



INSPIRE + PACK

Multipattern 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 INSPIRE 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 INSPIRE + PACK contains the following:

- Aim **INSPIRE** Microphone
- Aim **ORBIT** Shockmount (*with Resorber Ring*)
- Aim **SENTRY** magnetic Pop Filter
- Soft Carry Pouch/Dust Cap
- 5/8" to 3/8" Mic Stand Thread Adapter*
- User Manual
- Custom Carry Case

** 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 troubleshooting.

Conformity

INSPIRE 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
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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.

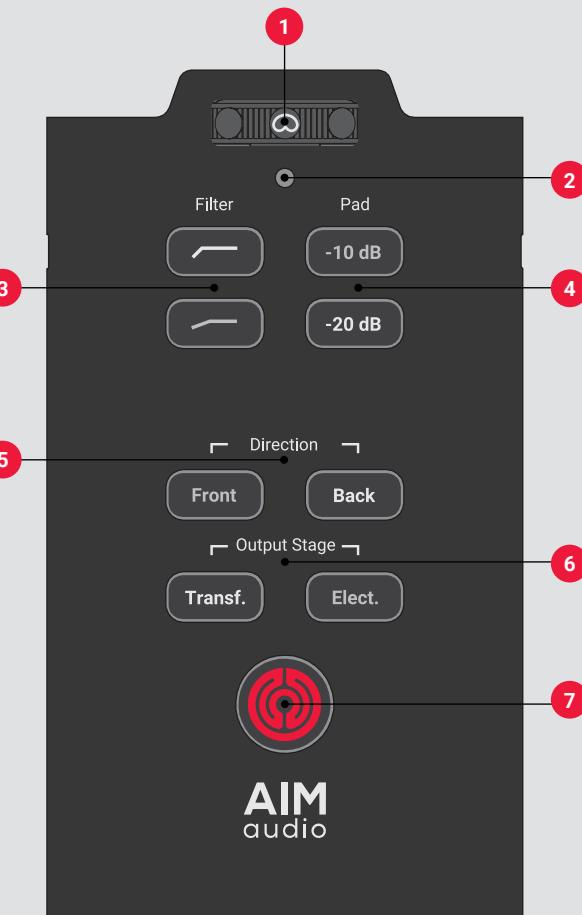
When disconnecting a cable, do not apply extensive force - you should always pull on the connector and not on the cable itself.

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.

INSPIRE

Multipattern Condenser Studio Microphone



Mic Controls

The **INSPIRE** is a trailblazing multi-pattern studio microphone, which features a high-end capsule and unique audio technology, in a sleek and distinctive chassis. Its five polar patterns will help to ensure you are prepared for any recording scenario. While its LED backlit controls make it easy to spot what the settings are at a glance.

1 Polar Pattern Wheel - *page 8*

2 Peak Level LED - *page 9*

3 Filters - *page 10*

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7 Aim Key
LED dimming, Key Lock - *page 14*

1 Polar Pattern Wheel

INSPIRE's 5 distinct Polar Patterns are selected by moving the wheel. Left to Right, these are:



To select your desired Directivity Pattern, turn the wheel to whatever symbol is illuminated in the centre of the wheel.

 *Tip: when changing patterns, the LED in the wheel will flash and only stops flashing when the respective pattern polarisation voltages have stabilised.*

This gives you an indication that everything is performing and sounding at its best. Omni will always take the longest time for the electronics to stabilise.

The LED will also flash when changing capsule direction (front-back) in any of the 3x cardioid modes, until everything is stabilised and optimum performance is achieved.

For more specs on each Polar Pattern and tips on use - check out this guide on our website:



aimaudio.com/inspire-polar-patterns

2 Peak Level LED

The Peak Level LED can help you better catch the levels of your audio, in conjunction 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 Filters

INSPIRE has two Filters fitted that are handy for different applications.

To activate, push the respective key for the Filter required and it will illuminate. Pressing the same key will deactivate it 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.*



activates a **Roll Off** at 115 Hz

 *Tip: this gentler filter can help to limit proximity effect, which can affect the microphone's response to low frequencies when used close to a sound source.*

Note: only one Filter can be active at a time.

Selecting a different filter while the other is active will toggle between them.

4 Pads

The two Pads in INSPIRE can help you set your gain structure and levels better for louder sources, to help minimise input distortion and clipping.

Choose from either -10 or -20 dB settings.

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

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

Note: only one Pad can be active at a time.

Selecting a different Pad while the other is active will toggle between them.



5 Capsule Direction

In any of the 3 Cardioid modes, you can toggle and switch the directivity of the microphone capsule from either the **Front** or the **Back** sides.

To toggle, push the respective key for the direction required and it will illuminate.

 *Tip: ideal if you are recording a separate vocalist or wish to put the mic right up to a guitar amp etc. and want to better see the Peak LED and settings.*

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 preamps/ interfaces/ mixers can normally provide.

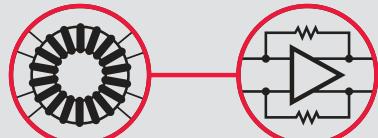
Therefore, we fitted a 'charge pump' to the mic so it can power and drive the relay without an external supply.

