MULTIMIX 8 USB

Reference Manual

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Introduction

Welcome!

Thank you for making the Alesis MultiMix 8 USB a part of your studio. Since 1984, we've been designing and building creative tools for the audio community. We believe in our products, because we've heard the results that creative people like you have achieved with them. One of Alesis' goals is to make high-quality studio equipment available to everyone, and this Reference Manual is an important part of that. After all, there's no point in making equipment with all kinds of capabilities if no one explains how to use them. So, we try to write our manuals as carefully as we build our products.

The goal of this manual is to get you the information you need as quickly as possible, with a minimum of hassle. We hope we've achieved that. If not, please drop us an email and give us your suggestions on how we could improve future editions of this manual.

We hope your investment will bring you many years of creative enjoyment and help you achieve your musical goals.

Sincerely,
The people of Alesis

For more effective service and product update notices, please register your MultiMix 8 USB online at:

http://www.alesis.com/ support/warranty.htm

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About the MultiMix 8 USB

The MultiMix USB mixers are the latest in the large family of Alesis audio mixers. We've come a long way since the 1622 mixer we first built in 1989. Since that time audio technology has grown in leaps and bounds, pushing up quality and driving down prices. Only a few years ago, you wouldn't have been able to buy a mixer this powerful for such an affordable price. Just take a look at the key features listed below, and you'll see that you have just made an incredible addition to your home studio or live setup.

The MultiMix 8 USB gives you just about everything you need to create polished, professional-sounding mixes When designing this unit, our goal was to give you as much control over your mixes as possible without requiring a wealth of extra equipment. That's why we added tools like the digital effects processor and the mic preamps. And with a multitude of ways in which to connect other equipment and instruments, the MultiMix 8 USB offers endless possibilities.

MultiMix 8 USB Key Features

- **4 microphone/line inputs with up to 50dB of preamp gain** – gives a boost to microphones and instruments with weak levels.

- **2 stereo line inputs** – great for line-level instruments

- **Internal digital effects processor with 100 preset effects and an easy-to-read display** – includes a variety of reverbs, delays, choruses, flanges, a pitch transposer and combinations of these.

- **3-band EQ per channel** – a potent tool for sonically shaping each channel to get that perfect mix.

- **1 pre-fader aux send per channel** – gives you control over the level of the pre-fader signal being routed to an external device.

- **1 post-fader aux send/effects send per channel** – a control for the signal being routed to another external device or to the onboard effects processor.

- **Control room output level** – provides control over the separate control room output

- **2-track send and return** – lets you mix your audio to tape or other media and to add a tape deck or CD player to the mix.

- **Stereo USB input and output** – routes the main ouput and the 2-track return through the USB port in crystal-clean, 16-bit, 44.1 kHz stereo digital audio. Use the Multimix USB as a high-quality soundcard for recording and playback with Windows and Macintosh computers.

- **External power supply**

How to Use This Manual

This manual is divided into the following sections describing the various functions and applications for the MultiMix 8 USB. While it's a good idea to read through the entire manual once carefully, those having general knowledge about mixing should use the table of contents to look up specific functions.

Chapter 1: Getting Started shows you how to include the MultiMix 8 USB in your audio setup for recording and live applications. We've included a hookup diagram, guidelines for which cables to use and the vital steps you must take to set levels properly.

Chapter 2: A Tour of the MultiMix describes the MultiMix 8 USB piece by piece. This chapter also features diagrams of the mixer to help you find each component as you read about it.

Chapter 3: Digital Effects Processor explains the effects provided by the on-board digital effects processor. If you want to know what a certain effect will do to your sound before you select it, this is where you should look.

Chapter 4: Applications outlines a number of scenarios in which you can use the MultiMix 8 USB, including some tips on what goes where when you're hooking everything up.

Chapter 5: Troubleshooting can give you a hand if you're experiencing problems with your mixer. You'll find that most issues can be resolved simply and quickly with the push of a button.

Chapter 6: Specifications and Chapter 7: Block Diagram are full of technical information for the more advanced users.

And at the end of this manual you'll see a glossary of common mixing-related terms and a page about the MultiMix 8 USB's warranty.

Helpful tips and advice are highlighted in a shaded box like this.

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When something important appears in the manual, an exclamation mark (like the one shown at left) will appear with some explanatory text. This symbol indicates that this information is vital when operating the MultiMix 8 USB.

A Few Words for Beginners

We realize that some of you who have purchased the MultiMix 8 USB are fairly new to the art of mixing, and we've written this manual with that in mind. We also designed the MultiMix 8 USB to be both powerful and easy enough to use that even a beginner can quickly pick up the basics.

