

Lewitt Microphones Pure Tube £859

A tube mic with all the benefits and none of the drawbacks? **Chris Corfield** checks it out

CONTACT WHO: Lewitt Microphones **WEB:** www.lewitt-audio.com/ **KEY FEATURES** **TYPE:** Condenser **PATTERN:** Cardioid **FREQUENCY RANGE:** 20Hz to 20kHz **MAX SPL:** 132 dB SPL **CONNECTION:** 7-pin XLR **DIMENSIONS:** 196mm x 65mm x 45mm **WEIGHT:** 692g



Lewitt Microphones has gone down the road of recognising the technologies that have got us to where we are, while also creating innovative products that punch well above their weight in terms of cost. Ask any guitarist about tube technology and they'll get all misty-eyed about how modelling or digital versions will never match the sweet, sweet harmonics of a tube amp. What they may or may not also tell you is that tube amps are also noisy beasts, full of crackle and hum which usually gets drowned out by their instrument. Fine for guitarists, but not so much for vocals. And, while tube microphones aren't exactly new technology, they have traditionally faced those same issues. With the Pure Tube, Lewitt believes it has overcome these issues, meaning vocalists can access the sonic benefits of tubes without the drawbacks.

It's quite a package, too. Along with the mic itself, the bundle contains a hefty shock mount, a pop filter and a dedicated solid-state power supply unit for the mic. Standard 48v phantom power won't do here I'm afraid. Everything comes safely packaged up in a mini flight case too, giving the whole set a highly premium feel. But how does it perform? Let's take a look in our Lewitt Pure Tube review.

This is a large, heavy recording microphone, in a way that's almost at odds with the fragility of the 12au7 tube encased within. The included shock mount appears to have been given the brief of protecting the mic from the actual apocalypse, and it takes its role very seriously. As a small point, a neat design flourish means the tube 'glows' when operational, although sadly we discovered this is an LED in the housing rather than the tube itself.

Once you've got everything hooked up, you'll see that – despite the price tag and the trappings – this is fundamentally a very simple microphone. Essentially what we've got is a fixed cardioid pattern, large diaphragm tube-powered condenser mic, which has been designed almost entirely for use with vocal applications. You can use it with acoustic instruments, and we did, but really the spoken or sung word is where this thing truly shines.



Where traditional condenser mics will rely on 48v phantom power for operation, the Lewitt Pure Tube instead comes with its own, separately housed, dedicated solid-state power supply. Audio performance is, genuinely, sublime. We tested a few voiceover reads, at different pitches and timbres, and found the Lewitt gave a smooth, rounded tonality with incredible detail. Unlike the famous Shure SM7B, the de facto podcast mic king, the Lewitt has a fairly flat frequency response, so it doesn't offer too much in the way of colour of its own. This means it is also ideal for recording acoustic guitars, or even for use as a room mic when recording drums, allowing the character of the instruments to shine through.

What's really impressive with the Lewitt Pure Tube is its noise performance, or rather, its lack of noise. By doing away with semiconductors and capacitors from its signal path, and relying on that

sole tube, it delivers an ultra-low noise floor. Working in conjunction with its 1" condenser capsule, this means the Pure Tube doesn't need to push your preamps as hard to achieve a usable, clean signal, and low-level noise is kept to a super low level.

The Lewitt Pure Tube is one of the best-executed condenser mics we've used in ages. It's not cheap, but it still offers superb value. **FM**

FM VERDICT

9.0

With a super low noise floor and premium build quality, the Lewitt Pure Tube could be the tube mic you've been waiting for

THE PROS & CONS

+

Incredible build quality

Great accessories thrown in

Virtually no noise

-

Expensive

Not the most versatile mic