

impact™



Astral Extreme AS-X-400 Monolight

INSTRUCTIONS

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Introduction

Thank you for choosing Impact. The Impact AS-X-400 Astral Extreme monolight can be used for everything from professional wedding and portrait work to action and sports photography. This monolight is an easy-to-use and reliable tool built for functionality, and it incorporates advanced features that are engineered for speed. In fact, that's why we call it the Extreme—because it's extremely fast. You can work fast and uninterrupted with the Astral Extreme, capturing incredible moments as they happen.

Ideal for working professionals, the Astral Extreme is designed so you'll never miss a shot while waiting for your light to recycle. Recycling time is as fast as 0.4 seconds at full power, flash duration is as low as 1/5000 of a second, and continuous shooting speed can reach a blazing 10 frames per second. This incredible speed makes the Astral Extreme great not just for fashion and event shooting, but also for high-speed photography. The Astral Extreme is fast enough to capture almost any movement at its peak, whether it's a bullet bursting through an apple, or it's a skateboarder launching out of a half-pipe.

Because high-speed flash photography can often mean high temperatures, the Astral Extreme uses a fan-cooling system, heat sinks, and speed-dedicated internal components to prevent overheating.

This monolight is easy to accessorize. With its built-in umbrella mount and Bowens S-type bayonet, you'll be able to attach light modifiers like umbrellas, softboxes, and beauty dishes to customize and shape your light to achieve the perfect look. A modeling lamp with a stepless power-output setting makes it easy to check positioning of your flash before it's time to fire.

The Astral Extreme has an optical sensor, so you can use it as an optical slave. There's also the optional Impact ControlSync 16 transmitter and receiver, which provides 150' (50 m) of untethered freedom with total wireless control over the Astral Extreme.

Precautions



- Please read and follow these instructions, and keep this manual in a safe place.
- Keep this unit away from water and any flammable gases or liquids.
- Do not leave the device in a closed vehicle under the sun or in other areas subject to very high temperatures.
- Do not attempt to disassemble or repair the equipment. There are high-voltage components inside the unit. Failure to observe this precaution could result in electric shock or product malfunction. This will void the warranty, and Impact will not be responsible for any damage.
- Use only the correct, recommended voltage.
- Make sure the unit is powered off when plugging it into a power source.
- Always remove the power cord by holding the plug; do not pull the cord.
- Disconnect the power cord from the power supply when not in use.
- Always power off and disconnect the flash from the power supply before changing the modeling lamp or flashtube.
- Do not stare directly at the lights when they are powered on.
- Do not flash directly towards the naked eye (especially those of infants and small children)—it may lead to visual impairment.
- Always remove the transport cap before using the flash.
- Avoid any unnecessary impact to the flash, as this can damage the flashtube and/or modeling lamp.
- Use only parts provided by the manufacturer.

Precautions



- Handle the unit with care.
- Clean the unit with a soft, dry cloth.
- Keep this unit away from children.
- Make sure the item is intact and that there are no missing parts.
- All photos are for illustrative purposes only.

Overview



Overview

Legend

1. Adjustment/carry handle
2. Umbrella mount (rear)
3. Modeling lamp output control dial
4. LCD display
5. Flash output control dial
6. Modeling lamp indicator light
7. Modeling lamp button
8. Sound indicator light
9. Sound button
10. Slave indicator light
11. Slave mode button
12. Flash ready indicator light
13. Flash test button
14. Wireless remote port
15. 1/4" phono socket
16. Power Switch
17. Fuse bay
18. AC power socket

Overview



Overview

Legend

1. Modeling lamp
2. Flashtube
3. Protective glass dome
4. Bayonet accessory mount
5. Accessory release latch
6. Umbrella mount (front)
7. Optical Slave sensor
8. Mounting bracket positioning rails
9. Mounting bracket
10. Hex screw
11. Ratchet handle
12. Locking knob
13. Mounting socket

Also included

14. Transport cover
15. 7" grid reflector
16. AC power cord
17. PC sync to 1/4" phono cord
18. Spare fuse (installed in fuse bay)
19. User manual



Getting Started

Mounting the Astral Extreme

1. Make sure the mounting bracket's ratchet handle is fully tightened.
2. Loosen the locking knob on the mounting socket and mount the Astral Extreme onto your lightstand.
3. Tighten the locking knob until secure.



You can adjust the tilt of the monolight by loosening the ratchet handle. Make sure to keep one hand on the monolight to hold it steady to avoid damaging the light.

Setting Up

After mounting the Astral Extreme on your lightstand, you will need to install the modeling lamp and the reflector.

IMPORTANT! Do not touch the modeling lamp or flashtube with your bare hands. Oil residue from your fingers can cause the surface of the flashtube to heat unevenly and explode. Always wear cotton gloves or use a clean cloth when handling the modeling lamp or flashtube.

