

David's Guide to Plugs and Sockets – For those who are not very technical!

Audio plugs

There are 3 main sizes of jack plugs:

2.5mm Jack plug – a very small jack plug often found on telephone accessories.

3.5mm Jack plug – probably the most common – usually found on headphones for iPods/MP3 players and computers.

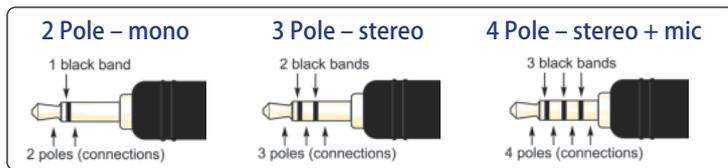
6.3mm (1/4") Jack plug – a big jack plug often used with pro-audio equipment and sound systems.



As well as coming in different sizes, jack plugs are available with different numbers of electrical connections – it's not complicated, simply look for the number of black bands on the plug... one for mono, two for stereo.

Hint: People also often refer to 'poles' (connections) when talking about jack plugs. As a guide, there is always one more 'pole' than black band on the plug i.e. a 2 pole plug has 1 band (mono) and a 3 pole plug has 2 bands (stereo)!

In addition, the latest generation of mobile phones often need 4 pole plugs with three bands to allow for stereo sound, plus a microphone. Which all goes to show – *just because the plug fits, it doesn't mean it will work!*



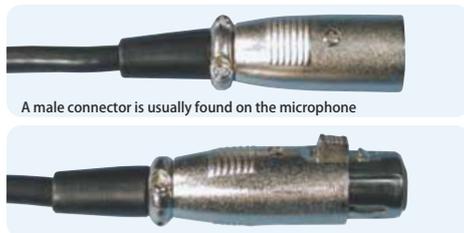
Phono (RCA) – a connector with a large round centre pin with claws around it. Phono sockets are often found on DVD/BluRay players (audio out), domestic hi-fi equipment & games consoles.



SCART – a large rectangular connector with lots of slanted pins found only on television and video equipment.



XLR – 3 pin XLR connectors are commonly used for balanced line connection for both conventional and radio microphones.



A male connector is usually found on the microphone



MALE

FEMALE

Speakon loudspeaker plugs

Used for connecting loudspeakers to amplifiers. Two types – 2 and 4 pole.



Trantec & SoundRanger plugs

Lemo – approx 7mm diameter. A polarised latching audio connector 'famously' used on legacy Trantec radio mics.



Lockable 3.5 mm – the same plug as on most headphones but with a locking screw ring so that the plug cannot be pulled out by mistake. Used for some radio mics including Trantec.



Mini XLR – approx 9mm diameter. A miniature latching audio connector made in 3 and 4-pin versions.



4 pin – approx 8mm diameter. A miniature audio connector with locking screw microphone connector, used on SoundRanger transmitters



USB plugs

There are 3 main sizes of USB plugs:

Standard USB – commonly found on computers, televisions and power supplies.



Mini USB – designed for data transfer in older smartphones and cameras



Micro USB – widely used for charging and data transfer with smartphones & cameras etc.



Telephone plugs

BT British Telecom plug
(Officially a BS6312 431A connector!)



RJ45 – Computer ethernet/internet connector



RJ11 – telephone line cord or handset connector. Used with a variety of pin connections including crossed.

For those that like boring info, an RJ11 plug can be connected into the middle of an RJ45 socket!



Digital plugs

HDMI – or High-Definition Multimedia Interface available in a range of specifications. The digital replacement for SCART.



Toslink – This is not a jack plug – it is a Toslink fibre optic connector(!) for digital audio – the name is derived from *Toshiba Link*. Remember to remove the protective cap!

