporary reed and other wind instruments. For soprano sax, clarinet, oboe and related instruments, position the mic directly above and in front of the keys between the middle of the horn and the lowest pads. 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 8-Ball above the middle of the instrument, and move the diaphragm closer to the mouthpiece if more high frequencies and breath sounds are desired. For other members of the saxophone family, start by placing The 8-Ball two to six inches in front of the lip of the bell. Angle the mic upward toward the mouthpiece to capture more air, brightness, and high notes. For a mellower sound, orienting the diaphragm toward the floor will emphasize the low range of the sax, and will tame the biting upper midrange that projects straight out of the bell.

Quality you can bank on — or in!

We're sure you'll be pleased with the results you get from The 8-Ball, whether it's in the studio or on stage. At Blue we're committed to bringing you the finest in technology and craftsmanship, along with attention to detail that runs throughout our entire line of award-winning mics. Thanks for putting The 8-Ball "in your pocket!"



Specifications:

Acoustical Operating Principal:
Pressure Gradient

Polar Pattern: Cardioid

Frequency Response: 35Hz – 20kHz

Sensitivity: (1kHz into 1k Ω) 10mV/Pa

Rated Impedance: 50 Ω

Rated Load Impedance: Not less than 1k Ω

Maximum SPL: (THD 0.5%) 150 dB SPL

Noise Level: 22dB "A" Weighted

Maximum Output Level: +14 dBu
(2k Ω load, 0.15% THD)

Power Requirement: +48V DC
phantom-power \pm 4V

Power Consumption: 1.5 mA

Optional Accessories: Cranberry (CB) or Kiwi (KB) high definition mic cable
The Ringer — Custom shockmount for The 8-Ball and The Ball



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In keeping with our policy of continued product improvement, Baltic Latvian Universal Electronics (BLUE) reserves the right to alter specifications without prior notice.

Any attempt to sink The 8-Ball prematurely is not recommended and will result in loss of game.

Made in Latvia.



Microphones

Think you can't afford the best? Think again.™