SpeechWare TravelMike User Guide

A Comprehensive Guide to the SpeechWare TravelMike and Optional Accessory Kit

SpeechWare TravelMike: The Complete User Guide
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SpeechWare TravelMike User Guide

This user guide is intended to provide practical information on the set-up and use of the SpeechWare TravelMike and common accessories used with the microphone.

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Introduction

Congratulations on your purchase of a SpeechWare TravelMike. Your microphone has been manufactured to the highest standards and can be expected to provide years of high-quality performance with speech recognition software, internet telephony, and other audio applications. This product is based upon the functionality of the larger SpeechWare TableMike series.

Key features include:

- An extremely accurate and sensitive microphone element
- The use of speech equalizer "auto-gain" technology to allow automatic mic input volume adjustment as you vary distance from the microphone element (and practical use from distances of 10-20 inches)

- Advanced digital signal processing to exclude the influence of contaminating external noise
- An extremely small form factor making it ideal notebook computer users

Unless you purchased the optional "TravelMike Accessory Kit" the TravelMike as purchased from us includes the following elements:

1. SpeechWare USB MultiAdapter (USB sound card with speech equalizer and auto gain control)
2. Detachable snub-nosed microphone
3. Fixed 90 degree USB adapter
4. Short USB extension cable
5. Windscreen (1)
6. Carrying case

What it does

At the heart of the TravelMike is the SpeechWare USB MultiAdapter. If you are new to the concept of an external USB sound adapter, in the broadest terms this device is designed to replace the on-board sound card on your computer and is intended to accomplish the analog-to-digital conversion going into your computer and the digital-to-analog conversion for sound coming out of your computer.

The MultiAdapter, as the central part of your TravelMike, packs some unique technology not found in any competing product. Consider the following features:

Close Range Performance: When used in the short range or blue mode, the device simply employs a high degree of digital sound processing (DSP) to reject obvious and repetitive external noise. You might use the TravelMike as a short range microphone if you attach it to your computer with a USB extension cord and as a hand-held microphone. If you use it in this manner, you will want to set it for the blue or close mode.

Long Range Performance: When used in the long-range or green mode, the MultiAdapter introduces the following features to provide the highest possible transcription quality in this special context:

- Auto Gain Control (AGC), through which the chipset automatically detects the voice volume input and adapts to it.
- Automatic Mute, through which the device sets a threshold for the device to only output the signal when the volume reaches a certain level. This mean that when you are not talking the device will mute automatically.
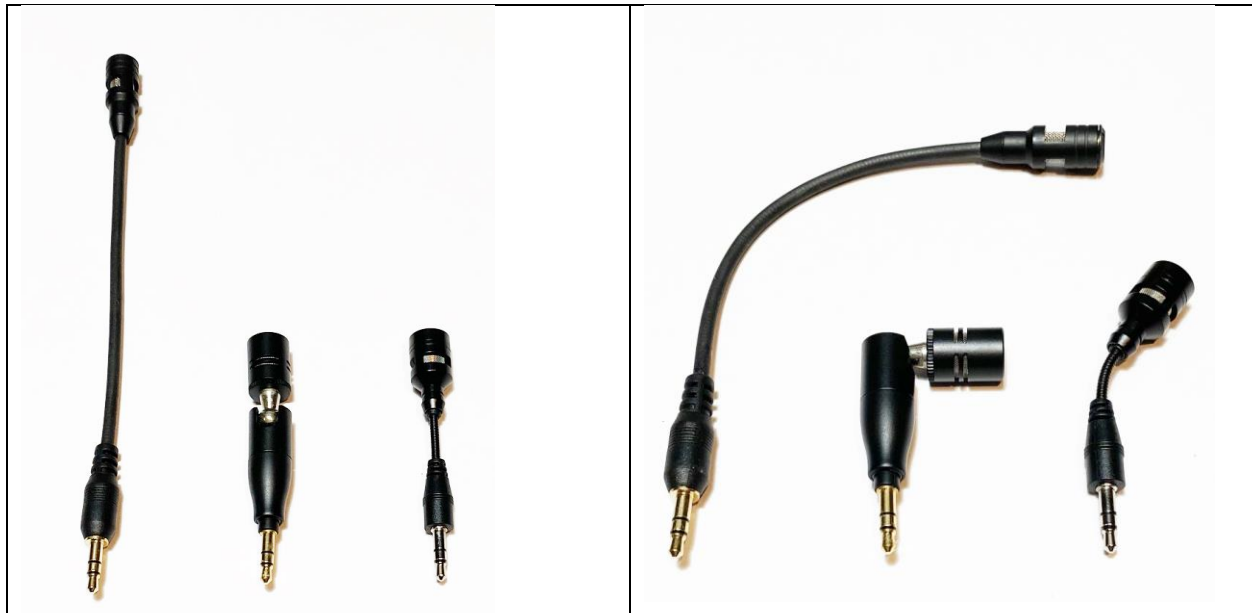
- Speech Equalizer (SQ), through which the device filters a certain range of frequencies to focus on human voice and allows it to discard external noises as for instance keyboard typing while dictating and other background ones. This is the reason why your voice sounds a little bit "metallic" when playing it back a voice recording.

