

Tech Tips

Amplifiers, PA systems, mixers

Guitar Amps

Our non-preamped piezo pickups (RG-03, BJ-02, TC, etc.) are designed to work properly and sound good going into any 'normal' guitar amp. By a 'normal' guitar amp, we're referring to an electric guitar amplifier as commonly available from most music stores. Generally speaking, a non-preamped piezo pickup will sound better going through a tube amp as opposed to an all transistor one.

The impedance of a non-preamped piezo is normally in the 5 to 10 mega ohm range and while this impedance is considerably higher than most electric guitar amps regularly deal with, these amps will almost without exception handle the piezo without issue.

Acoustic Instrument Amps

Most acoustic instrument amps are designed to handle a pickup or pickup system that has 1) a fairly low impedance and 2) has had the signal strength boosted by a preamp either onboard the instrument or else outboard between the instrument and the acoustic amp. Again, most acoustic amps will not work properly with most non-preamped piezo pickups. As always, there are exceptions to this rule as there are acoustic instrument amps available that have a special preamp stage built in and so can take either a passive (non-preamped) pickup or an active (preamped) pickup at the flip of a switch.

PA Systems, Mixers

These units will generally have both 1/4" and XLR (3 prong + ground) inputs. The 1/4" inputs, although they are considered to be high impedance inputs, are not usually capable of handling a passive piezo pickup without a preamp. So, either an onboard preamp within the instrument or an outboard preamp will be required in order to plug into virtually all PA systems or mixers. The XLR inputs on PA's and mixers are low impedance only (generally under 1000 ohms) and are meant primarily as microphone inputs.