

What is it? A stand-mounted mini acoustic screen for vocalists

PRICE: £229

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SE ELECTRONICS



Reflexion Filter

Chances are you haven't got room for a vocal booth in your recording space, but thanks to sE Electronics, you might not need one...



▲ Improve your sound and avoid eye contact with the sound engineer with the Reflexion Filter

Once in a while there comes along an idea that's so simple and so obvious that you wonder why no one thought of it before. sE Electronics' Reflexion Filter represents just such a concept – billed as a “portable vocal booth”, its primary function is to reduce the unwanted sound reflections that all too frequently form the tell-tale sonic signature of tracks recorded at home.

The Reflexion Filter is basically a semi-circular acoustic screen that you position at the back of your microphone using a set of clamps and support bars. Unfortunately, these are rather confusing, and we were forced to download instructions on how to

assemble them. Nevertheless, they offer flexible mounting options and enable you to remove the screen without changing the position of your microphone.

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Although it looks like it's designed to shield your microphone and stop sound getting in, the Reflexion Filter actually works the other way around. The idea is that the microphone picks up your voice as normal, and then the Reflexion Filter soaks it up before it gets a chance to bounce off the walls, which could create nasty resonances and echoes. If you thought this device was just designed to change your mic's pick-up pattern, think again.

The Reflexion Filter certainly looks the business, and it seems bigger in real life than it appears to be in photographs. It's actually rather heavy too, so it works better with tripod-base mic stands rather than weighted-base ones. Sadly, despite its large size, the Filter isn't quite big enough to accommodate all microphones in the ideal position (ie, with the mic capsule in-line with the screen opening).

Another concern is that the screen

resonates at certain audio frequencies. If you tap it with your thumb it booms like a drum, and if you sing loudly at it you'll find a frequency at which the screen 'sings' along with you. Ideally, panelling like this should be totally dead. The literature says that there's “only around 1dB” of colouration, but this isn't a particularly helpful or meaningful measurement.

Despite these slight reservations, the Reflexion Filter can be summed up as a nicely-structured device that will undoubtedly be helpful to many people. There's something psychologically reassuring about using it, too – perhaps this relates to the sense of privacy that it gives the singer. However, the quality of the

results you'll get from using the Reflexion Filter vary wildly depending on your particular environment, so our advice is to either try before you buy or find a friendly shop that will give you a refund if you're not completely happy with it. **cm**

ALTERNATIVELY

Acousti Pro products

N/A » N/A » £variable

Acoustic tiles, bass traps, speaker isolation pads, sound screen panels and noise barrier sheets

Ghost Acoustics products

N/A » N/A » £variable

A division of sE Electronics, Ghost have a range of acoustic treatment products

Not just for vocalists

Although it's primarily designed to reduce the sense of 'boxiness' that domestic environments such as bedrooms can project onto your vocal sound, the Reflexion Filter also has countless other applications. If you're a singer/songwriter who needs to sing and play acoustic guitar at the same time, for example, it can be difficult or impossible to correct the mix later on because of the sound leakage between the vocal and guitar. By positioning the Reflexion Filter under your chin,

however, you could dramatically increase the separation.

You could also use the Reflexion Filter 'in reverse' to cut down leakage in other situations – when you're recording a percussionist live along with a band, for example. By placing the Reflexion Filter in front of (rather than behind) the microphone, you could create a space in which egg shakers, guiros and other instruments could be played. It's all down to your imagination.

VERDICT

FOR

- + Tames 'bad' room conditions
- + Looks the business
- + Flexible mounting system
- + Many alternative uses

AGAINST

- Rather expensive
- Screen resonates
- Doesn't fit all microphones

It won't guarantee good vocal recordings, but the Reflexion Filter is certainly worth a try. Make sure you hold onto the receipt, though...

RATING