Since all these functions are accomplished through a proprietary chipset, the device does not burden the CPU and the latency of the recognition process; in other words: fastest possible transcription, which is rather important for professional users!

Flexible versus Pivoting Boom

While the circuitry within the MultiAdapter at the core of the TravelMike has been constant over the years and the product has always been bundled with a high-quality microphone element akin to the one used in the larger TableMike series, over the years SpeechWare has used a variety of arrangements for the *boom* on microphone. The "boom" is the section between the plug which inserts into the USB adapter and the microphone element and it has varied in length and physical characteristics.

The original boom was 5-6 inches long and similar to the boom used in most headset microphones. Later, SpeechWare switch to a "snub-nosed" design which was only a couple of inches long. In 2019, they switched from a mechanically pivoting boom to a thinner and simpler flexible boom, similar to the original boom, thinner and less. While the rationale for this change was related to the occasional failure in the wiring within the pivoting boom, a downside of the newer flexible boom was a reduction in the ability for the boom to flex and remain in the flexed position. This is demonstrated in the image below.

Original, Pivoting Boom and Newer Flexible Boom versions fully extended.	Same elements at maximum sustained flexion	

Comparison of Pivoting and Flexible Boom

	Original Pivoting Boom	New Flexible Boom
Durability	Good	Better
Simplicity in bending	High	Slightly more complicated
Maximum sustained flexion (degrees)	About 30	90 or more

While we think the changes in the boom over the years has been a steady worsening in functionality (we liked the length and flexibility of the original, long boom the most) these subtleties may not matter to you. Currently, Speech Recognition Solutions carries TravelMikes with both boom types.
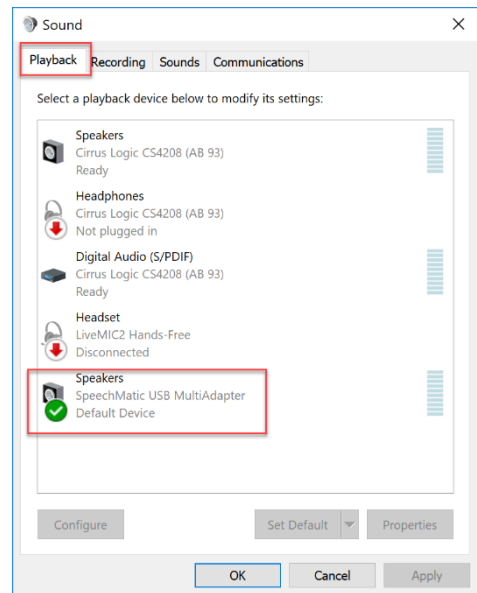
Windows Set-up

Set-up for the TravelMike is fairly straightforward, since all needed drivers are contained within current operating systems and are automatically installed upon insertion of the device into an available USB port. It requires no driver downloads and is both Mac and Windows compatible.

