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# PreSonus PM-2 and PX-1 versatile condenser microphones

*Clarity, balance and detail at an unbelievable price!*

## REVIEW BY ALEX HAWLEY

PreSonus has recently expanded its product line to include microphones as a nice compliment to the wide range of interfaces, monitors, mixers and other studio gear it offers. The current selection consists of both of large and small diaphragm condenser models, a drum mic kit (DM-7, reviewed January 2021), a standalone dynamic mic (PD-70), and a full-featured USB mic (Revelator). Common among all PreSonus microphones thus far is their very approachable price tags, making them attractive entry points for anyone looking to start or add to their home studio mic locker. On review today are the new PX-1 large diaphragm condenser and the PM-2 pencil condenser pair.

### PX-1 Overview

The PX-1 is a large diaphragm fixed cardioid condenser designed to capture an even clarity throughout the spectrum. It has a solid weight to it and feels well built in the hands. It features a silver finish, traditional head basket, and a tapered body. It ships with a plastic mount that threads to the bottom of the mic, as well as a tubular zip-up vinyl carrying case.

Behind its grille is a 25mm gold-sputtered capsule made of 6-micron thick mylar. Its preamp is a Class A FET design with a transformer-balanced output.

The frequency response of the PX-1 is 20 Hz to 18 kHz, though based on its chart, it falls off by only a few decibels at 20 kHz. The PX-1 has a primarily flat response, with only two peaks, centered at roughly 7 kHz and 10 kHz, with about a 3dB and 4dB boost, respectively.

The PX-1 features an equivalent noise level of 18dB SPL, a sensitivity rating of 25mV/Pa, and a maximum SPL handling of 135dB. The PX-1 does not offer any filters or a pad switch, but the 135dB SPL capability should be plenty for most uses. The noise level might need

to be considered on ultra-quiet sources, but it shouldn't be an issue for most vocal and instrument recordings.

### PX-1 in the studio

In session, the PX-1 proved to be a steady all-rounder. Nothing about the response is colored or shaped in any way, and it consistently provided an accurate representation of its source with great detail. The 10 kHz peak provided an airy top end while still sounding relatively natural overall; for vocals and spoken word, that presence helps a great deal with intelligibility. It also helps when it comes to sitting comfortably on top of a mix, but that same range may potentially emphasize unwanted sibilance, depending on the vocalist. I didn't find noise to be an issue, but it's there if you listen for it on really quiet sources. For most acoustic instruments and even spoken word recordings, it's quiet and clean.

On acoustic guitar, the PX-1 has weight, with well-balanced mids and a natural openness up on top. It's a bit bright for my taste on overdriven guitar amps, but I don't often use large diaphragm

condensers on loud distorted amps, as I often find modern condensers on the bright side in this application. On electric guitar styles featuring a more rounded clean tone however, it captures the sound of the amp together in the room rather convincingly.

If you like how a particular instrument sounds in your room, then you'll likely appreciate the 'sound' of this mic as well; it doesn't have a prominent character of its own, and I mean that in a good way. It captures its sources with reasonable accuracy and transparency. With that in mind, it will provide plenty of utility and flexibility in a growing mic locker—a solid choice for those looking for clean recordings on a tight budget.

### The PM-2...seeing double

The PM-2 is a small diaphragm cardioid pencil condenser that comes bundled in matched pairs with two mic clips and a slotted stereo bar for X/Y miking (an excellent inclusion for the bundle). The stereo bar is too narrow for wide-spaced applications, but it's very well suited for X/Y and ORTF setups.

The PM-2 is finished in the same matte silver as the PX-1, with a comparable build quality, while still being lightweight. Its capsule is  $\frac{3}{4}$ " gold-sputtered, with 6-micron thick mylar and FET preamp circuitry. The listed frequency response is 40 Hz to 18 kHz, with its response chart reading primarily flat with a few minor dips in the lower-midrange at 100 Hz and 300 Hz. The rest of the specs are comparable to the PX-1—same max SPL handling (135dB) but with a slightly better noise rating of 22dB.

### PM-2 in the studio

Much like the PX-1, the PM-2 is clean, clear, and detailed. A pair of pencil condensers is always handy to have on deck for a variety of acoustic instruments and drum overheads. My first instinct is always to throw them up for acoustic guitar, so that's where I started, and the PM-2 pair did not let me down. The resulting sound was well-balanced and full, with a very natural top end. It has a detailed sound without any muddiness or boxiness in the lower mids. The sound reminded me a bit of the Oktava MK 012 pencil condensers

that I reviewed a few months back, but perhaps a touch less bright. Nicely, I don't find the PM-2 to sound overly emphasized on the top end at all, and it extends in a very natural way.

There are many quality pencil condensers on the market, but very few at this attractive of a price point. It truly is a great value and one that I think will prove useful on plenty of sources. The PM-2 is well suited for any percussion or stringed instrument, making it a great utility mic to have around.

### Very, very complimentary

Both the PX-1 and PM-2 exemplify just how far entry-level microphones have come in the past decade, and just how good affordable mics can sound. Amazingly, the price of all three together is just under \$260, making them a wise choice for getting a studio up and running—and this is a great setup for singer/songwriters! The PM-2 and the PX-1 provide quality at a great price. ➤

**Price:** PX-1 \$129; PM-2 \$129 (pair)  
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