Getting Started

To install the modeling lamp, follow these steps:

1. Make sure that the monolight is turned off and unplugged.
2. Remove the transport cover by pulling the accessory release latch and rotating the transport cover counterclockwise.
3. Remove the protective glass dome by carefully pulling it from the clips holding it in place.
4. Screw the included modeling lamp into the threaded socket.
5. Reinstall the protective glass dome by snapping it in place over the two bulbs.



Getting Started



To install the reflector, follow these steps:

1. Align the three pegs on the reflector with the corresponding notches in the monolight's bayonet accessory mount.

Note: Make sure the reflector's umbrella hole is aligned with the monolight's umbrella mount, located next to the accessory release latch.

2. Insert the reflector into the accessory mount and rotate the reflector clockwise until it locks into place.

To plug in the Astral Extreme, follow these steps:

1. Make sure the power switch is set to the Off position.
2. Plug the AC power cord into the monolight's AC power socket and then into an AC power outlet.

The Astral Extreme runs on the standard 110 V AC, 60 Hz voltage and comes with a grounded AC power cord.

Flash Power Output

The Astral Extreme's flash power output covers a 6-stop range. It is adjusted via the flash power output control dial (A) from 6.0 (full power) all the way down to 1.0, in 0.1-stop increments. The selected flash power is displayed on the LCD (B).

Note: Turning the flash power output lower than 1.0 until "OF" is displayed on the LCD will disable flash firing. This feature is for use with the dedicated remote. For more information, see the *Wireless Remote Control* section in *Triggering the Flash* on page 16.



To fire a test flash, press the flash test button (C). When the flash has recycled and is ready for another flash, the flash ready indicator light will glow red (D).

The Astral Extreme's autodump feature automatically empties the capacitor to the required power setting when you lower the flash output.

There is a built-in memory function that saves the settings on the control panel after 3 seconds. The next time you turn on the Astral Extreme, your previous settings will appear on the control panel.

Note: After 30 continuous flashes at full power, the flash should be cooled down for about 3 minutes. Overheating may occur if it is used continuously without cooling down.

Modeling Lamp



The modeling lamp is a continuous light that you can use for flash positioning to give you an idea of how the flash will illuminate your subject.

To turn on the modeling lamp, press the modeling lamp button (A). When the modeling lamp is on, the modeling lamp indicator light (B) will glow blue. Use the modeling lamp output control dial (C) to steplessly adjust power output.

If the modeling lamp is on when you fire the flash, the modeling lamp will dim and then return to its set power output level after the flash has fully recycled.

Note: The modeling lamp will automatically turn off after 2 hours to avoid overheating.

Audio Confirmation



The Astral Extreme can emit a beep to let you know when the flash has fully recycled and is ready for another flash. This feature is useful when you can't see the flash ready indicator light, which indicates the status of the flash. The audio confirmation will also cause the monolight to emit a beep when you press any of the buttons or rotate the flash output control dial.

To turn on audio confirmation, press the sound button (A). The sound indicator light (B) will glow blue when audio confirmation is turned on.

Triggering the Flash

There are three ways to trigger the flash: 1/4" phono, optical slave, or wireless remote (sold separately). When you trigger the flash, the flash ready indicator light will turn off and then turn on when the flash has recycled and is ready for another flash. If audio confirmation is activated, the monolight will emit a beep when the flash has fully recycled.

1/4" Phono

To trigger via a 1/4" phono cord, use the included PC sync to 1/4" phono cord to connect your camera's PC sync terminal to the Astral Extreme's 1/4" phono socket. A remote slave receiver can also be plugged into this socket.

Wireless Optical Slave

The Astral Extreme is equipped with a wireless optical slave feature, allowing you to fire the monolight remotely. There are two slave modes on the Astral Extreme: Instant-Fire and Skip Preflash.

Instant-Fire slave mode fires the monolight as soon as it sees a flash. Skip Preflash mode ignores the preflash from the master and fires only with the main flash.



To set the slave mode, press the slave button (A) repeatedly until the slave indicator light turns the proper color. In Instant-Fire mode the slave indicator light will glow blue (B), and in Skip Preflash mode the indicator will glow red (C).

Note: When positioning wireless slaves to light a subject, make sure to maintain a clear line of sight between the master and the optical slave sensor. Keep in mind that the effective communication range between master and slave flash units is approximately 33' (10 m).

Mounting Accessories

Wireless Remote Control

A dedicated remote control, the Impact ControlSync 16 Transmitter and Receiver (sold separately), can control triggering, adjust power levels, and turn the modeling light and audio confirmation features on and off. To use the remote, plug the dedicated receiver into the monolight's USB wireless remote port.

The Accessory Mount

The Astral Extreme has a Bowens S-type bayonet accessory mount for attaching light-shaping tools like softboxes, beauty dishes, and snoots, as well as the included 7" reflector with an umbrella hole.

IMPORTANT! To avoid potential damage, do not leave the modeling lamp turned on for an extended period of time when using a heat-sensitive accessory.

To mount an accessory, follow these steps:

1. Align your accessory's mounting pegs with the corresponding notches on the monolight's accessory mount.
2. Insert your accessory into the accessory mount and rotate your accessory clockwise until it locks into place.