1. Assemble the TravelMike by inserting the snub-nosed microphone element into the microphone jack on the MultiAdapter and the MultiAdapter into the 90 degree USB adapter
2. Optionally cover the microphone element with the windscreen provided to avoid unwanted speech degradation, and to offer it an additional layer of protection from dust and saliva.
3. Insert the entire assembly into an appropriate USB port on the notebook computer. Connect the cable to a **DEDICATED** USB port on the computer. **DO NOT USE** any other USB cable or a multiple USB Splitter or USB Hub device to connect to the computer. The power light (LED) of the MultiAdapter unit will light up in **Red**. If the unit does not initialize - check that the USB connectors are properly inserted at both ends.
4. Wait a few seconds for *Windows*® to automatically install the corresponding USB sound drivers. You may or may not see some message/dialog boxes at the completion of the installation.
5. After completion of the installation, *Windows*® will select the **'SpeechMatic USB MultiAdapter'** ("USB TableMike" in the images above) as the Recording and the

Playback Device, and will make it the default for all microphone-in and sound-out functions.

a. If you do not have a speaker or ear set plugged into the sound out jack of the MultiAdapter **you will not hear any playback through your notebook speakers or speakers plugged into your notebook sound out jack.** To change this setting, with *Windows® 8 or 10*, go to your sound control panel (Control Panel > Sound) and click on the Playback tab and choose any other available playback device. To select the alternative device, right click on it and select "Set as Default Device"

b. If you plan to listen to sound by means of an ear-set or speakers plugged into the MultiAdapter sound out jack, you need do nothing further. Simply plug the listening device into the headphone jack on the MultiAdapter.
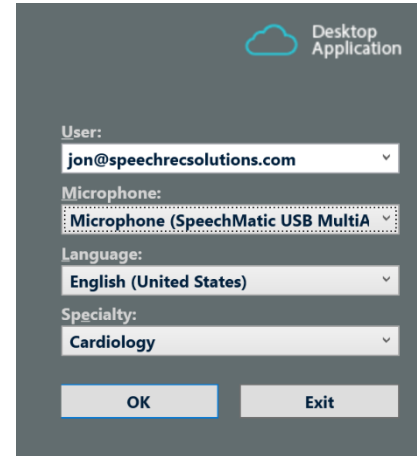
Dragon Set-up

Set-up of the TravelMike with Dragon depends upon the version of Dragon you are using. We will therefore separate this discussion into three parts: Dragon Medical One, Dragon 15 versions, and older versions of Dragon NaturallySpeaking.

Dragon Medical One:

If you are using your TravelMike with the new cloud-based Dragon Medical One (DMO), set-up couldn't be simpler.
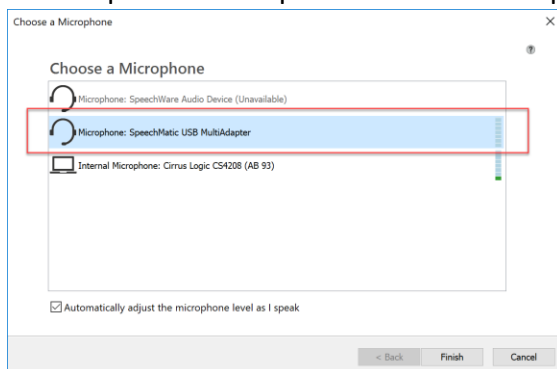
- If running DMO locally on your computer (not through Citrix or other Remote Desktop software), be sure that your TravelMike is plugged in before logging onto DMO and you will see it as an option as you log on:
- If you are running DMO through Citrix or another virtualization process in which the DMO application is actually located somewhere other than your computer, be sure you have plugged in your device before starting DMO and also be sure to select it as your preferred recording device from the Sound control panel. If it isn't already the default device, right click on SpeechWare SpeechMatic MultiAdapter from the Recording tab and select "Set as the Default Device". After this, start DMO as usual and on the initial log-on screen you should have the option of selecting "SpeechMatic USB MultiAdapter as your sound source.