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.

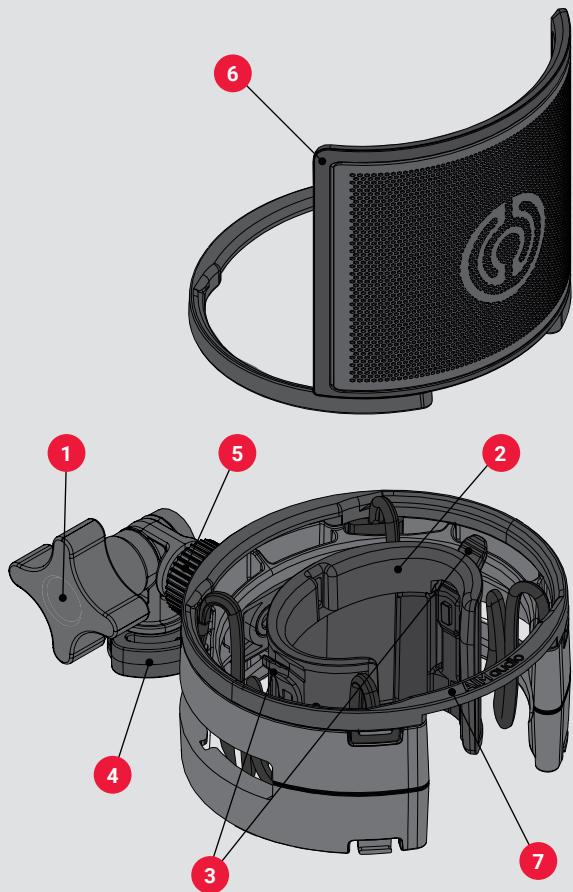
No matter which LED brightness mode is selected, the Peak Level Indicator will still function, unless that is separately disabled (see pg.9).

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.

ORBIT

Custom Shock Mount



Take the Shock

INSPIRE 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.

With your INSPIRE + PACK and for the ultimate shock-mounting experience, we've included **ORBIT**, our revolutionary patent-pending multi-position Shock Mount and the **SENTRY** Magnetic Pop Filter as part of the package. Made from extremely strong Long Glass Reinforced Nylon, ORBIT is lightweight and very simple to use.

- 1 Tightening Clamp - *page 18*
- 2 ORBIT Mic Grip - *page 19*
- 3 Grip Release Tabs - *page 19*
- 4 Removable Cable Grip - *page 19*
- 5 190° Positioning Clutch - *page 20*
- 6 SENTRY Magnetic Pop Filter - *page 22*
- 7 Magnetic Resorber Ring - *page 23*

Setting up

Your ORBIT Custom Shock Mount has had many years in development, our team precisely working out how to make the ultimate mounting solution for our mic. Unlike regular elastic, our Custom Lyres give maximum attenuation of extraneous stand-borne noise, rumble and vibrations and without the potential for sagging over time.

In addition, the half-open front makes the controls on the microphone easily accessible.

As ORBIT is such a revolutionary Shock Mount, there are some differences from other designs, in how to use and set it up. So, although we have instructions in text here, we've also made a few video guides for each step, to best show how dead simple it is to use in practice.



aimaudio.com/manual-videos

First steps

Any regular good quality straight or boom arm microphone stand will work well with ORBIT, but for the best performance, make sure you have a good and solid base that suits your intended positioning purpose.

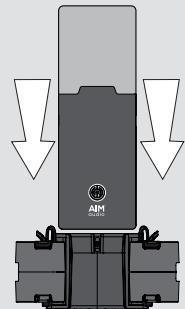
Attach the Shock Mount to your stand by screwing the base of the Mount into the stand. Then adjust the overall Mount angle using the **1 Tightening Clamp**.

 **Tip:** use the supplied brass mic thread adaptor as/ if required, based on your local region's standards.

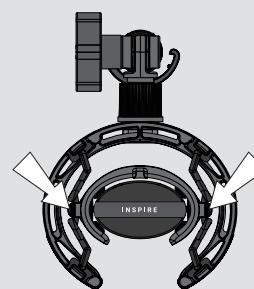
Place the mic

To properly fit an Aim Mic into the Mount, simply slide it down firmly in the **2 ORBIT Mic Grip** from the top side.

The mic should be securely captured by the dual rubber inserts in the Grip.



Test by pulling downwards gently on the mic while in the Mount. If it has been pushed down too far, then refit before letting go.



To safely remove the microphone from the Mount, push down both **3 Grip Release Tabs** on the sides.

Do this with both thumbs on the Tabs, at the same time as pushing the mic **Upwards** out of the grip using your fingers on the bottom of the mic.

Hook it up

Connect the XLR microphone cable to the mic.

The integrated **4 Removable Cable Grip** in the Mount helps to isolate rumble and handling noise transmitted through the cable.

 **Tip:** best practice is to loosely loop your cable downwards from the mic and then into the clip so it isn't too tight. If you reposition the mic after fitting it to the mount, un-clip and re-clip so the cable remains as free and loose as possible into the mic.

