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Many amateur musicians get frustrated at the high costs of becoming a performer. Between instruments, music lessons and equipment, many potential musicians are turned away before they get a chance to try to break into the music industry. Fortunately, [USB microphones](#) provide an inexpensive alternative to advanced studio equipment. The MXL USB.009 is a USB microphone with some of the best music capabilities we've seen. This top vocal microphone has on-board adjustments for simple sound customization, and by plugging directly into your computer, it saves you hundreds of dollars that you might have spent on a soundboard. The USB.009 is also good for podcasts, broadcasts and voiceovers, [earning](#) it our Top Ten Reviews Silver Award.

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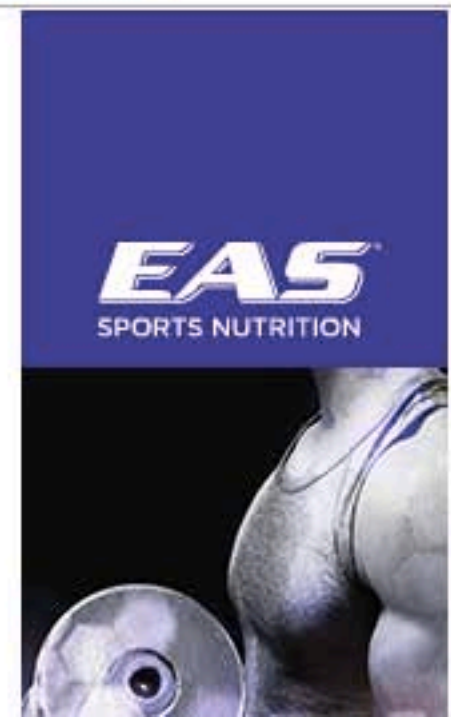
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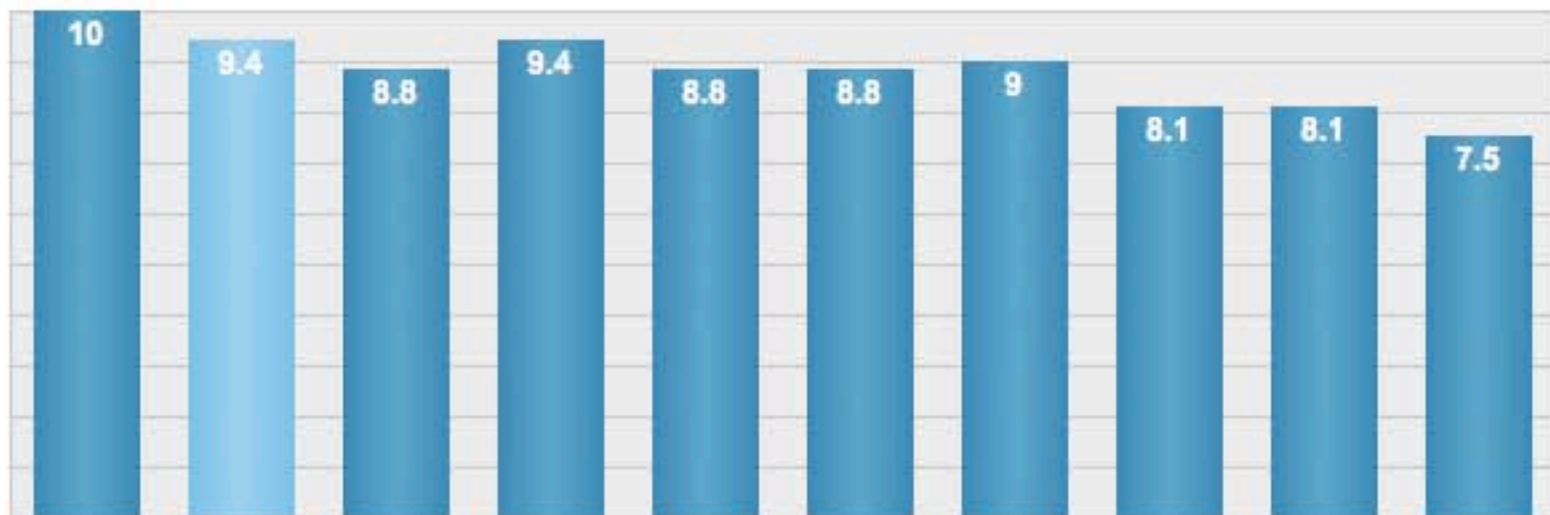


