



OWNERS MANUAL - 2/2022

SMS Classic Tube Preamp

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QUICK START

Connect the IEC power cord from the back of the Classic to the very same power strip with all the other gear in your setup, pedals, effects, tuner, amplifier, etc.

Connect the rear output jack of the Classic to the input jack of your power amplifier.

Set the rear output knob around 9 to 11 o'clock

Power on the SMS Classic. After about 15 seconds the tubes will warm up and it will be running

Connect guitar to the input of the Classic

Set the Gain knob at about noon and set the tone and reverb controls to taste

Adjust both your power amplifier and the rear output knob of the Classic to dial in your best loudness for the situation

(For those using the JG modded Classic and going for that tone, set the Gain at noon, the treble at 100%, midrange at 50-60%, bass fully off, and reverb to taste. You can set the bright switch center-off or up-on to taste as well. Utilize your guitar's tone knob as a global treble control.)

OPERATION

INPUT jack - This is an instrument level input with a typical 1Meg Ω input impedance. It should comfortably handle most any guitar, steel guitar, bass guitar, or acoustic instrument levels.

GAIN - This knob controls the loudness, obviously. One thing to remember is that this preamp is very much designed as a clean machine, and it is not meant to be cranked up and overdriven like other preamps. So keep that in mind as you put the "Classic" to use.

Bright/Dark switch - The up or "bright" position is just like what you'd find on many classic tube amplifiers. The middle position of the switch is off or neutral. The down or "dark" position offers a slight mellowing of the very highest high frequencies. This can be beneficial if a speaker is too crisp on top or if going direct to a mixer.

TREBLE - Yup, it controls the amount of treble.

MID - The midrange control on this preamp is a cut-only function. Cranking the "MID" knob will approach a flat response but never boost mids. The voicing of this preamp will always tend to have some degree of midrange dip, just like any classic guitar amp. Mid settings below 12-noon will have subtler changes in the sound compared to settings past noon.

BASS - This knob controls the amount of bass frequencies in the sound.

REVERB - This knob controls the amount of reverb that gets blended in. The internal reverb is a digital emulation of a spring reverb with a hint of modulation.

POWER - Remember that these are tubes, and they typically take about 12 to 15 seconds to warm up and start working. Also, tubes will sound much better after 5 minutes of being warm, and reach their optimum tone after about 20 minutes. It's recommended that you generally leave the preamp on once it's on. Too much powering on and off can age the tubes prematurely. Also since it's just a preamp, the unit consumes very little power and creates very little heat (unlike a tube "power" amp), so don't be afraid to leave it on for many hours at a time if you know you'll be using it frequently throughout the day or night. If you're on set break at a gig and want to mute your rig, just turn the gain down to zero or half-unplug the cord at the input instead of turning it off.

OUTPUT - On the back of the preamp there is an output jack. This jack is an unbalanced (tip-sleeve) type output which means you should use a simple guitar cord to make the connection. It's best to keep the length of your cable run as short as possible.

PAD KNOB - The knob next to the rear output jack is the "pad" control. This preamp naturally has a very hot output level, too strong for many inputs on power amps and other line level devices that may follow the SMS Classic. For starters, leave this knob set a bit below "noon". See how this works with your particular setup and adjust from there. Quite often, the front panel "gain" knob will sound best in the "noon" to "2 o'clock" range. With that in mind, you can then dial in your ideal "pad knob" setting. This will allow the most flexibility with the controls on the front panel.

WARNINGS

The SMS Classic Tube Preamp contains lethal voltages. The raw supply has over 300 volts present at a number of points on the circuit board. So if you ever decide to have a qualified person open the unit to replace the tubes, be absolutely sure that the AC power is not connected to the preamp and that at least 6 minutes have passed to allow for the voltage to dissipate before ever entering the unit. The tubes can be gently wiggled into and out of their sockets fairly easily.

CAUTION: To reduce the risk of electrical shock, do not remove the cover. No user serviceable parts inside; refer servicing to qualified service personnel.

WARNING: To reduce the risk of fire or electrical shock, do not expose this product to rain or moisture.



The lightning flash with arrowhead symbol with an equilateral triangle is intended to alert the user to the presence of un-insulated "dangerous voltage" within the product's enclosure that may be of sufficient magnitude to constitute a risk of electric shock to persons.



The exclamation point within an equilateral triangle is intended to alert the user to the presence of important operating and maintenance (servicing) instructions in the literature accompanying the product.

Before using your SMS Classic Tube Preamp, carefully read applicable items of operating instructions and safety suggestions.

