

SARNO MUSIC SOLUTIONS



ST. LOUIS, MO



VACUUM TUBE GUITAR PREAMP

V8-B – Bass Version

**OWNER'S MANUAL**

SMS V8-B Octal Tube Preamp for Bass

V8G-2-B / Rev. 1c– 7/12/14

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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## **PAGE**

2	Introduction
3	How It Works
5	WARNINGS
6	Specifications
7	Warranty
8	Service Information

## INTRODUCTION

The V8-B Octal Tube Preamp™ is a very powerful tone machine that is built on the ideas of circuit minimalism and component quality. The V8 finds its inspiration from various tube circuits from the '50s and '60s. Octal (8-pin) preamp tubes were used extensively in the 40's and into the '50s, but they largely lost their popularity to the advent of the "noval" (9-pin) tubes of the mid-50's. Some guitar companies continued to use the octals thru the '60s, but eventually most everyone moved over to the smaller, cheaper 9-pin tubes like the 12AX7 and others.

The V8-B preamp uses a classic "tone-stack" type EQ as found in many classic amplifiers of the '60s and later. It's a time-proven EQ design that is extremely flexible and bass-guitar-friendly. We take the classic tone-stack and make a few tweaks of our own and utilize ultra high grade components to maximize the tone quality and have the ideal signal path for your electric bass guitar.

The V8-B preamp is not designed for dirt or overdrive. It's a clean-machine to the extreme. It has very high head room and very low harmonic distortion. The octal tubes have an especially "clean" quality to them as well. If you're needing drive and grit, you'll need to use your favorite pedals to achieve that, and let the V8 deliver it faithfully on toward the amplifier. The V8 is entirely hand built in the USA. *Enjoy!*

# HOW IT WORKS

**START-UP** - The far right knob on the V8 is a 3-position rotary switch. To start up the V8, have your power amplifier muted or powered down so that when the V8 comes on, there is no "pop" or "thump" that is delivered to the speaker. Follow this sequence for safe startup and maximum tube life.

- A. Turn the knob from "OFF" to "WAIT".
- B. While on "WAIT", wait and count to 12 so the tubes can warm up
- C. After 12 seconds, turn the knob to "RUN"
- D. Now turn on your power amp or make your final connection.

Note: the middle "WAIT" position is not recommended as a mute or stand-by. If you need to mute your rig for setbreak or when stepping away from your gear for a while, simply turn the "GAIN" knob off. When you're done using the V8, simply turn it all the way to "OFF".

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

**GAIN** - The Gain knob is the first control in the signal path. It's pretty simple, just set the gain somewhere in the middle or just above, and let that be your baseline loudness position. Adjust your power amplifier to make the final master loudness decisions. This should then give you a wide range of loudness control with the V8's Gain knob.

**BASS** - The Bass knob covers a pretty wide range of control. With the knob back at around 9 o'clock, you have a relatively flat bass response. Below that you are actually removing bass. At around noon the bass response will be a good baseline, typical setting for many instruments and sounds. Above that, there's still some more to be had if needed.

**TREBLE** - The treble knob in the V8 is what's called "interactive" just like in the many famous tone-stack amplifiers in the world. What this means is that it not only controls the amount of treble, but it simultaneously adjusts the midrange. This type of EQ when making "normal" settings will create a midrange dip. The more you crank the treble, the lower the frequency of the midrange dip. When you cut the treble, the dip rises to higher frequencies. You really don't have to think about this, but it's good to understand that there's a LOT happening with the treble knob in a "tone-stack" type EQ.

**OUTPUT** - The rear output jack is 1/4" unbalanced and uses a typical guitar cord. The output level at the jack is a hot, line-level, so be sure to have an appropriate setting for whatever device follows the V8 whether it be an effects unit or an amplifier.

**XLR OUTPUT JACK** - The XLR output on the V8 is transformer balanced utilizing a very high grade, USA-built, mu-metal shielded balancing transformer. Standard pin configuration: pin 2 is hot, pin 3 is cold, and pin 1 is ground. The output level at the XLR is padded down to a fairly strong "microphone" level so it's ideal for going directly to a mixer or mic preamp for either live or recording situations. The XLR output level is FAR lower than the hot 1/4" output jack.

**GROUND LIFT SWITCH** - The XLR output provides a ground lift switch. Sometimes in certain setups, a ground hum can be induced when using the XLR output. If this happens, flip the XLR ground lift switch and choose the setting that removes the hum. The switch is controlling whether XLR pin 1 is connected to the chassis or not.

**VOLTAGE SWITCH** - The V8 has a small red slide switch on back that lets you choose whether your mains voltage supply is 115V (North America) or 230V (Europe, Down Under, etc.) Be VERY sure this is set where it should be so you don't blow the fuse or risk harming the preamp.

**TUBES** - The V8-Bass preamp uses a pair of octal tubes, the You can find modern versions of this tube made by Tung-Sol (this is what comes with your V8), or if you want to go searching for some vintage tubes, they are out there. Be sure to have one selected for "low microphonics" so that you don't hear the tube when you tap on the chassis.

# WARNINGS

**The V8-B Octal 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 change or replace tubes, be absolutely sure that the AC power is not connected to the preamp and that at least 2 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 V8-B Octal Tube Preamp, carefully read applicable items of operating instructions and safety suggestions.**

1. Obey all warnings on the SMS V8-B Octal Tube Preamp and in the SMS V8-B Octal 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 normally 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

# SPECIFICATIONS

**Tubes (2 total):** pair of 6SL7 octal type

**Weight:** 4.5 lbs.

**Dimensions:**

Width: 10.5" Standard rack mount width

Height: 2.3"

Depth: 8"

**Fuse:** Internal 1/2AMP Slo-Blo

**Mains:** Selectable 115VAC (North America) / 230VAC (across the pond and down under)

**Input Impedance:** 1Meg $\Omega$

**Output Impedance – Unbalanced ¼":** 15k $\Omega$  (approx.)

**Output Impedance – XLR Balanced:** 600 $\Omega$  (approx.)

**Chassis:** Powder coated aluminum

**Power:** Standard IEC AC power cable (SVT style recommended)

# WARRANTY

1. Sarno Music Solutions warrants the **SMS V8-B Octal 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 V8-B Octal 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 V8-B Octal 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.