Sound Quality 9.4/10

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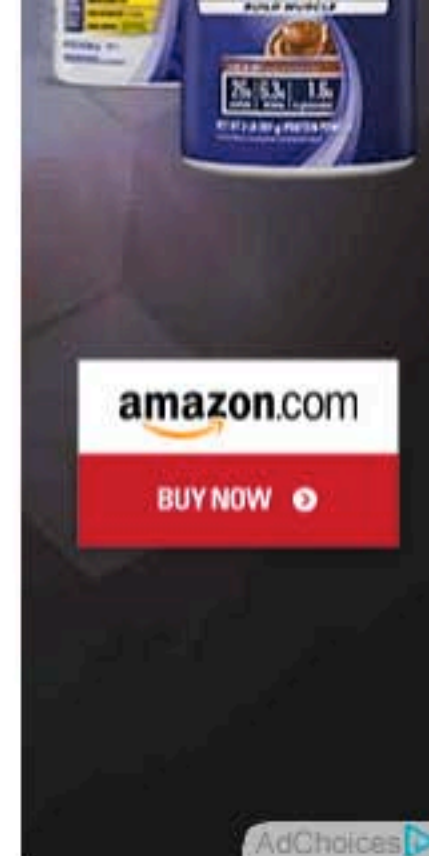




The MXL USB.009 is a cardioid USB mic with some excellent capabilities. Cardioid microphones are best for a single person's use, as they mostly capture the sound directly in front of them and pick up little other noise. Although it is limited to one polar pattern, cardioid is best for musicians, podcasters and live broadcasters.

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In terms of sound quality, this mic is best for musicians, although it works just fine for most other purposes. Whether you're singing or [playing](#) an instrument, the MXL does music better than other microphones we reviewed. It has an average frequency range of 20Hz to 20kHz. Its recording resolution is slightly better than average at 24 bits. However, it has a sampling rate of 96 kHz, which is the equivalent of a DVD's sound. If you're putting together your demo or recording an acoustic cover for your YouTube channel, you won't need much more equipment than this USB microphone to get the recording quality you need.



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Features 7.5/10

This is one of the most attractive microphones we reviewed. When turned on, the head lights up with a subtle blue glow. Naturally, this blue light doesn't improve the sound quality, but it adds some flare.

On the front of the microphone, you can control the gain and mix. Gain is the microphone's input volume, so the higher it is set, the louder your voice will be in the recording. Mix controls the recording direction. Since everything is recorded in stereo, you can make your recording heavier on the left or right speakers.

The microphone also has a headphone jack with a volume control, so if you'd like to hear what sound the microphone is picking up, you can get it directly from the device. This is best for podcasters and musicians, as it allows them to adjust the gain and mix on the fly.

Finally, the microphone comes with a desk stand and mount, but neither are great. The stand is short, and the microphone mount can break fairly easily. You can screw the mount to any standard microphone stand, but the mount is harder to replace.

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Ease of Use 9.4/10



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Unlike performance microphones, this MXL requires little training to use. You can plug it directly into your [PC](#) or Mac and get started recording. There is an included manual if you don't understand how to use the microphone, but unlike performance mics, you don't need to hassle with a soundboard. In fact, the USB.009 lacks an XLR input, so you wouldn't be able to use a standard soundboard if you wanted to. Still, for amateur musicians who simply want to record a few songs, there's no reason to complicate things.


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Help & Support 9.4/10

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MXL supports the USB.009 with a three-year warranty, which is relatively short since other companies provide 10-year and lifetime warranties. MXL's website gives you access to [FAQs](#) and a downloadable manual. If you need personal support, you can contact representatives by email and [phone](#).

MXL USB.009 Summary: 8.8/10

The MXL USB.009 is one of the top vocal [computer](#)  microphones available. Its recording quality is better than most other microphones. While it is good for nearly all usages, it stands out as a music mic. The microphone's head glows blue, and the on-board dials allow you to control gain and mix. The desk stand is flimsy and small. However, with its great sound quality and excellent support options, the MXL USB.009 is among the best microphones available.

By [Ben Davis](#)



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