

LET'S GET LOUD!

Presented by The Moxie Strings

The life of a string player is getting very exciting! Strings are increasing their presence in a variety of genres and on many stages, causing a serious need for quality amplification. There are many options available, and there are many variables to take into consideration when deciding on the right amplification device to suit you, your classroom, and your program.

Microphones

- Smaller version of a speaking microphone
- Amplify by capturing instruments exact sound
- Clip to current instrument or use microphone stand
- XLR cable (a.k.a. Mic cable)

Pros	Cons
Most "real" and acoustic tone	Amplifies everything (cough, wind, other instruments)
No installation	More likely to feed back
Notes:	Needs phantom power
	No effects pedals
	Fragile
	One more thing to remember...



Brand: Audio-Technica
Model: ATM350
 Condenser Clip-on Microphone
www.audio-technica.com



Brand: Bartlett
Model: Multiple
 Attachable, instrument-specific mic
<http://www.bartlettaudio.com>



Brand: Countryman
Model: ISOMAX-2
 Multi-purpose microphone
<http://www.countryman.com>



Brand: Crowne
Model: GLM (Great Little Mic) 100 or 200
 Discontinued, but can find used.
<http://www.crownaudio.com>

Pick-Ups

- Small transducer on bridge
- Amplifies by turning a string's vibration into electric signal
- Most use quarter-inch cable (a.k.a. instrument cable)



Pros	Cons
Many different tones	Most require installation
Allows playing in many settings	Pre-amp highly recommended
Very little feedback	Not eye-catching
Can use any effect pedal	
Can use current instrument	
Can still play acoustically	

Realist	Fishman	Shadow	L.R. Baggs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm tone • Often used by low strings • Strong signal • Requires rare cable • Installation required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very common • Emphasizes high tones • Limits low tones • Standard ¼" cable • Minimally invasive • Installation required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm, subdued tone • Putty adhesive on bridge • No disassembly necessary • Acoustic tone affected • Requires rare cable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acoustic tone • Standard ¼" cable • Requires new bridge • Installation required
			Brand New: Headway The Band" Realist Sound Clip (bass)

ELECTRIC INSTRUMENTS

- Many body styles (wood, plastic and carbon fiber)
- Amplify by a pick-up turning string's vibration into electric signal
- Quarter-inch cable

Pros	Cons
"cool" and eye-catching	Lack of resonance often creates thin or pinched tone
Allows playing in many settings	Pre-amp highly recommended
Very little feedback	Cannot be played acoustically
Can use any effect pedal	Body shapes may require adjustments in playing technique
Silent when unplugged	
Many have headphone jack for practice	
Can withstand more temperatures/conditions	



Make: Shar Products
Model: Plug-n-Play
Sharmusic.com



Make: Ned Steinberger
Model: NS or NS WAV
nedsteinberger.com



Make: Mark Wood
Model: many
woodviolins.com



Make: Yamaha
Model: many
Usa.yamaha.com

How It Fits:

CLASSROOM

- Teacher leads/plays examples amplified
- Repeat-after-me exercises amplified
- Students earn ability to play electric
- Friday as "electrics" day- students take turns
- Student projects/reports on electrics, effects pedals, or non-classical styles
- Composition unit-electric strings as variable
- Improvisation games amplified

Concert

- Pieces with improvisation- student soloists amplified. (*Ein Bein Strauss, Banana Slug Blues, or create an improv section!*)
- Electric String Quartet
- Collage Concert
- Student compositions
- Amplify featured section (*Viva Violas, Basses Loaded*)
- Amplify soloists in any genre
- Alternative styles Group

Additional Equipment

Cables	Amps	Pre-Amps	PA Systems
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarter inch vs. XLR • Multiple lengths <u>Brands:</u> Monster, Fender, Live Wire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many sizes • Battery vs. AC power • Tone control • Multiple inputs • Input type <u>Brands:</u> Fender, Roland, Plug-n-Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boost signal • Tone control • May require multiple cables • Boost and Tuner options <u>Brands:</u> LR Baggs, Fishman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For larger spaces • Mixing Board & speakers • Many instruments <u>Brands:</u> Fender, Behringer, Bose <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>

Questions to ask	Mic	Pick-Up	Elec.	Pre-Amp?
Will you be playing outside often?		X	X	
Will you be playing with drum kit?		X	X	X
Will you be playing as part of a band or larger ensemble?		X	X	X
Will you be playing in large venues?	X	X	X	X
Is a completely acoustic/unaffected tone important to you?	X			
Are you against modifying your instrument?	X		X	
Do you plan to use effects pedals?		X	X	X
Do you plan to allow student use?		X	X	
Do you plan to play in venues where you'd prefer not to have your "good" instrument? (bars, unpredictable weather, etc)			X	
Would you like to have control over your quality of sound?		X	X	X
Will you be playing mostly through a larger sound system?		X	X	X
Is the cool look and "wow factor" important?			X	
Do you plan to still play acoustically?	X	X		

Other considerations:

Avoiding Feedback

Feedback is a loud, unintended sound created when a signal loop exists between the amplification device (usually microphones) and amplifiers (monitors or speakers). When a signal the microphone sends is projected by an amplifier (speaker or monitor) and the signal is heard and re-amplified by the microphone, this loop is likely to create feedback. Avoid this by turning mics away from monitors, angling monitors differently, and performing behind PA speakers.

Every venue is different

Your instrument will sound different in every room, depending on the acoustics of the room, size of space, sound system, sound person, arrival of an audience, etc. Be constantly assessing and adjusting.

Be Picky!

Never settle for a string sound that you're not happy with. This may mean adjusting tone controls, trying a different pre-amp or amp, or asking the sound person to make adjustments.