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## FAQ - Stage floor mics

### What is a stage-floor microphone?

It is a microphone placed on the floor of a theater stage, usually near the front edge, to pick up actors. It is also called an "area mic" because it picks up over a broad area. It's also called a "boundary microphone" because it rests on a boundary or surface: the stage floor.

### Does the venue have an influence on feedback?

Yes. Our stage floor mics work great in theaters and auditoriums if the loudspeakers are placed close to the audience. Then feedback is not a problem. Some venues where feedback is likely to happen are:

- (1) Small venues such as nursing homes, night clubs, and music stores. Floor mics are not recommended for those venues.
- (2) Theaters with permanent loudspeakers that are close to or over the stage. They tend to cause feedback unless they are line arrays or column speakers. We recommend that you buy, borrow, or rent two portable PA speakers on stands, and place them close to the audience to prevent feedback.
- (3) Very live, reverberant rooms such as gymnasiums with lots of hard surfaces.

### Do your mics require phantom power?

Yes, 12 to 48 volts. That is supplied by most mixers. The mic simply plugs into the mixer mic input to receive power. If your mixer does not have phantom power, you need to get a phantom power supply such as the ART Phantom I, Behringer PS400, or Rolls PB23. Plug the mic into the phantom supply, and connect the supply output to your mixer mic input.

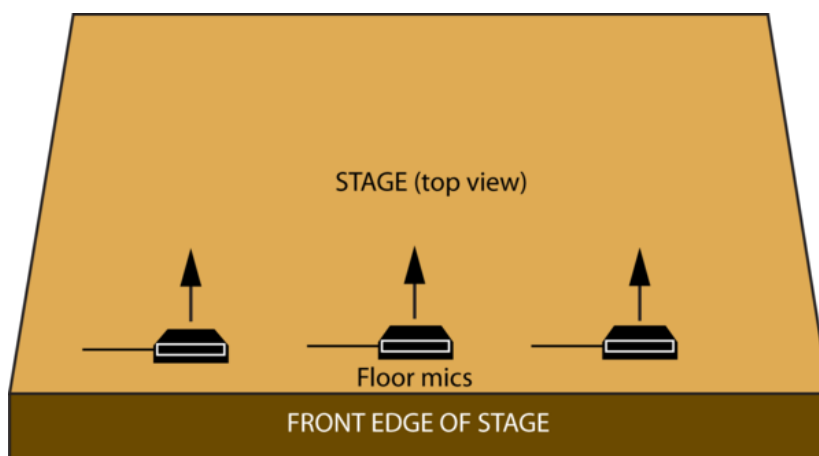
### How many mics do I need? Where should I place them?

20 ft stage: 1 mic center stage.

24-30 ft stage: 2 mics 12 to 15 feet apart.

35-40 ft stage: 3 mics 15 feet apart.

45-50 ft stage: 3 mics 17 feet apart.



The FRONT of the mic is indicated by an arrow on the bottom of the mic. As you face the stage from the audience, the cable should exit to the left out of the mic. The long dimension of the mic should be parallel with the stage edge.

### How do I get the mic signals to my mixer? The supplied mic cables don't reach to my mixer.

Purchase some microphone cables and plug them into the mic connectors. The mic cables should have a female XLR connector on one

end and a male XLR on the other end.

Another option is a microphone snake ([www.whirlwind.com](http://www.whirlwind.com), [www.hosatech.com](http://www.hosatech.com), [www.procosound.com](http://www.procosound.com)).

#### **Do floor mics pick up a lot of footstep noise?**

No, no more than your ears do. Stand close to the stage with the P.A. off. If you can hear footsteps when actors walk, any mic will "hear" them too. Have the actors wear rubber-soled shoes. Or carpet the stage floor and put the mic on an 18"- square, 1/8" thick masonite panel.

It helps to brace the stage from underneath so that it doesn't creak. You might apply some sound damping material such as Fatmat eXtreme at [www.fatmat.com](http://www.fatmat.com). Also, switch in a 100 Hz highpass filter (lowcut filter) on each mic channel -- 200 Hz for children.

