

FRAMPTONE TALK BOX

*Introduction to the World's Finest Talk Box,
Manufactured by Keeley Electronics*



Keeley Electronics Beginner's
Guide to the Framptone Talk Box

What It Is and What Is Needed:

The Framptone Talk Box is a guitar effect probably unlike any you'll find. If you are not familiar with the principles of a Talk Box, then this document is for you. If you are familiar with the principles of a Talk Box, you may not need this document, but then again maybe you'll find it entertaining. *But* for those of you who are brand new to the role of a Talk Box, read on.

The Talk Box in essence takes your amplifier speaker and puts it into your mouth. Imagine shrinking your favorite amplifier, setting it into your mouth, which in all of its cavernous glory shapes the sound by way of organically moving walls and a big, undulating red carpet, the sort of living cave one might expect to find an Edgar Rice Burroughs novel set on Barsoom (Mars). But since it's impractical and even dangerous to make small electric guitar amplifiers and speakers that fit into your mouth, this end is instead achieved by transporting the signal of an external amplifier into your maw via a long, safe tube that exits the peak of the pyramid. But it doesn't end there, because in order for the world to hear what's going on at the end of the tube, it needs to be amplified yet again. For this, you use a microphone, exactly as a vocalist would use. Similarly, just like a vocalist, this microphoned signal has to be sent to yet other speakers in order to be heard.

So, in order to put your amplifier's sound into your mouth, the amplifier dedicated to feeding the Talk Box (inside the pyramidal sound chamber) no longer sends a signal directly to the amplifier's speaker. Remember, the sound that once traveled through a speaker cable and into a speaker is now traveling into the Talk Box and up a tube that extends from the pyramid's top up into your mouth. And because the mouth talks and forms so many intricate sounds you get the idea.

The kind of amplifier you need use to drive the Talk Box must be of the sort that allows you to disconnect the speaker cable. If you use an amp head, you're all set. Since you already take the output of your amplifier and connect it to a speaker cabinet, you simply take the speaker cable that once went to the speaker cabinet and put it into the 1/4 inch Framptone Talk Box input. On the Talk Box is another 1/4 inch jack that allows you to continue to connect to your speaker cabinet, so when the Talk Box is OFF, the speaker cabinet will receive your guitar signal as it normally does.

If you have a combo amplifier, things might be a little different for you in terms of getting up and running. First, your combo amp must provide you with a speaker output jack into which you can connect a long speaker cable that instead of going to the speaker in your combo now goes to the Talk Box. In this case, it's exactly like an amp head/speaker cabinet rig, but because some combo amplifiers do not provide the user with easy access to the speaker jack, or any access at all, such an amplifier would be ill suited for the Talk Box. For instance, some combo amps connect the power section of the amplifier directly to the speaker by some connection other than a 1/4 inch output jack. The speakers are connected directly to the power amp. How to remedy this situation is beyond the scope of this document. It's not a difficult fix, so if you're uncertain of what to do, give us a call, or better yet, your local amplifier technician.

Assuming you have an amplifier that provides you with a 1/4 inch speaker output, and now that the amplifier signal is in your mouth via the long tube, a microphone is needed in order to bring the sound of the amplifier/Talk Box to the world. Like a singer, you can run the microphone signal to a recording console or to a P.A. If you want to send the microphone to yet another guitar amplifier, which is, for instance, what a lot of harmonica players do, you'll need to address the difference in impedance between what a guitar amplifier likes to see and what a microphone preamp or mixing board provides. Again, contact us if you want to run your microphone into another guitar amplifier, and we'll suggest the right tool for that. Otherwise, run your microphone in the same fashion as a vocalist: to a P.A. or to a recording console.

What's really exciting about the Framptone Talk Box is that today's guitarists have access to plenty of other effects that simply didn't exist before. For instance, imagine a Fuzz Head, a Boss DD-3 delay with a pitch shifter in the loop, a wah, a compressor, or any of your other favorite effects coming before the Talk Box. The possibilities cannot be exhausted. So.... feel free to run pedals before or in the effect send/return of your amp as you might normally do.

The Framptone Talk Box can be set up in three different ways:

- You can place it between an amplifier and its speaker and toggle the Talk Box ON or OFF. ON means that you will be sending your amplifier's signal into the Talk Box, up the tube, and into your mouth in order to be microphoned. When the Talk Box is OFF, the speaker of your amplifier receives your guitar signal, just as it would normally.
- Or you can place the Talk Box downstream of an amplifier and NOT return it to the speaker. In this case, the Framptone Talk Box must always be ON "to maintain a resistive load on the amplifier to prevent damage to the amplifier's output transformer."
- But the BEST case scenario is to use the Framptone A/B Box and two amplifiers--one line is dedicated to drive the Talk Box and the other to receive your guitar signal as usual. This will enable you to blend the talk effect with an amplified guitar sound. Remember, you'll still need to send the Talk Box microphone to a P.A., to a recording console, to another amplifier, or a combination of these.

One thing to remember about the Framptone Talk Box is that it is NOT like a Fuzz Head or any other guitar effect pedal. With the Fuzz Head, your guitar goes in, gets fuzzed, leaves and arrives at your amplifier. The Talk Box NEVER goes to an input of your amplifier, and if you plug your guitar directly into the Talk Box, you will not provide it with any power whatsoever. It wants to receive *an amplified signal*. Damage can result to an amplifier or mixing board if you take this amplified Talk Box signal and run it into their inputs. It would be like watering your houseplants with a firehose. It would make a huge mess. Instead, as described earlier, the Talk Box receives the summed signal of your guitar as it leaves your amplifier through a speaker cable. The Talk Box likes to see a 16 ohm signal.