Dragon 15 Versions

"Dragon 15 Versions" refers to Dragon 15 Home, Pro, Legal, and Dragon Medical Practice Edition 4 (DMPE4). For all of these versions, integrating the TravelMike into the software is a breeze. Follow these steps:

1. Insert the TravelMike into an available USB port and, if necessary, allow needed drivers to install (only required the first time)
2. Open your version of Dragon and if you have multiple user profiles on the software, select your preferred profile.
3. Dragon will notice that there are multiple sound cards available (the on-board sound card and the MultiAdapter associated with your TravelMike, and perhaps others) and will query you as to which sound device you want to use.
4. Select SpeechWare SpeechMatic USB Adapter and then click finish. See image below:

Older Version of Dragon (Pre-Version 15)

If using a new TravelMike with older versions of Dragon NaturallySpeaking, you have several options in terms of how to integrate your microphone with Dragon:

  a. Simply substituting the TravelMike for your old mic and running the audio set-up wizard
  b. **Adding the TravelMike as a new "source" to an existing profile**
  c. Creating an entirely new user profile based on the TravelMike

Of these options, we consider the middle option the best, both because it allows you to save all the personalized words and commands in your current profile, and yet still afford you the opportunity (based on the version of Dragon you are using) to do some limited reading and training with the new microphone.
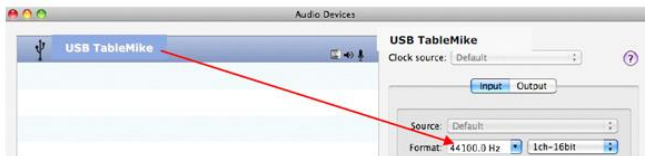
Here is the basic process based on Dragon version:

Dragon 11 or 12	Dragon 13 and 14
1. Select Dragon > Open User .. 2. On the far right of the Open User dialog, click on "Source" and then "New" 3. Select the new source (TravelMike) from those listed and follow subsequent instructions	1. Select Manage Dictation Sources from the "Profile" menu. 2. Click "Add new dictation source" 3. Follow all subsequent instructions

Mac Set-up

Preliminary Setting Tweak: Although the TravelMike is essentially a "plug-and-play" device, the following brief adjustment is recommended when preparing to use a TravelMike with your Mac:

  1. Go to the Utilities folder in your Applications folder, and launch 'Audio MIDI Setup'. Select 'SpeechMatic USB MultiAdapter' from the list of devices.

  2. Click on the 'Input' tab, then choose '44000.0 Hz' and '1ch-16bit' from the Format menu.
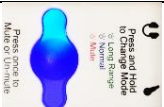

  3. Quit the Setup

General Operating Instructions

Controls: The SpeechWare USB MultiAdapter has several key components, including

1. Microphone input jack
2. Sound out jack
3. Push button
4. LED indicator (under the push button)

LED Indicator: The LED indicator will be either green, blue or red and indicate the following states:

Red	**Muted:** Microphone off and no sound passed to computer	
Blue	**Normal**: Close range; ideal for use with headset microphones plugged into adapter	
Green	**Distant**: 10-20 inch range; ideal for use with mini-boom on notebook	

Push Button Use:

- A short depression of the push-button cycles between the active (on) state for the microphone (either green or blue) and the muted state (red)
- A long push of the push-button will cycle between the blue and red modes

  (Note: you can cycle between the two modes only when the device is in either of the active modes; you cannot change modes when the device is in the muted state)

Normal versus Distant Mode:

Normal Mode: When in the "normal" mode, the TravelMike does not employ the Equalizer (auto-gain) technology and should be used with a distance of about one inch between the user's mouth and microphone element. In this mode you will have the most intense rejection of external noise, but the least amount of freedom in terms of distance from the microphone

Distant Mode: In the distant mode, the TravelMike employs the full measure of auto-gain technology and allows practical usage from distances between 10 and 20 inches. In this mode

the TravelMike will also employ the greatest amount of digital signal processing to reject external noise. As a result of this intense processing you will also notice a somewhat hollow sound to your voice when played back.

