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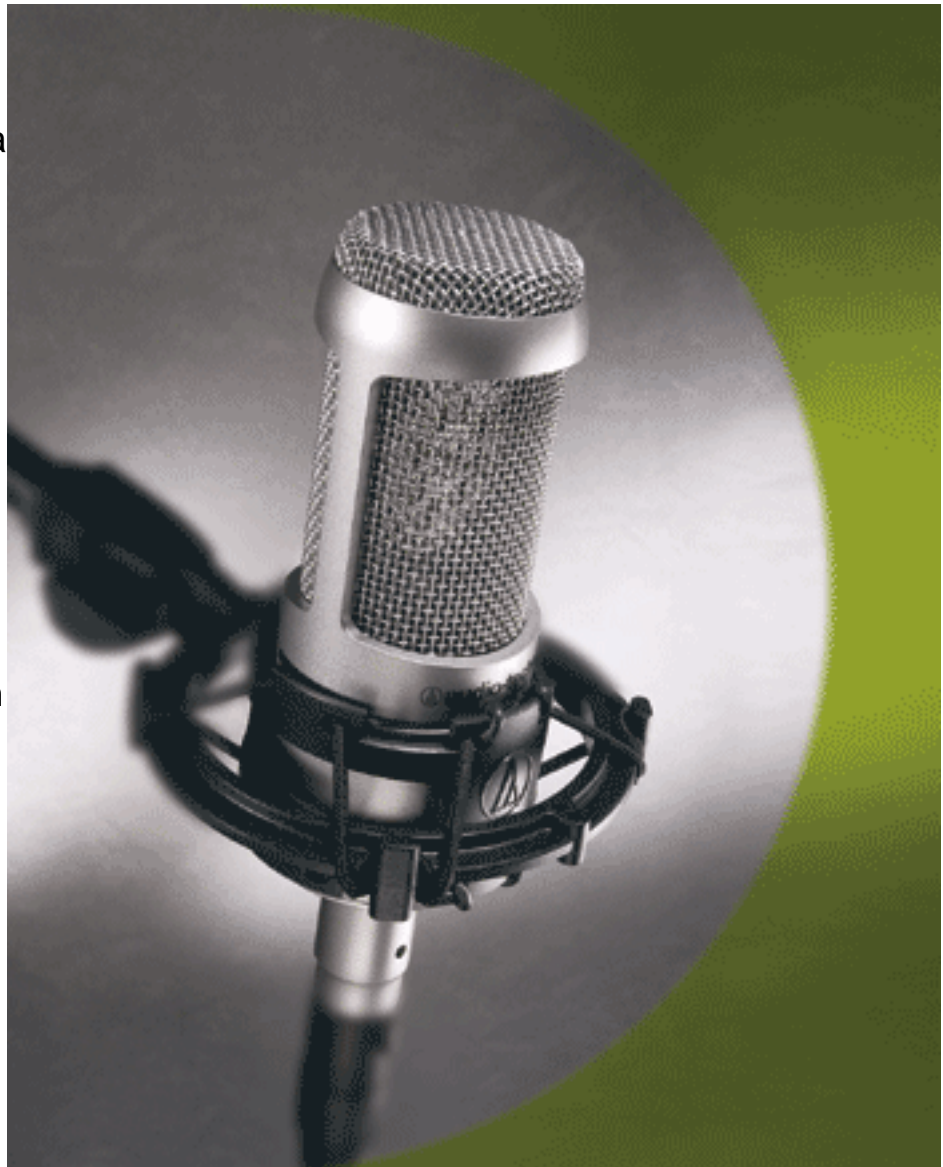
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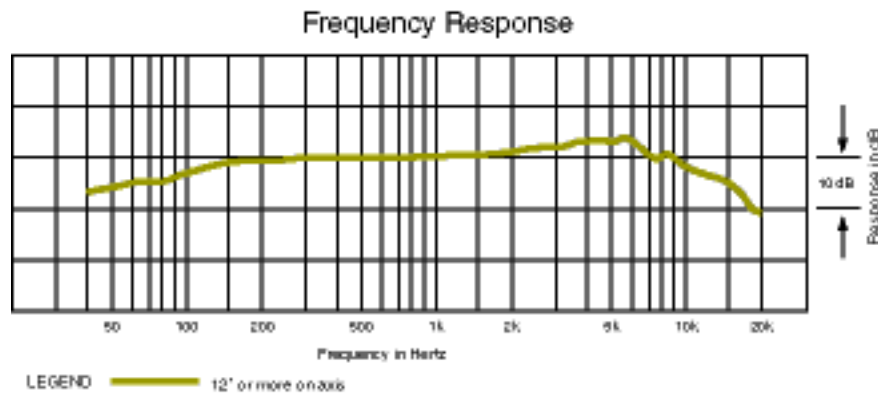
The AT3060 tube condenser microphone is a new addition to Audio-Technica's 30 Series but with a twist: Its onboard tube electronics are 48-volt, phantom-powered and use ordinary XLR mic cables; no bulky external power supply is required. According to A-T, removing the PS allowed the company to put more money into the mic's components and manufacturing. Beyond the added expense of a power supply and specialized cables, other practical advantages become apparent once you put this side-address cardioid mic to work. An ideal 3060 application is location recording, where an AC source near the mic may not be readily available. Live sound mixers who would like to use a warmer tube mic will appreciate the mic's "plug-and-play" aspect: no power supply to hide and protect onstage.