Many mixer manuals—and manuals for just about any electronic instrument for that matter—are full of complicated terminology and incomplete instructions that presume a lot of experience on the part of the reader. We try to avoid that with this manual. True enough, you will find all the technical lingo and specifications you can handle in here, but we do our best to make this accessible to you.

Beginners will find several elements of this manual especially useful. Keep your eye out for the tips found in the gray boxes on the right side of the page. Be sure to check out the hookup diagrams on page 7, which will give you some ideas on how to fit the mixer into your audio setup after you've taken a tour of the mixer in Chapter 2. And if you come across any terms that you haven't seen before, the glossary probably can help you out.
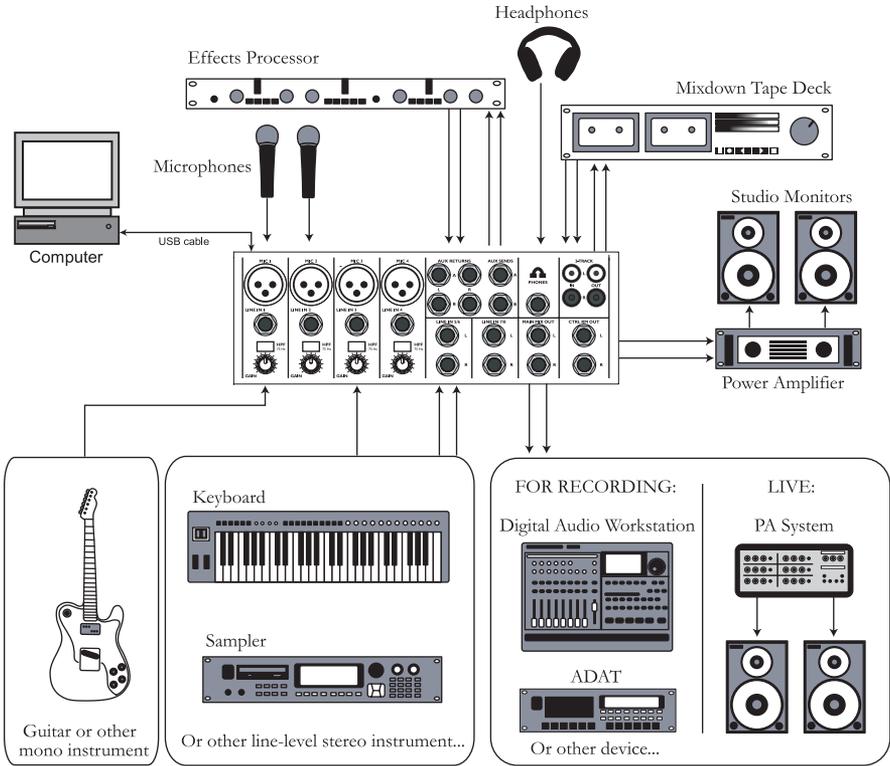
One of the most important things you'll do before you begin a mixing session is to set the levels. Be sure to refer to the instructions on page 16.

Getting Started

Hooking up the MultiMix 8 USB

This diagram will help you get the MultiMix 8 USB hooked up and ready to go. The equipment you use depends on personal preference and on whether you're performing live or recording. For example, you'll see below that the MAIN MIX OUT can be routed to a recording device for recording, or to a PA system for live performance.

Be sure to follow the guidelines for which cables to use (further down this page) and the procedure for setting levels (on the next page) before you begin mixing.

Headphones

Effects Processor

Mixdown Tape Deck

Microphones

Studio Monitors

Computer

USB cable

Power Amplifier

Keyboard

FOR RECORDING: LIVE:

Digital Audio Workstation   PA System

Sampler

ADAT

Guitar or other mono instrument

Or other line-level stereo instrument...   Or other device...

Using Proper Cables

When connecting instruments and other equipment to the MultiMix, it's important that you use the appropriate types of cables. Here are some simple but important guidelines:

• For the mic inputs, use XLR cables.

• For the line inputs and all other 1/4" connections, use 1/4" mono TRS cables.

• Use stereo RCA cables for the 2-track in and out.

- Use a USB cable to connect the USB port to a computer. Do not use a USB hub, as hubs can introduce timing glitches in USB communication.

Setting Levels

Before you can begin mixing different audio sources with your MultiMix, you must set the level for each channel you're using. This helps to prevent distortion and clipping. The idea is to get the strongest signal possible without clipping. Here's how:

1. Turn the channel level control to the 12:00 position.

2. Turn the AUX SEND and GAIN controls all the way down, and turn the EQ knobs to the center detent (you'll feel a click).

3. Connect the source of the signal to the channel's input.

4. Play the instrument at a normal level and adjust the channel's gain slowly until the PEAK LED lights.

5. Slowly reduce the channel's gain until the PEAK LED no longer lights when you play.

6. If you need to apply EQ, do so and check the PEAK LED to make sure it still does not light as you play.