

TECHNOLOGY

Gadgets: Podcasting bundle starter kit, easy to setup. Now, what to say?

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I dislike the sound of my voice, which is not uncommon. Some people don't recognize their voice when it's played back to them. With that in mind, hearing my voice was, by far, the only bad part about reviewing the MXL APS podcasting bundle starter kit.

Setting up and using the all-in-one system was easy. What I wasn't prepared for was having something to record. But, it was just a test, so I decided to talk about my potential holiday shopping list.

The kit includes an MXL BCD-1 Live Broadcast Dynamic Mic, an MXL BCD-Stand, and an MXL Mic Mate Pro for a high-quality XLR-to-USB connection.

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The BCD-Stand looks similar to a desk lampstand, with an articulating hinge arm that you can attach to the side of your desk or almost any flat surface. Hardware is included to attach the arm to your desk permanently. An XLR cable is built into the arm for a clean setup.

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Once the microphone is attached to the adjustable stand, you can swivel it to your preference.

The Mic Mate Pro is an XLR-to-USB cable adapter that you use to connect the microphone to your recording USB source, a PC or Mac (with an adapter) or it can connect to your smartphone, tablet or any recording source.

The key to the system is the MXL BCD-1 Live Broadcast Dynamic Mic, which is impressive with its attractive looks and high-quality glossy black metal design. Attaching it to the stand with its swivel attachment and the XLR cable takes very little time. Metal thumbscrews are on the sides of the microphone for additional help getting the right angle.

Some specifics: the dynamic microphone is 6.2-by-2.0-inches; has a frequency response of 40 Hz-15 kHz; sensitivity is -54 dB re 1 V/Pa; and an impedance of 600 ohms. It has a 3.5mm headphone port for connecting headphones or earbuds.

I have very little experience with podcasts, so I didn't know what software to use. Since I have Apple's GarageBand on my computer and I've had experience with it, it was my go-to choice.

The MXL APS podcasting bundle is essentially plug-and-play without the need for drivers or software. Once the hardware is connected and plugged into your source (MacBook Pro for testing) and you have something to talk about, you're all set.

So now to my Podcast, which was kind of fun. I have no future in the Podcast world, but using the MXL APS Podcasting Bundle was as easy as can be with excellent results. As mentioned, I didn't like the sound of my voice, but once I got past that and made a recording I was happy with it; I let my wife listen along for her opinion.

I got a two thumbs up from her on quality, but a thumbs down on my recorded words, "I know my wife will be listening to this test recording, so I'm choosing to not disclose what's on my shopping list for her at this time."

The clarity of the recordings was rich and clear, obviously, during post-production, you can make adjustments but I went with the direct recordings.

Together these products provide the essential hardware components you need to start a high-quality audio podcast, with great results and incredibly easy and timeless setup.

A hard black case with a form-fitting foam interior to safely store the microphone is included as are a leather pouch for the cables and a USB cable to power the microphone.

www.mxlmics.com \$299.95

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