

Electro-Voice RE320 Dynamic Microphone

By Steve **LaCerra**

If the RE320 from Electro-Voice looks familiar, there's good reason: the RE320 derives its body style and incorporates technology used in E-V's popular RE20 and RE27N/D microphones. The RE320 features the humbucking coil used in the RE20 for reduced susceptibility to RF. It also uses the

mic's weight can cause boom arms to rotate if they are not tightened securely. E-V ships the RE320 with a stand mount in a hard zippered nylon case with a closed-cell contoured foam insert, providing ample protection for its contents. Available options include a wind screen and shock mount.

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high-output Neodymium-magnet capsule used in the RE27N/D — but with a new low-mass diaphragm for improved transient and high-frequency response. Unlike its siblings, the RE320 provides a two-position contour switch that significantly alters the frequency response of the microphone: the "flat" position is intended generally for instrument and vocal use, while the other position engages equalization intended for kick drum.

In spite of its size, the RE320's handsome black, semi-gloss finish makes it unobtrusive on stage. Weighing in at a solid pound and a half, the mic demands a serious stand and, though I never had issues with tipping, the

On Kick Drums

FOH

Initially, I thought I'd miss the absence of a low-cut switch, but this wasn't an issue in practice, because these days, just about every mixing desk has a low-cut on the channel. E-V is not kidding when they refer to the contour selector as a "Dual Personality" switch. The kick drum setting is designed to pre-empt the typical kick EQ with the major contours being a dip of roughly 5 dB at around 300 Hz and a peak of approximately 5 dB at 4 kHz, and it works. The mic consistently delivered great results on kick with plenty of whump in the bottom, excellent attack from the beater

on the head, and no need to carve out the lower mids. Finding the sweet spot on kick required some experimentation. I found that the RE320 did not deliver fat bottom until the entire mic body was inside the drum. In situations where time did not permit fine-tuning the placement, a dB or two boost in the bottom and top finished off the kick sound quite nicely. Bottom end was extended, but always tight.

On Vocals

FOH

Given the results with kick drum, I did not expect the RE320 to be such a great performer on vocals. I used the mic on singer/songwriter Ernest Buckley (an artist with whom I have worked extensively) with excellent results. Given the wrong microphone, Ernest's voice can be sibilant and lack the depth that it has in person. The RE320 provided presence without sibilance or spitty-ness, though it was a hair shy in the chest area until Ernest moved in very close to the mic (this with the switch in the flat position). I attribute this to E-V's (patented) Variable-D™ technology borrowed from the RE20 and RE27N/D. Variable-D tames the proximity effect that can result when a vocalist (or any source) gets very close to a microphone, often causing the bottom end to become overbearing and bloated. Variable-D compensates for this, making the RE320 behave more like an omnidirectional mic when the source is up-close. (FYI, most omnidirectional mics exhibit little, if any, proximity effect.) The bottom line is that you can place the RE320 close to the source without creating mud.

The RE320's directionality is tight. High-frequency response does not fall off until approximately +/- 35 degrees off-axis, beyond which point you lose a bit of air and presence. Rejection at 180 degrees is excellent — there's barely anything to be heard leaking in the rear of the microphone.

Bass Amp, Guitar Amp, Floor Tom

FOH

For bass amp, the RE320 offered up plenty of thump and upper-mid growl, and on floor tom, the mic provided a nice attack of the stick on the head and a smooth, extended low end (though the size of the mic made placement on floor tom difficult). I got great results on guitar amp as well, where you could practically taste the pick on the strings without need for EQ. Lower-mids were tight, and the mic captured the jangle of a chorused crunch tone without a hint of harshness.

My one gripe with the RE320 is the black-on-black contour switch, which is impossible



Electro-Voice RE320

Pros: Great all-around performance

Cons: Switch markings are difficult to read; heavy

How Much: \$299 (street)

to read. Perhaps E-V could add white highlighting to the raised indicators. Regardless, the RE320 is an excellent all-around microphone. It excels on kick and other low-frequency instruments but is also very useful on guitar amp, toms and vocals. It's the type of mic you won't regret having in your arsenal, and it's priced quite modestly. **FOH**