

SUGDEN AUDIO

Masterclass LA-4 Line Pre-amplifier

INSTRUCTION MANUAL

MAY 2024

Designed and manufactured in England by

J E Sugden & Co Ltd
Valley Works
Station Lane
HECKMONDWIKE
West Yorkshire
WF16 0NF
ENGLAND

BEFORE USE

This section must be read before connecting to the mains supply

MAINS CONNECTION INFORMATION

Your SUGDEN amplifier has been designed to comply with the domestic power and safety requirements that exist in your area. This amplifier can be powered by AC ONLY.

CHOOSE A SAFE AND SUITABLE LOCATION

Your amplifier is a class A design and therefore requires good ventilation

DO NOT: Expose to direct Sunlight

DO NOT: Position next to a heat source such as a radiator

DO NOT: Use in places with high humidity or poor ventilation

DO NOT: Subject to mechanical vibration

DO NOT: Place on an unstable or inclined surface

DO NOT: Stand other equipment on top of the amplifier

Never block the ventilation holes or stand directly on a carpet

GUARANTEE

To **activate your guarantee**, please complete the owner registration form on our website www.sugdenaudio.com/warranty-registration within 60 days of purchase. It is in your best interests to register your ownership to ensure you benefit fully from our warranty. Your details are not shared with any other company.



The LA-4 is in conformity with the EMC directive and low-voltage directive.



UNPACKING

Your amplifier should reach you in a substantial protective carton. On unpacking please examine the unit for signs of prior use or damage. Check that all the front panel controls function mechanically.

RECYCLING

This products packaging materials are recyclable and can be reused. The product and the accessories packed together are the applicable product to the WEEE directive except batteries. Please dispose of any material in accordance with your local recycling regulations. When discarding the unit, comply with your local rules and regulations. Batteries should never be thrown away or incinerated but disposed of in accordance with your local regulation concerning chemical waste.

INSTALLATION

The Masterclass pre-amplifier is suitable for freestanding on a shelf or in a cabinet. Do not stand the unit in direct sunlight or near a heat source. It is not recommend that the pre-amp sits directly on top of a power amplifier.

ACCESSORIES SUPPLIED IN THE CARTON

- IEC straight connector with moulded mains plug. This should be suitable for your country. To check that the pre-amplifier is the correct voltage examine the carton, the assembly ticket attached to rear of the unit and the legend on the rear of the unit.
- Remote control handset supplied with two AAA batteries.

CONNECTING YOUR PRE-AMPLIFIER TO THE MAINS SUPPLY

Use the IEC power chord supplied, as this has been properly tested and CE approved to be used with your pre-amplifier. The mains input socket is located at the rear of the unit and is clearly marked 'Mains power inlet & fuse'. Next to the mains power inlet is a switch marked 'power' for switching the unit on and off.

CONNECTING YOUR PRE-AMPLIFIER TO A POWER AMPLIFIER

The Masterclass LA4 pre-amplifier has two pairs of phono sockets and one pair of XLR sockets. The phono sockets are standard type RCA connectors of high quality with Teflon inserts and gold plated contacts. It is advisable to make sure your interconnect leads have similar quality plugs that fit securely. We recommend WBT or Neutrik type connectors preferably the locking type. These offer the best possible connection. The two sets of phono sockets are clearly marked right (red) and left (black or white) for identical connection to

your power amplifier. If you are using two power amplifiers the second set of phono sockets can be used, or these can be connected to an active sub-woofer.

The XLR output sockets are for connection to an amplifier with a balanced input like the Sugden range of Masterclass Power amplifiers. The pin configuration is:

- 1 Ground
- 2 Positive
- 3 Negative

If using long cable runs between your power amplifier or CD player, balanced XLR cables can offer a better performance than line level phono cables. Good quality microphone cable gives excellent results and good value for money.

CONNECTING YOUR SOURCE TO THE PRE-AMPLIFIER

All input sockets are clearly marked on the back panel of the pre-amplifier. There are six stereo inputs in total.

- One XLR Balanced input
- Four line level inputs marked INPUT 1-4
- One tape input/output

The inputs are clearly marked left and right for identical connection to your source component. All inputs are for equipment with a line level output except the balanced input that is for equipment with a balanced output.

BYPASS INPUT

When the pre-amp is switched to standby it is possible to operate a signal bypass. Connecting a source to the bypass input will allow a signal through to the pre-out at its original level. This feature is useful for home theatre systems allowing a direct connection from a processor to your high quality stereo power amplifier.

When the pre-amp is switched on the bypass input is muted.

OPERATING YOUR MASTERCLASS PRE-AMPLIFIER

There are two rotary controls and two push switches on the Masterclass front Panel

INPUT SELECTOR SWITCH

The input selector switch is located at the far left of the front panel and controls which input is to be selected. The large knob has an indicator that corresponds with the input legend. The input selector switch is a precision component and requires the minimum of effort to rotate. Never force the switch as this could result in damage or loosening of the control knob. The pre-amplifier circuit uses gold contact relays which cause the signal to cut off when moving between inputs. This is normal and avoids any possibility of noise such as clicks or pops.

STANDBY SWITCH AND INDICATOR

The standby switch is the second control from the left and switches the pre-amplifier from a standby situation into full operation. It will not operate unless the mains switch on the rear of the unit is on. It is recommended that the pre-amplifier should be switched into standby mode when not in use. When in standby the switch is out and the standby indicator will go out.

RECORD SWITCH

This provides a line level signal to the tape output sockets on the rear of the preamplifier. When the switch is engaged the LED will come on. The level of the tape output is the same as the input signal from your source component.

MAKING A RECORDING

- Select the input you wish to record (Balanced, Line 1-4 or Tape)
- Depress the record switch and the LED will come on to indicate that a signal is now being sent to the tape output.

VOLUME CONTROL

The volume control is positioned at the far right of the front panel. At fully anti-clockwise or six o'clock the volume control is at minimum. The volume control can also be operated by the supplied remote control. Because Sugden products are dynamic high gain designs and use precision volume controls, it is normal to operate the volume control between 6 and 11 O'clock.

REPLACING FUSES

There are four power supply fuses in the Masterclass Pre-amplifier; these are to protect the unit in case of a failure. If a fuse does require replacing, this is usually an indication that a fault exists. However, it is not always an indication that the pre-amplifier is at fault so it is important to determine the cause before replacing any fuses. Please consult your dealer for advice.

- Always replace fuses with the same type and rating

LOOKING AFTER YOUR MASTERCLASS

The case construction of your Masterclass is made from durable traditional materials carefully chosen for their none intrusive electrical properties. The front plate is solid machined aluminium plate that has been carefully anodised to a high finish. The legend is ink based and as with the rear panel, this should not be cleaned with any type of solvent. The rest of the case is powder coated and should only be cleaned with a soft slightly damp cloth.

Masterclass LA-4 Line Amplifier Front Controls



Masterclass LA-4 Line Amplifier Back Panel and Controls



Masterclass LA-4 Specification @ 230Volts setup.

Facilities	
Inputs	Four line level inputs, one tape input, one Balanced Input, one Bypass input
Outputs	Two line level outputs, one tape output, one balanced output
Input Sensitivity	100mV for 1Volt Output
Frequency Response	1 Volt Output +/- 0.1dB 15Hz to 30kHz
Maximum Output	10 Volts
Stereo Separation	>90dB
Signal to Noise	>90dB
Distortion	1kHz @ 1Volt Output 0.006%
Nett Weight	7kg
Dimensions	90 x 430 x 335mm

The manufacturer reserves the right to alter specification without notice.