

Handheld Condenser Microphones

By GeorgePetersen

Dynamic microphones have been the standard in vocal performance mics for decades. However, if you're looking for extended bandwidth and fast transient response in a handheld, a condenser mic is just the ticket. With that in mind, we present this look at some current condenser models. All models listed require phantom powering. No frequency response data is given; a "flat" response is rarely desirable and many models include LF or upper mid presence boosts to add character or intelligibility. Weight can be a factor, particularly with certain vocalists using a handheld mic over extended periods. And street pricing is provided for your convenience.



AKG C5

Street Price: \$179

Pattern: Cardioid

Max SPL: 145 dB

Sensitivity: 4 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 25 dB (A)

Weight: 12.2 ounces

Notes: Presence boost adapter offers two tonal choices.

akg.com

Lewitt MTP 940 CM

Street Price: \$599

Pattern: Switchable supercardioid/cardioid/wide-cardioid

Max SPL: 156 dB

Sensitivity: 10 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 9 dB (A)

Weight: 11.7 ounces

Notes: Three-way LF rolloff; -6/-12 dB pad; three pattern choices.

lewitt-audio.com

Miktek PM5

Street Price: \$599

Pattern: Cardioid

Max SPL: 142 dB

Sensitivity: 18 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 19 dB (A)

Weight: 10.4 ounces

Notes: Handheld version of C5 studio mic.

miktekaudio.com

Milab LSR-3000

Street Price: \$959

Pattern: Cardioid

Max SPL: 150/138 dB (pad in/out)

Sensitivity: 13 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 21 dB (A)

Weight: 10.4 ounces

Notes: 12 dB pad and 80 Hz low-cut switches.

milabmic.com

Apex 515

Street Price: \$119

Pattern: Cardioid/omni/supercardioid

Max SPL: 134 dB

Sensitivity: 13.8 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 17 dB (A)

Weight: 9 ounces

Notes: Includes three interchangeable capsules.

apexelectronics.com

Audio-Technica AE5400

Street Price: \$379

Pattern: Cardioid

Max SPL: 157/147 dB (pad in/out)

Sensitivity: 10.0 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 14 dB (A)

Weight: 11.6 ounces

Notes: Same capsule as AT4050 studio mic; 10 dB pad; LF roll-off.

audio-technica.com

Audix VX5

Street Price: \$249

Pattern: Supercardioid

Max SPL: 140+ dB (with pad in)

Sensitivity: 5 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 26 dB (A)

Weight: 8 ounces

Notes: 10 dB pad and LF roll-off switches.

audixusa.com

Neumann KMS 105

Street Price: \$699

Pattern: Supercardioid

Max SPL: 150 dB

Sensitivity: 4.5 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 18 dB (A)

Weight: 10.6 ounces

Notes: Cardioid KMS104 version also available.

neumannusa.com

Peavey CM1

Street Price: \$129

Pattern: Cardioid

Max SPL: 136 dB

Sensitivity: 7.1 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 24 dB (A)

Weight: 11.2 ounces

Notes: Non-reflective black matte finish.

peavey.com

RØDE S1

Street Price: \$329

Pattern: Supercardioid

Max SPL: 151 dB SPL

Sensitivity: 5.00 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 18 dB (A)

Weight: 10.9 ounces

Notes: Available in black or nickel finish.

rodemic.com

beyerdynamic TG V96c

Street Price: \$699

Pattern: Cardioid

Max SPL: 150 dB

Sensitivity: 4 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 20 dB (A)

Weight: 11.6 ounces

Notes: Operates on phantom down to 11 volts.

beyerdynamic.com

Blue enCORE 300

Street Price: \$199

Pattern: Cardioid

Max SPL: 146 dB

Sensitivity: 11 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: n/a

Weight: 13.4 ounces

Notes: Backlit logo indicates phantom power.

bluemic.com

CAD Audio C195

Street Price: \$99

Pattern: Cardioid

Max SPL: 132 dB

Sensitivity: 18 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 22 dB (A)

Weight: 10 ounces

Notes: Transformerless design.

cadmics.com

Schoeps CMH-64 U

Street Price: \$1,779

Pattern: Cardioid

Max SPL: 132 dB

Sensitivity: 13 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 24 dB

Weight: 6.7 ounces

Notes: CMH 641 U supercardioid version also avail.

schoeps.de

Sennheiser e965

Street Price: \$699

Pattern: Switchable cardioid/supercardioid

Max SPL: 152/142 dB (pad in/out)

Sensitivity: 7 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 21 dB (A)

Weight: 13.9 ounces

Notes: Switchable low-cut filter and 10 dB pad.

sennheiserusa.com

Shure KSM9

Street Price: \$699

Pattern: Switchable cardioid/supercardioid

Max SPL: 152 dB

Sensitivity: 2.81 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 22 dB (A)

Weight: 10.6 ounces

Notes: KSM9HS (switchable hypercardioid/subcardioid) version also offered.

shure.com

DPA d:facto II

Street Price: \$979

Pattern: Supercardioid

Max SPL: 160 dB

Sensitivity: 5 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 19 dB (A)

Weight: 10.9 ounces

Notes: Capsule removes to be used with various wireless transmitters.

dpamicrophones.com

Earthworks SR40V

Street Price: \$999

Pattern: Hypercardioid

Max SPL: 145 dB

Sensitivity: 10 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 22 dB (A)

Weight: 12.8 ounces

Notes: Bandwidth extends to 40 kHz.

earthworksaudio.com

Electro-Voice RE510

Street Price: \$249

Pattern: Supercardioid

Max SPL: 146 dB

Sensitivity: 3.2 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 22 dB (A)

Weight: 9.2 ounces

Notes: LF roll-off switch.

electrovoice.com

Sontronics STC-6

Street Price: \$219

Pattern: Cardioid

Max SPL: 140 dB

Sensitivity: 8 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 14 dB (A)

Weight: n/a

Notes: Switchable low-cut filter and 10 dB pad.

sontronics.com

Superlux PRO-238 MkII

Street Price: \$139

Pattern: Cardioid

Max SPL: 136 dB

Sensitivity: 10 mV/Pa

Self-Noise: 16 dB (A)

Weight: 13.8 ounces

Notes: 100 Hz low-cut filter.

superlux.us

Coming Next Month

AC Power Distro Systems

Systems for tying into power at a venue are something where a home-brew DIY approach won't cut it. We look into top-of-the-line models from a dozen manufacturers that bring safe, clean power to the stage.