Mode	Normal (Blue)	Distant (Green)
Operating Range	1 - 3 inches	10-20 Inches
Auto Gain	Minimal	Most Intense
External Noise rejection	High	Moderate
Playback Sound Quality	Most Natural	Artificial sounding
Ideal Usage Situation	Moderate or high noise	Low ambient noise
Comments	Best setting in moderate or more noise	Best if low noise; most convenient given distance flexibility

TravelMike Accessory Kit

While the TravelMike was originally designed to mount directly to an available USB port and this depends upon the use of the included 90-degree right-angle USB adapter, the variability of logistical arrangements and work-flows among speech recognition users has made it clear that other mounting and usage options are possible may sometimes be preferable. The point of the "accessory kit" is to expand these options. When using the accessory kit, the TravelMike has the unique ability to be used in the following ways:

1. Attached to a USB port on a note book
2. Attached to the lid of a notebook
3. As a hand-held microphone
4. Attached to a mobile USB base and a free-standing desktop microphone

In the table below, we show some of the options offered with the parts contained within the kit. To be thorough, we also show the default mounting which does not require the accessory kit.

The price of the TravelMike Accessory Kit when purchased alone is $69 and it can be seen at: https://store.speechrecsolutions.com/speechware-travelmike-accessory-kit-p343.aspx

Mounting Method	Notes	Wind-Screen	Mode
Mounted to USB Port	As originally designed, the TravelMike is attached directly to a side USB port on a notebook computer. In this arrangement, the snub-nosed microphone element is rotated forward at its hinge point and it is rotated so it is facing the user. The microphone is used in the green LED or "distant" mode to optimize mic input volume with changing user position. This is the simplest mounting method and requires nothing more than the 90-degree USB adapter that comes with the basic TravelMike. **The accessory kit is not required for this mounting method.**	No	
Free-Standing	Using the TravelMike in the free-standing mode involves use of the universal card reader and USB hub. This mode allows extra flexibility in positioning the TravelMike and leaves the microphone pointing directly to the user. One big advantage of this mounting method is the ability to us the TravelMike with a desktop computer. The base comes with a 32-inch cord. If needed, either or both of the USB extension cords provided with the accessory kit can be used to provide extra length in reaching a desktop computer.	No	

Mounting Method	Notes	Wind-Screen	Mode
Hand-Held	With the included 36-inch USB extension cable, the TravelMike can be used fully independently in a hand-held manner. In this scenario, the multi-function button is used to place the microphone in the "normal" or close-up mode. This method allows the most accurate use of the TravelMike and is preferred in high-noise situations. Use of the foam windscreen is recommended in this mode, since the microphone is somewhat "hot". If a longer extension cable is needed, these are available on our site.	Yes	
Mounted to Notebook Lid	Mounted to the to the notebook computer lid using the self-adhering Velcro strips included in the accessory kit allows mounting of the TravelMike to any convenient location and places it in a position closer to head level for even greater directional specificity. In this scenario, the TravelMike is connected to the computer with the short USB extension cable. The microphone is operated in the green LED or "distant" mode. An additional advantage of this method is the stable fixation of the TravelMike to the computer which is particularly useful for the mobile user.	No	

Components of the TravelMike Accessory Kit:

Card Reader & USB Base	The accessory card-reader and USB base is intended for free-standing use of the TravelMike	*Velcro Strips*	Two set of Velcro strips are included for attaching the TravelMike to a notebook computer lid when this style is desired.
36 Inch USB Extension Cable (For Hand-Held Use)	Use the 36 inch USB extension cable for hand-held use of the TravelMike.	*Alcohol Prep Pad*	Alcohol swabs are included for use cleaning before attaching the Velcro strips to the TravelMike and the notebook computer lid. Be sure let the surfaces dry before attaching Velcro!
18 Inch USB Extension Cable (For use when mounted to laptop)	The 18 inch USB extension cable is design for connecting the TravelMike attached to the notebook computer lid to an available USB port.	*Drawstring Bag*	To hold carry everything, the accessory kit includes a nylon drawstring bag.

Other Accessories for the TravelMike

SpeechWare USB Hub and TravelMike Base:

This USB hub which is sold as accessory base for the TravelMike, is an alternative the base we sell. It includes 3 USB 2 ports, one USB 3 port, and an accessory adapter to allow use of the device with a computer having only USB-C ports. The only advantage this product has over our own card reader and USB base which we include with our TravelMike Accessory Kit is the presence of the USB 3 port. It is considerably more expensive, but well made.

