

Erika Wireless USB Mic

FAQs

1. Why the name Erika?

My wife wouldn't let me name our only daughter Erika, so the honor fell to our first wireless mic.

2. How does Auto-Mute work?

Auto-mute was designed to virtually eliminate embarrassing "hot mic" moments. Auto-Mute uses Erika's configurable wireless range to automatically mute and unmute the mic as users enter and leave their area. By default, Erika ships with a range setting of 3, which corresponds to about 75' line of sight. Of course, walls and other obstructions will reduce the range, so users are encouraged to download the Erika app and adjust the wireless range for their specific environment. A range setting of 5 (the maximum) will provide 300 feet open air, line of sight range. However, in most applications, it's better to reduce the operating range to minimize interference and increase battery life. The Erika app enables fine-tuning of this wireless range.

3. Can I use Erika with my cellphone?

Cellphone compatibility is a complex subject. Apple products require a special A/V cable which is not readily available. Erika does function with Android phones when combined with a video or audio recording app. Connection to an Android phone requires a USB-C to USB-C cable, which is not included. Erika is not compatible with any cellphone while making a phone call or when used with an online meeting app, like Zoom, Teams or WebEx.

4. Can I use Erika with my DSLR / audio mixer?

No, Erika is a USB only device without an analog output. Of course, if you are recording / streaming with a laptop then one or more Erika's can be easily connected. OBS (Open Broadcast Software) supports the mixing of multiple mics for streaming and simultaneously recording each mic into individual tracks.

5. Erika operates in the 2.4 GHz band, isn't that already overcrowded?

First, it's important to remember that most wireless mics operate in the 400 to 700 MHz band which continues to shrink due to government auctions to the cellphone industry. These changes have rendered some wireless mics obsolete and illegal to operate. To the best of our knowledge, no financial compensation has been offered to purchase replacement mics. Furthermore, mics that are legal

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to operate in one country, may be barred in another, as there is no worldwide uniformity regarding the use of the 400 – 700 MHz spectrum.

Enter 2.4 GHz, the worldwide ISM (Industrial, Scientific, Medical) band used for Bluetooth and legacy WIFI. This spectrum stretches from 2.400 to 2.483 GHz and can be easily divided into 40 bands of 2 MHz width. By hopping from one band to another, collisions can be minimized and if necessary, data can be retransmitted on a different band. This is the basis of Erika's auto-adaptive frequency hopping.

In real world applications, dropped wireless data packets do occur and data must be re-transmitted. Therefore, best practices locate the Erika receivers far away from each other (in multi-mic applications) and away from WIFI access points and routers. You should reduce the channel bandwidth of your WIFI to 20 MHz and if possible, move all your devices to the newer 5 GHz band, which completely eliminates any issues.

In our experience Bluetooth devices such as mice and even Bluetooth streaming audio pose little problem for Erika. We do however recommend limiting the number of Erika's used at specific venue to 4, just to minimize the possibility of dropped audio packets.

So, while the 2.4 GHz band may seem crowded, there's plenty of room for multiple Erika's to happily coexist even with WIFI and Bluetooth.

6. How do I connect multiple Erika's?

The Erika wireless receiver is fully USB audio compliant. The first time you plug Erika into your laptop you may notice that an audio driver is automatically loaded by the OS (operating system; Windows, for example). After that event you can easily add more Erika's by plugging into open USB ports or purchasing a USB 2.0 hub.

Using "Sound Settings" in your OS you can select each Erika, adjust the volume and rename each mic. Then you can select each Erika within your application (OBS, for example) and make further adjustments such as adding EQ or limiters.

7. Can I use Erika with a USB 3.0 hub?

Erika Wireless USB Mic FAQs

USB 3.0 hubs are notorious for emitting noise in the 2.4GHz band. Plugging Erika(s) into USB 3.0 hubs may result in dropped audio packets. Use USB 2.0 hubs which are readily available and low-cost.

8. What is the audio latency?

Approximately 30 mS end to end, or less than one frame of video (at 25/30 fps). Most apps have AV sync adjustments to align the audio and video. Audio sync adjustments are standard in most video recording programs.

9. Is the mic battery replaceable?

No, the internal lithium polymer battery cannot be replaced, but has a very long life. After 500 charge cycles the battery capacity is only reduced by 20%. Erika has numerous levels of battery protection, including overcharge, over discharge and safety timers. You can leave Erika on the charger without fear of damage. You can drain down the battery without any reduction of capacity.

10. What features are included in the Erika app?

Firmware updates including new features and bug fixes, and wireless range selection (for Auto-Mute optimization) are part of the Erika app. Additionally, volume level and battery level can be monitored.

11. Can I use multiple Erika's with online meeting apps like Zoom?

One Erika can be connected to each laptop during an online meeting. So, all remotely located participants can each enjoy improved audio quality, as compared to a laptop mic. In a conference room setting, one Erika can be placed face up on the conference room table, supporting 2-4 participants. However, multiple mics connected to the same laptop are not supported in Zoom, Teams, WebEx etc.