The 3060's silver-painted brass body is the same as that of the AT3035's open acoustical housing design, which reduces case resonances. The one-piece internal mic



assembly--held in place by three small Phillips screws--easily slips out for inspection. The 1-inch Mylar diaphragm is two microns thick and gold-vapor deposited. The entire capsule assembly with nickel-plated brass acoustic baffle is similar to the one used in the A-T 40 Series mics.

The tube is a hand-selected, pre-aged, subminiature Raytheon 6418 triode. Mounted near the bottom of the mic, it is connected by whisker-thin wires soldered to a PC board below it. The rest of the amplifier components, voltage converters/regulators for the plate and filament (and output XLR) are on this board. To prevent tube microphonics, the peanut-size triode is surrounded in foam and shock-mounted in a brass block. I was pleased to see a big output transformer (A-T says this contributes to the 3060's low-frequency character) and that the top end extends out to about 17 kHz, according to the frequency response plot.



Frequency Response Curve For The AT3060

## IN THE STUDIO

Using the AT3060 is the same as any other phantom-powered mic: plug it in and go. The manual recommends waiting 10 minutes for warm up and stable operation, but the mic comes on nearly instantly (with no thump or pop) and is ready to rock in a minute or so. The included AT8458 shock-mount works well due to its clever design: Instead of a captive clamp arrangement--which on other shock-mounts can wear out or break with repeated use--the 3060 body has a groove machined around its circumference that mates to supporting elastic cords. Once the cord ends click into this groove, it takes a good tug to remove the mic. Not surprisingly, the mic never fell out, even when it was inverted or shaken.

I used the AT3060 to record two different female singers, a chromatic harmonica and acoustic guitars. For the singers, I used an Avalon VT-737SP channel and found the mic very clean, accurate and open-sounding, with a very low noise floor. (Specs list EIN as 17 dBA.) The frequency chart shows a 2dB rise from 4 to 5 kHz and this was a good touch here; I didn't use any EQ when recording or when I mixed the project later on. I liked the warm bottom end, even when the girls sometimes "kissed" the mic: proximity effect, yes; boominess, no.

I had no mic overload or compression with loud and close singing, which is an initial concern, as there's no attenuator pad. I encountered no sibilance problems or high-frequency hiss, even though the mic's response extends to 17 kHz. This high-frequency response is flat and smooth rather than lifted like many tube mics: yet another reason to have this mic in your studio. However, the 3060's tight cardioid polar pattern did require my singers to stay more "on their marks," aimed at the front of the mic. With this in mind, I'm sure the 3060 would also

be suited for live stage work due to its good off-axis rejection. I'd like to try an omni or maybe a multipattern version of this mic someday.

Recording chromatic harmonica was trouble-free: I miked it from above the instrument, just above the top of the player's head, looking down at the middle of the harmonica about 10 inches away. My player moved around a little to work the mic and I did have to EQ out a little of the 2 to 5kHz area as the producer was looking for a more mellow tone out of this bright instrument. The 3060 captured all of the player's mouth noises and breathing perfectly, while rejecting the noise coming from a nearby air-conditioning vent. (I aimed the musician and the back of the mic toward that vent.)

Acoustic guitars sounded full, yet bright and balanced. I required no roll-off (the mic has none) and placed the 3060 between the sound hole and the start of the fretboard, and about 18 inches out front. For fingerpicking, I aimed the 3060 more toward the bridge and cranked up mic gain on Universal Audio's new UA 6176 channel. I usually don't like the sound of large-capsule condensers on acoustics, but this mic surprised me! With nearly the same articulation as smaller-capsule condensers, there was plenty of gain to capture it all with a good, solid bottom end.

The AT3060 retails at \$599 MSRP and, like all Audio-Technica mics has a one-year warranty. I found the mic's all-around usefulness, smooth high-frequency response and warm sound make this one a solid winner. If you work in recording or live sound situations where external supply is an issue, you'll be even more impressed.

Audio-Technica, 330/686-2600, [www.audio-technica.com](http://www.audio-technica.com).

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