Unique Positioning Technology

With our patent-pending mechanism, you can easily change the angle of the mounting position by 190 degrees, to suit whatever direction you want to 'Aim' the capsule at.

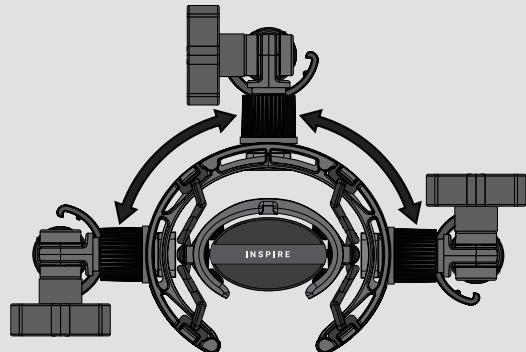
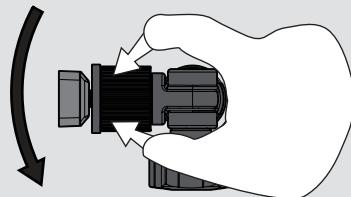
We've all been there with Shock Mounts. You're all set up, but you then realise that you need to move the angle of the mic to the source and it probably means completely moving the stand. Well no more! Side mounting, front, back or any position in between, you've got it.

ORBIT is ideal for INSPIRE's Back mode too. This allows for positioning the mount in such a way that the controls or Peak LEDs are visible to the engineer, making it perfect for vocalists or for miking up guitars and amps etc.

Get it angled just as you like

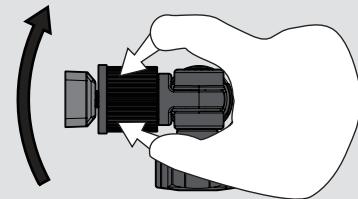
First, if you have a cable secured in the Cable Grip, it is recommended that you un-clip it during the process and then only reattach the cable when the angle is set. Now hold the front of the shock mount with one hand.

With the other hand, use your finger and thumb to unscrew and loosen the outer ring of the **5 190° Positioning Clutch** counter-clockwise.



Once there is enough slack, move the outer ring around its circumference, until the desired position and angle is achieved.

When the mount is positioned where you want it, re-tighten the Clutch ring clockwise and you're ready to go.



 **Tip:** if ORBIT has been stationary for some time, there is a chance that the rubber grommet inside the Clutch may 'stick' to the outer frame, which might mean it may be harder to move than usual. If that is the case just use a little more force to 'un-stick' and release the rubber until it moves. You won't break the mount, it's made out of extremely strong Long Glass Reinforced Nylon.

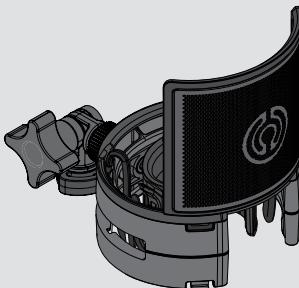
Catch the pops

Our mics have a great integrated dual Steel Mesh pop filter, but to help catch the very worst plosives we developed the **6 SENTRY Pop Filter**.

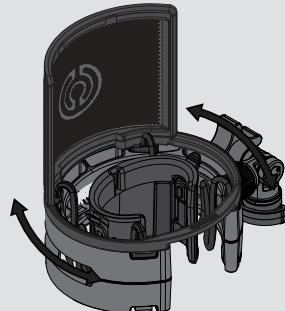
Made with coated stainless steel and acid-etched hexagonal holes that have been aligned precisely, our custom Pop Filter has been designed to catch great vocals, with an acoustic performance that's perfect for plosive control, without reducing top end clarity.

It works both ways

Placing SENTRY is simplicity itself.



Just drop the filter onto the top of ORBIT (make sure to remove the Resorber Ring first) and the super strong magnets will hold it in place - no matter the shock mount's angle.

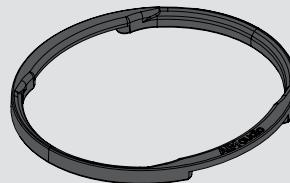


You can also reverse BEAK to face the other way, if you are using INSPIRE's Back mode and have ORBIT's Clutch moved to a side.

De-Resonate

Many other Shock Mounts on the market have their own resonance that can get into recordings. ORBIT is open at the front, for control access, plus as ORBIT is designed to be lightweight yet extremely strong, we used new materials which meant there can be some small unavoidable resonances. However, with the SENTRY installed, these are completely cancelled out.

But for those times you don't need a Pop Filter, we developed the **7 Magnetic Resorber Ring**.



For the best audio performance, the Resorber Ring should be placed on the ORBIT at all times when SENTRY is **not** installed.

Just drop it on and the magnets will do the rest for you. When not in use - keep it in the case.

 **Tip:** don't use the Resorber Ring and SENTRY at the same time. While the strong magnets may hold them together slightly, the high quality pop filtering performance of SENTRY may be affected as it will sit on the mount higher than intended.



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