This base is sold for $59 and can be seen at
https://store.speechrecsolutions.com/speechware-usb-hub-and-travelmike-base-p428.aspx

Hard Case for TravelMike: Although the included case provides excellent protection for the TravelMike and its various components, the tightly form-fitting nature of the case can make quick assembly of the device a bit laborious, particularly in the process of removing pieces from the case. For this reason, if you are a mobile user and expect to be frequently packing up and traveling with the components of the TravelMike, we suggest that you consider purchase of a hard case in which the parts of the TravelMike can be quickly deposited and removed. We sell this case for $19.95 and it can be viewed at this link:
https://store.speechrecsolutions.com/hermitshell-case-for-small-microphones-p384.aspx?Thread=True

45 Degree rotation adapter: If you purchased the TravelMike with the flexible boom and find it doesn't bend quite enough for your planned use of the product, this simple adapter created by Speech Recognition Solutions is the perfect was to build a 45 degree bend without depending upon a tight bend of the flexible boom.

The construction of the adapter doesn't require great skills. It's simply two 90 degree plug adapter attached to each other and offset by 45 degrees. We add to the mix a bit of super glue which stops the two adapters from rotating.

We charge $11.99 for the adapter and it can be seen at:
https://store.speechrecsolutions.com/45-degree-trs-adapter-p424c40.aspx?Thread=True

Troubleshooting and Common Questions

I'm using the TravelMike with a Mac and it doesn't seem to be working well. What am I doing wrong? This happens occasionally and is usually because the user did not realize that

special steps are needed to set up the TableMike for use with a Mac. Please read the section above on "Mac Set-up".

I recently switched from my usual microphone to the TravelMike. Although it works, it doesn't seem to be giving me the accuracy I expected. What's wrong? This is a fairly common scenario when switching mics and underscores the need to properly integrate your new microphone with your software. If using the TravelMike with Dragon, we recommend that you add the microphone as a new "source" to your existing profile. Details of this process are described earlier in this guide.

Is it necessary to use a foam windscreen with the TravelMike? This is entirely optional. If using the TableMike in the normal (close) range, the windscreen has the potential to prevent "popping sounds" which result from air-flow from your breathing as you talk. It also provides a method of keeping moisture and aerosolized particles in your breath from interacting with the microphone element. When used in the green or distance mode, all of these benefits are probably much reduced, so we consider use of the windscreen to be more optional when using the TravelMike in the distance mode.

Can this microphone be used as a handheld microphone? Yes. Although the TravelMike was originally intended to be plugged into a USB port on a laptop computer, if you purchase a simple USB extension cable, the TravelMike can be handheld and works beautifully with speech recognition. If you plan to use it with a notebook, we recommend a USB cable in the 18-24 inch range. When using it with a desktop, you will want a USB extension cable at least 6 ft. long.

When listening to playback of my voice it sounds very "tinny". Why is this? When used in the green or "distant" mode, the TravelMike uses advanced digital signal processing and this alters the quality of the incoming sound. This is actually advantageous when using the microphone with Dragon, since it is a product of external noise rejection. You may not want to have the quality of your voice changed for non-Dragon applications, so in this scenario we recommend changing to the blue or "Normal" mode.

Can I plug my favorite headset microphone into the MultiAdapter rather than the mini-boom? Yes, in fact the MultiAdapter is sold as a stand-alone product for this very use. You have the option of diverting the MultiAdapter component of your TravelMike to such use at any time.

Are there accessories which can be used with the TravelMike? Yes, the most useful accessory is the optional base which allows use of the TravelMike independent of a direct mounting/attachment to a notebook computer (pictured to the right.) To learn more about this accessory please visit http://store.speechrecsolutions.com/speechware-c39.aspx

We also sell a comprehensive "TravelMike Accessory Kit" which includes everything you need to deploy the TravelMike in any of 3 ways: 1) free standing on the base shown to the right 2) as a hand-held microphone and 3) attached to your notebook lid by means of a Velcro strip. This

can be viewed at: https://store.speechrecsolutions.com/speechware-travelmike-accessory-kit-p343.aspx

Warranty Information

All SpeechWare TableMikes come with a full, one-year warranty. Please contact Speech Recognition Solutions directly if you have a warranty claim. In order to extend your warranty to 2-years, please visit SpeechWare at the URL shown below and register for the extension.

https://www.tablemike.com/en/warranty