

SPECS

Frequency Response: 20Hz-20000 Hz
Sensitivity: 22mV/Pa
Capsule: single diaphragm, centre-tapped, fixed cardioid pattern
Impedance: ≤ 200 Ohms
Equivalent Noise Level: 16dB(A weighted)
Max SPL for 0.5% THD@1000Hz: 130dB
Connector: 7-pin



sE Electronics SE2200T | £349

sE's successful 2200A has gone turbo, with a valve-based upgrade. *Jon Musgrave* fires up the SE2200T

WHAT IS IT?

Valve-based large capsule condenser for all-round recording

CONTACT

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HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Engaging valve sound
- 2 Great value bundle
- 3 Proven mic manufacturer

SE Electronics 2200A cardioid condenser mic has been a massive success, and rightly so. The combination

of a crisp top end, robust construction and packaging, and of course excellent price is hard to beat. So it should come as no surprise that they've finally reworked the 2200 into a valve-based version, and SE2200T is its name.

As you would expect, there are plenty of similarities. First up, the capsule is the same one-inch single large diaphragm, centre-tapped design with fixed cardioid pattern. Also familiar are the 10dB pad, 100Hz optional low cut filter and transformer-based output stage. But beyond that, the requirements of the valve design mean different internal electronics. The valve

is a SE-badged ECC83A, and the mic power and audio is handled via a seven-core cable from the SE T1 external PSU. You'll find a standard XLR audio output on the PSU unit.

From a technical perspective, the various differences haven't affected the frequency response too much, with the same characteristic lift as the 2200A around the 10kHz mark. However, the SE2200T's self-noise, sensitivity and maximum SPL handling have been improved along the way.

In the sound

It may not be the most visually-stylish mic out there, but you can't fault the build quality of the 2200T, and when you're done recording, everything packs away into a sturdy flight case. It's always

good to see a robust suspension cradle thrown in for free, and the only thing that may annoy some is the lack of a standard mic clip.

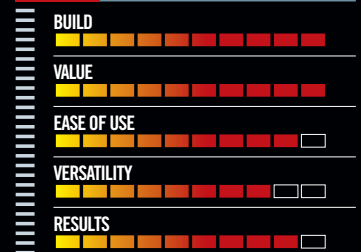
Sonically, the 2200T has a modern sound with a slightly-hyped top end. This makes it a great general-purpose mic, but also particularly good for vocals, acoustic guitars, and anything where you want to add a bit of 'air' at source. Like all cardioid mics, the pattern is frequency dependent, and for midrange sounds this is pretty broad, narrowing in the top-end. In use, we found this made positioning easy, which is ideal in a budget mic.

As far as the tube aspect is concerned, it's the transients that really benefit, with the tube-circuit rounding off and introducing subtle harmonic distortions. Inevitably this is content-dependent, but you'll spot benefits on vocal articulations and plosives and pretty much any percussive sounds, plus a more rounded performance with low frequencies. Overall, the results are definitely more coloured than a solid-state design, but that can be desirable. If I were planning to use the mic predominantly for vocals I would definitely opt for the valve version ahead of the solid-state SE2200A. Equally, for drum overheads or room mics, on sound alone the SE2200T would be more up my street.

Verdict

Overall, the SE2200T has the same excellent combination of features and value as the 2200A, except the valve design means a more engaging sound. Like the 2200A, there's no single astonishing thing about this mic, but the combination of features and price are the selling point. The added complexity of using a valve PSU can be awkward at times, but on the upside you know the underlying design has a good track record. It's very difficult not to conclude this is a great buy. **FM**

FutureMusic VERDICT



The sonic tuning of its sibling, with extra colouration and all for an excellent price.