To remove the accessory, pull the accessory release latch and rotate the accessory counterclockwise.

Mounting Accessories

The Umbrella Mount

The Astral Extreme has an integrated umbrella mount that employs an internal tension spring capable of holding up to a 7' parabolic umbrella.

To mount an umbrella in the Astral Extreme, insert your umbrella shaft into the umbrella mount at the front of the monolight. Depending on the desired position of your umbrella and the length of its shaft, the shaft may emerge from the umbrella mount at the rear of the monolight.



Adjusting the Center of Gravity

Adjusting the Center of Gravity

The Astral Extreme has an adjustable mounting bracket held in place by a single hex screw. This makes it easy to adjust the monolight's center of gravity if a large or heavy accessory is causing it to tilt forward or backward.

To adjust the monolight's center of gravity, follow these steps:

1. Turn off and unplug the Astral Extreme and remove any mounted accessories.
2. Use a 3 mm hex wrench to loosen the hex screw in the mounting bracket.
3. Slide the mounting bracket forward or backward along its positioning rails to the desired position.
4. Tighten the hex screw until secure.



Replacing Parts

Replacing the Flashtube

IMPORTANT: Before replacing the flashtube, it is recommended to manually empty the capacitor (see below), even though the Astral Extreme has an autodump feature.

To replace the flashtube, follow these steps:

NOTE: When handling the flashtube, use a clean cloth or cotton gloves. Never touch the flashtube with your bare hands. Oil residue from your fingers can cause the surface of the lamp to heat unevenly and explode.

1. Manually empty the capacitor by pressing the test button to fire the flash. Immediately turn off the monolight by pressing the power switch to the Off position.
2. Unplug the AC power cable from the monolight's AC power socket.
3. Remove the reflector, glass dome, and modeling lamp.
4. Carefully loosen the metal wire wrapped around the flashtube. Needle-nose pliers may be helpful for this.
5. Hold both sides of the base of the flashtube and firmly pull the flashtube straight out of the socket.



Replacing Parts

6. Insert a fresh FT-X-400 flashtube into the flashtube socket.
7. Wrap the metal wire around the clip that holds the flashtube in place. The wire does not need to be in the exact position as before, but it does need to connect the two ends of the clip.
8. Reinstall the modeling lamp, glass dome, and reflector.

Replacing the Fuse

The Astral Extreme's user-replaceable fuse protects the flash unit's circuitry. The fuse and included spare are located in a bay mounted above the AC plug (A).

To replace the fuse, follow these steps:

1. Turn off the Astral Extreme by pressing the power switch to the Off position.
2. Unplug the AC power cable from the monolight's AC power socket.
3. Use a flat-head screwdriver or needle-nose pliers to remove the fuse bay.
4. Remove the old fuse (B) and replace it with the spare (C).
5. Reinsert the fuse bay into the monolight.



Specifications

Maximum power	400 W/s
Recycle time	0.4 sec. at full power
Flash duration	1/5000 to 1/8000 sec.
Power output control	6-stop range, 6.0 to 1.0 in 0.1-stop increments
Guide number	(ISO 100): 213' (65 m)
Color temperature	5600 K \pm 100 K
Modeling lamp maximum output	150 W (E27 base, user replaceable)
Operating voltage	110 V AC, 60 Hz
Triggering method	Test button, sync cord, optical slave, wireless remote port
Circuit protection	8A fuse
Accessory mount	Bowens S-type
Umbrella mount	8 mm
Sync terminal	1/4" phono
Dimensions	16.1" \times 5.5" \times 5.5" (41 \times 14 \times 14 cm) (without reflector)
Weight	7.15 lb. (3.24 kg) (with flashtube, modeling lamp, and reflector)

One-Year Limited Warranty

This Impact product is warranted to the original purchaser to be free from defects in materials and workmanship under normal consumer use for a period of one (1) year from the original purchase date or thirty (30) days after replacement, whichever occurs later. The warranty provider's responsibility with respect to this limited warranty shall be limited solely to repair or replacement, at the provider's discretion, of any product that fails during normal use of this product in its intended manner and in its intended environment. Inoperability of the product or part(s) shall be determined by the warranty provider. If the product has been discontinued, the warranty provider reserves the right to replace it with a model of equivalent quality and function.

This warranty does not cover damage or defect caused by misuse, neglect, accident, alteration, abuse, improper installation or maintenance. EXCEPT AS PROVIDED HEREIN, THE WARRANTY PROVIDER MAKES NEITHER ANY EXPRESS WARRANTIES NOR ANY IMPLIED WARRANTIES, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ANY IMPLIED WARRANTY OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. This warranty provides you with specific legal rights, and you may also have additional rights that vary from state to state.

To obtain warranty coverage, contact the Impact Customer Service Department to obtain a return merchandise authorization ("RMA") number, and return the defective product to Impact along with the RMA number and proof of purchase. Shipment of the defective product is at the purchaser's own risk and expense.

For more information or to arrange service, visit www.impactstudiolighting.com or call Customer Service at 212-594-2353.



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