1. Obey all warnings on the SMS Classic Tube Preamp and in the SMS Classic Tube Preamp Owner's Manual.
2. Do not perform service operations beyond those described in this manual. In the following circumstances, all repairs should be performed by qualified service personnel **only**:
 - Liquid is spilled into the unit
 - An object falls into the unit
 - The unit does not operate or changes in performance in a significant way
 - The unit is dropped or the enclosure is damaged
3. Prolonged listening at high volume levels may cause irreparable hearing loss and/or damage. Be sure to practice "safe listening"

TUBES

The SMS Classic Tube Preamp has two 12AX7 vacuum tubes inside of it. These are by far the most commonly available vacuum tubes out there. Most any guitar shop will carry this type of tube. If you want to tweak, you can try various brands, new and old, and even a few variations of tube as long as they stay close to the 12AX7 type such as 7025 or ECC83.

If you do order tubes from a tube dealer, do try to make sure they've been tested for low microphonics. The unit currently ships with a pair of selected JJ ECC83 tubes. These are currently proving to be great sounding, low-microphonic, and reliable tubes.

SPECIFICATIONS

Tubes (2 total): 12AX7 or similar

Weight: 4.5 lbs.

Dimensions:

Width: 19" Standard rack mount width

Height: 1-3/4" Standard single space rack unit height (1 RU)

Depth: 8"

Fuse: Internal 1/2-Amp Slo-Blo 3AG

Mains: Internally set for either 115VAC or 230VAC

Input Impedance: 1Meg Ω

Output Impedance: 25k Ω (approx.)

Chassis: Powdercoated aluminum

Power: Standard IEC power cable (SVT style recommended)

Reverb: digital "spring" algorithm

WARRANTY

- 1.** Sarno Music Solutions warrants the **SMS Classic Tube Preamp™** as free from any defects resulting from faulty materials or workmanship for a period of two **(2)** years from the date of delivery; and ninety **(90)** days for the tubes. This warranty is in lieu of all other warranties expressed or implied, and Sarno Music Solutions makes no further warranties expressed or implied including, but not so limited, any warranties of merchantability or fitness for any particular purpose. Warranty does not cover: damage caused by misuse, abuse, product modification, neglect, improper installation or operation, attempted repair by unauthorized personnel, rental or any shipping damage.
- 2.** The exclusive remedy in the event of defects in workmanship or material shall be the repair or replacement of such components found to be defective after examination and inspection by Sarno Music Solutions, or replacement of the **SMS Classic Tube Preamp™** whichever Sarno Music Solutions deems appropriate. Sarno Music Solutions shall bear the cost of transport of defective merchandise under warranty conditions **ONLY**. All shipping, risk of transport, and cost of repair and/or replacement work of the **SMS Classic Tube Preamp™** made **AFTER** the above stated warranty period shall be the responsibility of the Buyer.
- 3.** It is expressly agreed that the Buyer or User shall have no claim against Sarno Music Solutions with respect to either personal injury or damage to property or loss of profit resulting from any defect or for any consequential damages, such as, but not so limited, loss of business opportunities, property or personal injury losses, etc. or for any indemnity, implied or expressed, with respect to claims by third parties, And Buyer shall indemnify Sarno Music Solutions against any and all claims by third parties against Sarno Music Solutions resulting from the use of equipment and/or materials purchased hereunder or from the use of any products made from or by said equipment or materials.
- 4.** These Terms and conditions take precedent over all other terms and conditions, warranty statements or policies.
- 5.** All warranties apply only to Sarno Music Solutions products purchased and used in the USA. Please keep the shipping box in a safe place for any potential future needs.

SERVICE INFORMATION

Service and repairs of Sarno Music Solutions, LLC products are to be performed only at Sarno Music Solutions, LLC unless otherwise authorized in advance. Unauthorized service, repair, or modification will void this warranty.

Return Authorization is **required** prior to sending products for repair. All items MUST be shipped to Sarno Music Solutions, LLC **prepaid, insured, and properly packaged** - unless otherwise authorized in advance. Always include a letter giving complete details of the problem along with your name, phone number and/or e-mail address where Sarno Music Solutions, LLC can contact you if necessary. **Our address:** 852 Atalanta Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63119 or call 314-962-7220

OUT-OF-WARRANTY SERVICE

- 1 Contact Sarno Music Solutions, LLC to obtain return authorization.
- 2 All items MUST be shipped to the above address **prepaid, insured, and properly packaged**. Products arriving in a non-standard package, which appear damaged, may be refused. ***Shipments received "freight-collect" will be refused.***
- 3 Product must be shipped to Sarno Music Solutions, LLC address with a letter stating return shipping address and description of problem.
- 4 Your unit will receive quality service and will be returned transportation pre-paid. Out-of-warranty billing will be determined by nature of required repairs.