

Tascam DR-40 Field Recording Kit User Guide

Kit Contents

1. Tascam DR-40
2. Handheld dynamic mic
3. XLR cable
4. Soft carrier pouch
5. Furry windscreen (for most models)

Verify the package as complete and functional before you leave the studio.

Preparing the DR-40 for Recording

1. Before using make sure "Hold" button (on the left side) is set to OFF (away from the dot icon).
2. Hold down the power button (left button just below the LCD screen) to turn on. The on/off button is labelled home and also functions as the stop button during playback or recording.
3. Verify battery strength. It uses 3 AA batteries. Have backup batteries on hand before heading into the field.

Recording Settings

1. Press "Menu" choose "Rec Setting", and press "ENTER" to go into the record settings menu.
2. Adjust the format to 16-Bit. If you choose 24-bit you better know why.
3. Sample should be 44.1kHz. If you choose anything higher you better know why.
4. Set size to 2G. This sets the record length to 6 hours.
5. Low cut and prerec should be off.
6. Auto Rec Mode should be off.
7. Press menu twice to go back to the main screen.

Why 16-bit, 44.1kHz files? Because that's the standard bit size and sampling rate for audio CDs. If you're recording specifically for video, bump up the sampling rate to 48kHz. If you're recording music then use 48kHz or 96kHz and 24-bit.

Other Settings of Importance

1. Verify under Menu -> Others -> Effect that EFFECT is set to OFF.
2. Under Menu -> Others -> File name you may want to set it to WORD and then give it an appropriate label. I prefer to just verbally slate my files while recording and have the file names set by DATE.
3. Verify under Menu -> Others -> Date/Time that the time and date are correct. This will save you time later in logging and post-production.

Formatting Your Card

No SD card is provided. You must use your own and it needs to be formatted for the device, so make sure that you backup your card before using it in the recorder. Follow this process to format the card when you're ready.

Menu -> Others -> System -> QUICK FORMAT. Select EXEC. You will be prompted with "All data erased. Are you sure?" If you are sure, press ENTER (for YES) to remove all of the files on the card.

You'll get a spinning reel-to-reel icon that shows the files are being removed, and when it is complete, you are returned to the menu system.

The formatting process may take a while (like minutes) depending on how much data is being deleted and how fast your SD card is.

If you want to return the card to factory new, you can also use the FULL FORMAT option because it also verifies the card is fully functional (instead of basically just deleting the data). This type of card formatting can take over an hour to complete, so don't be in a rush and be sure to have fresh batteries.

Connecting a Mic

On the left side of the recorder, set the EXT IN to MIC.

NOTE: If your microphone is a condenser mic (like many shotgun mics) you will need to set it to MIC + PHANTOM.

Connect one end of the XLR cable to the mic, and the other end of the XLR cable to the device, under the L (left) input. This is also INPUT 1.

Under the LCD screen is a button REC MODE. Press it.

REC MODE should be set to MONO.

SOURCE should be set to EXT IN 1.

Recording Audio

Connect your headphones and press the red RECORD button. It will get a blinking red outline. You are in record standby. You can now monitor your audio over your headphones, and you will see you're getting levels, but you are not recording yet.

Do a microphone check with the performer/interview subject. Adjust the input level buttons on the left side of the device. Get your audio level to be averaging around near the downward pointing triangle on your LCD meter. You may also need to adjust microphone proximity to get good quality audio.

When you have your level set and are happy with the microphone audio quality, press the RECORD button again to record. You should see the timecode counter starts moving.

If you have clipping, you will see the PEAK light illuminate. Bring down your input level. If you still have audio distortion, move your mic further away.

When you are ready to stop recording, press the STOP button (represented by a grey square icon two buttons to the left of the record button).

If you want to pause the recording but continue on the same file, you can also press the REC button to pause recording. It will blink red again, and you'll see the timecode pause. Press REC again to start recording.

Reviewing Your Recordings

You can use the left and right pointing double arrows to select the file you want to play. You'll see the labels of the files change as you scroll through the recordings. Press the PLAY button when you want to play back. You can push the + and – buttons to change the audio monitoring volume. This does not adjust the volume of the actual recording, just the playback level you hear.

Getting Your Data off the Device

The simplest way is to simply connect the SD card to a computer.

Turn the device OFF, by pressing and holding the power button.

Then, go to the flap that covers the SD card on the right side of the device, open it, and press the SD card in to get it to pop out.

Connect the SD card to your computer via the adapter port.

The DR-40 SD card will appear on your desktop. Open the location. There may be a number of folders listed, but the default configuration will put the files in the MUSIC folder.

Drag and drop the audio files (or the entire folder) to a location off the SD card. If you want to make a backup of the copy, drag and drop the files to a different location on a different device or medium (flash drive, external hard drive, etc.)