#### **Can I reduce stage-floor thumps by putting the mic on a foam block or other padding?**

No. In fact, if you lift the mic off the floor while it is picking up footsteps, you should hear no difference in the loudness of the footsteps. The Stage Floor Mic is not sensitive to floor vibrations. That's because the mic diaphragm is perpendicular to the stage floor, so it doesn't move in and out when the floor vibrates up and down.

#### **Can you recommend a powered mixer for use with your floor mics?**

One is the Peavey PVi 6500 for \$399 from [sweetwater.com](http://sweetwater.com). A complete sound system would be:

Floor mics > long mic cables > powered mixer > long speaker cables > speakers on stands (2 needed).

**Compared to wireless mics**, floor mics are much lower cost, virtually indestructible, and simple to use. No special skills needed.

#### **How can I reduce feedback?**

- **IMPORTANT:** Place the loudspeakers close to the audience and far behind the microphones. Put the speakers on stands, or on the side walls, even with the 3rd or 4th row. Aim the speakers diagonally across the audience.
- On your mixer, turn up only one or two mics at a time. The more mics that are on, the more feedback.
- Use a 1/3-octave graphic equalizer between your mixer and the power amplifier, or plugged into the mic channel's insert jacks. Turn down frequencies that feed back just to the point where ringing stops.
- Place the mics as close to the actors as possible without getting in their way.
- Switch in a 100 Hz highpass filter (lowcut filter) on each mic channel -- 200 Hz for children.
- Do not use compression.
- Ask the actors to talk loudly. Tell them when you can't hear them. The microphones need something to pick up.

**Can your mics be used for an "assisted listening" setup for our hard-of-hearing patrons?** Yes.

#### **I need to use the mic outdoors but I'm worried about wind noise. How can I shield the mics from wind?**

Get a 12" x 15" piece of brown fur from Jo-Ann Fabric:

<http://www.joann.com/darice-designer-fur-deluxe12inx15in-dark-brown/4919247.html>

Cut out a few 6" x 7" pieces to cover the floor mics. Tape down the front and back of the fur piece. On your mixer, enable a 100 Hz highpass filter and you're all set. The effect on the mic's frequency response is -2 dB at 10 kHz, which is easy to equalize.

#### **Can I tape the mic to the stage floor?**

Yes, use gaffer's tape on the base plate. Do not cover the grille with tape.

#### **Can I paint the microphone?**

Yes. Follow this procedure:

1. Cover the grille holes with masking tape to keep paint off the foam windscreens.
2. Spray paint the mic.
3. When dry, remove the masking tape from the grille holes.
4. Hand-paint the grill holes -- do not spray-paint.

#### **What's the difference between the Stage Floor Mics and the Boundary Recording Mic?**

The Stage Floor Mic and the Stage Floor Mic-C are for amplifying actors in a P.A. system. They have a supercardioid polar pattern. They are tuned or voiced for speech intelligibility, and they have less feedback than the Boundary Recording Mic.

The Boundary Recording Mic is for recording small musical ensembles, operas, plays and musicals, and soloists. It has a cardioid polar pattern. It is tuned or voiced for high fidelity. Two Boundary Recording Mics can record a show or concert in stereo.

**How are your mics tested?**

We 100% test our mics for frequency response, off-axis attenuation and sensitivity using Time Delay Spectrometry (TDS) and a TEF analyzer. With TDS or TEF measurements, a loudspeaker generates a frequency sweep from 20 Hz to 20 kHz. The microphone under test picks up that sweep. The mic's signal is run through a bandpass filter that tracks the sweep, and filters out sound reflections from the room because they are at a different frequency than the tracking filter. As a result, an anechoic measurement can be made in an ordinary room.

**Where do you sell your microphones?**

We sell directly from this web site. In the UK, we sell from our sole UK distributor, 10 Out of 10 Productions Ltd. If you live in the UK,, please purchase our mics from them.

**Can you take purchase orders?**

Yes, from U.S. schools only. Schools should order directly from our website and mention "Purchase order" as the payment method.

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