How To...

Record at Home on a Budget

By Chad Johnson

Learn to Record Your Music in the Comfort of Your Own Home!
The MXL 9000 is a large diaphragm tube condenser mic with a cardioid pattern. It uses a 12AT7 tube and is powered by its own external power supply (included), so you don’t need to have phantom power in order to use the mic. Its frequency response is 30 Hz to 20 kHz, and it includes a shock mount, a 7-pin power cable (which connects the mic to the power supply), and an XLR mic cable (runs from the power supply to the preamp/interface/etc.). The mic itself is cased in an attractive silver-finished metal shell that’s quite classy-looking.

The buzzword encircling tube mics is generally “warmth,” and the 9000 certainly delivers in this area. It’s got a smooth, rounded quality that gives a pleasant tone to vocals and instruments alike. The high end is a tad understated but still clear and airy, and the bass response is firm and full. The mic shines on vocals for sure, but it also sounds brilliant on acoustic guitars, guitar amps, and other stringed acoustic instruments like mandolin and ukulele. If you can swing only $200 for a condenser mic, the 9000 would certainly be a fine choice. If you can swing a bit more, then by pairing this mic with a non-tube condenser, you’d have quite a nice option for a bit of variety when necessary.

Street price: $199.95