

Description

Application

Getting the Best Sound

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Sometimes, budgets don't allow for individual performer microphones. In that case, you can rely on the good techniques you use for miking your choir. Overhead mics, available in a variety of colors and polar patterns, are generally comprised of a condenser element mounted on a short gooseneck, leading to a thin cable. The length of the cable can be up to 30 feet long.



The Shure
MX202B
Overhead mic

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Using overhead mics to capture sound from above can provide decent sound with a couple of reservations. First of all, the microphones are further away from the sound source than a headset, lav or even a floor stand would be – so ambient noise is going to be a factor. Then, there's the risk of feedback if suspended mics are closer to the loudspeakers than the sound source.



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- Use as few overhead mics as possible. The more open mics there are in use, the less potential gain before feedback. Putting in more mics to make it louder is actually counter-productive.
- Stick with uni mics. If you can, hang an overhead mic 2 to 3 feet in front of the nearest actor downstage. Aim the capsule slightly upstage. Hanging them 2 to 3 feet above the actors' head will reduce potential gain before feedback.
- Consider the scenery or stage sets. Set changes may render some installed overheads unusable.
- Suspended mics point straight down at an actor's head, while most actors project to the audience. Some speech intelligibility and high frequency content will be sacrificed. The mics are also likely to pick up reflected sound off the surface of the stage and mechanical or air handling noises from above the stage.
- Remember the 3-to-1 Rule. When spacing multiple mics to cover a larger area, the mic distance should be three times the microphone to sound source distance. This will reduce the possibility of comb filtering.

