

RC4X

Four Channel Wired Remote

Operation Manual



AlienBees

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The RC4X is designed to provide remote operation for the AlienBees Studio Flash Units, effectively controlling the B400, B800, and B1600 models. Up to four units may be controlled by the RC4X remote, individually operating each of the four units which may be of varying power. The lights are fashioned with a modular telephone jack connection on their back control panel, which is wired to the corresponding modular telephone jack connection on the front of the RC4X via the four provided, color coded cables. These cables are included with the remote, and are 25 feet each in length.



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As each light used is connected to the remote, the number underneath the telephone jack on the remote indicates which slider will be used to operate that light. Once properly connected, the RC4X provides the following functions:

1. common selection of MODELING LAMP MODE with setting options of Full (where the modeling lamp in all connected lights will remain on full brightness regardless of FLASHPOWER adjustment), Off (where the modeling lamp in all connected lights will remain off regardless of FLASHPOWER adjustment), or Tracking (where each individual modeling lamp will track the changes that are made with the slider control corresponding to that light);

2. individual, continuously variable slider control of FLASHPOWER over a stepless 5 f-stop range from Full down to 1/32 power;

3. flash testing of all connected lights with the FIRE button;

4. common sync connection to all lights from a single mini-plug sync input located on top of the RC4X, which connects directly to your camera, (the appropriate sync cord is the 15 foot sync cord provided with each individual AlienBees unit);

5. hand-held remote control operation at 100 feet or more.

Operation

The RC4X does not have an On/Off switch, but instead has a SLEEP MODE which will power down the unit after 3 hours of inactivity. When the unit receives a sync command, or a test command with the FIRE button, the SLEEP MODE timer is reset. When in SLEEP MODE, the sliders will not control the FLASHPOWER or the modeling lamp, and no changes will be recorded. To begin your shoot, push the FIRE button once to "wake" your RC4X unit before taking your pictures.

The RC4X is powered by two 1.5 volt AA alkaline batteries that are housed in a snap-open compartment on the back of the unit. In normal use, the batteries will last approximately 1000 hours before requiring replacement.

Connection

You may connect up to four compatible lights to the RC4X using the 25 foot cables provided. If you desire longer cords, to increase the distance between the flash units and the remote control, off-the-shelf modular telephone cables may be purchased at local hardware stores and used, simply make sure that these cables have four internal wires. The RC4X system has been tested with wires running up to 100 feet without problems.

The flash units should be plugged into grounded, three-pronged power outlets. We recommend against defeating the third-wire ground on AlienBees units or any other such equipment, for the sake of safety.

If you desire RC4X connection for more than four lights, an additional RC4X may be used to control up to four more lights. However, multiple remotes MAY NOT BE WIRED TO EACH OTHER from one telephone jack on an RC4X to another telephone jack on the additional RC4X. This will present a short-circuit condition, resulting in battery failure and possibly damage to the unit itself. If you are using multiple remotes, only one needs to be synced directly to your camera. The second set of remote operated lights may then be adjusted using your additional remote, but will be fired via their built-in slave trippers.

Another popular custom connection might be to mount several flash units in a large overhead lightbank, and configure them to function as a single unit from one channel of the RC4X. This can be achieved using an accessory that allows multiple cables to be connected to a single phone jack (one IN, multiple OUT), and may be purchased at a local hardware store. All flash units linked to that channel will assume that channel's slider setting.

Controls

When an AlienBees flash unit is connected to the RC4X, control of the FLASHPOWER and the modeling lamp mode (Full, Off, or Tracking) is now a function of the RC4X, regardless of the control settings on the back panel of the flash unit itself. The flash unit's On/Off switch and Model/Ready switch are not remotely operable, and must be set as desired on the units. Essentially, the flash units must be individually powered on, and while their FLASHPOWER and modeling lamp are being controlled by the RC4X, the Model/Ready indicator light will still serve as a display for when the unit has recycled.

The RC4X can be conveniently located at camera position, allowing you to quickly adjust the ratios between the lights. Switching the modeling lamp to TRACKING MODE will enable each light's modeling lamp to precisely track the changes in that light's FLASHPOWER setting. With the AlienBees "what-you-see-is-what-you-get" modeling, an accurate preview can be achieved between the "live" setup and what is captured on film or digital image.

The FIRE button serves as a convenient way to test fire all flash units connected to the RC4X, as well as providing a simple test for battery condition and general functioning of the remote unit. Each time the FIRE button is pressed, the red LED indicator should briefly light. This LED indicator is located next to the number 4 under the telephone jack connections on the front panel of the RC4X. The red light indicates that the battery is still charged to an acceptable level. This also indicates that a diagnostic test of the remote unit's major internal components has been successfully performed. The same diagnostic routine is carried out when the remote unit has been fired via the built-in slave or sync jack. The RC4X need not be connected to the flash units to be tested. If the LED indicator does not flash, the battery must first be replaced. If the LED indicator still will not flash after battery replacement, an unlikely internal defect is indicated and you will need to contact the AlienBees Technical Support Team at Toll Free 1-877-714-3381.

Warranty

This equipment is covered under a two year factory warranty. This warranty is limited to the repair or replacement of the unit or any component part therein, which fails during the period stated. The warranty shall exclude the replacement of batteries.

Should warranty service be required, you should first contact our Technical Support Team and they will direct you should you need to let us repair or replace the unit.

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