ION®

EXPLORER™ EXPRESS

User Guide

English

Tap or click
for technical
support.

ionaudio.com/support

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for purchasing the Explorer™ Express. At ION, your entertainment is as important to us as it is to you. That's why we design our products with one thing in mind—to make your life more fun and more convenient.

Note: Before you first use the product, please fully charge the batteries. Your unit was purposely shipped with a reduced battery charge to ensure safe transit. For optimal charging, power off the speaker while charging.

Use the included USB-A to USB-C® cable to connect the unit to a 5V, 2A power adapter (not included) connected to a power outlet and let it charge for up to 3 hours (depending on the specifications of your adapter). This helps ensure the longest life for your battery.

Box Contents

Explorer™ Express

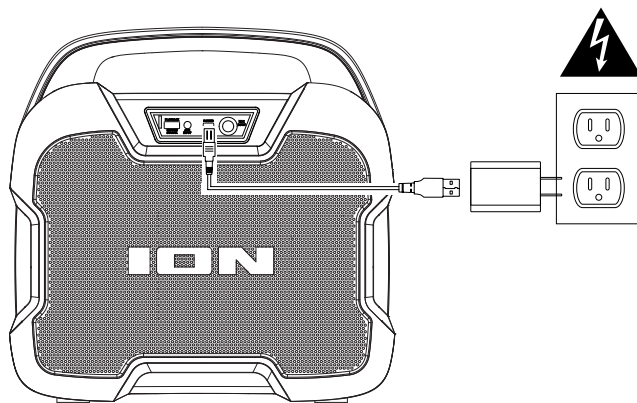USB-A to USB-C® Charging Cable (3.28 ft. / 1 m)

Quickstart Guide

Support

For the latest information about this product (documentation, technical specifications, system requirements, compatibility information, etc.) and product registration, visit ionaudio.com.

For additional product support, visit ionaudio.com/support.

SETUP

Charging and Battery Information

For the quickest charging time, power off Explorer™ Express and use the included USB-A to USB-C® cable to connect the USB-C® charging port on the rear panel of the speaker to a USB power adapter (DC 5V 2A, not included) connected to a power outlet, or your computer (powered on). A full charge can take up to 3 hours, depending on the specifications of your 5V, 2A adapter.

The **lightning bolt** icon on the display will light up when Explorer™ Express is connected to a power source and charging. The **battery icon** will fill to display the battery life percentage. When charging is complete, the lightning bolt icon will disappear, and the battery icon will be completely filled.

If no audio is played through the Explorer™ Express speaker for 15 minutes, the unit will enter a standby mode to conserve battery life. This may mean the Bluetooth signal is paused, no audio is coming through a device connected to the aux port, or the volume is set to 0. To wake the unit, simply resume audio signal or press any button.

When the Explorer™ Express speaker is connected to a Bluetooth audio output device and no audio is playing from any source, the speaker will automatically power off after 60 minutes have passed.

Here are some other recommendations for getting the longest life from the internal battery.

|	
General Usage	Fully charge the battery before using it.
	Avoid full discharge of the battery if possible. Li-Ion batteries are maintenance-free, and the battery will last longest when operating between 30 and 80 percent charged.
	Do not use the product while charging the battery.
	Do not charge the battery in exceedingly hot (greater than 90°F/32°C) or exceedingly cold (less than 32°F/0°C) temperatures.
Storage	For best product longevity, do not store at exceedingly hot (greater than 90°F/32°C) or exceedingly cold (less than 32°F/0°C) temperatures.
	For best product longevity, store product with a 50% battery charge.
	If you leave the battery level low and do not charge it for 6 months, it may permanently lose capacity.
Repair	If the battery fails to charge, contact ION Audio at ionaudio.com.
Disposal	Bring the unit to a recycling center or dispose of in accordance with local ordinances.

Outdoor Use and Care

Though Explorer™ Express is water-resistant and able to tolerate splashing water, please review the tips below to get the best performance from your Explorer™ Express:

- Bring Explorer™ Express indoors during extreme weather.

- Please do not place Explorer™ Express in standing water.

- Please do not connect the power adapter to an Explorer™ Express in a wet environment. Make sure the power input, power adapter, and power outlet are all completely dry before making any connections.

- **WARNING:** Keep any non-water-resistant devices (phones, music players, etc.) in a dry place where they will not be affected by water and cause a risk of electric shock.

FEATURES

Front Panel

Click a control below to jump to that section.
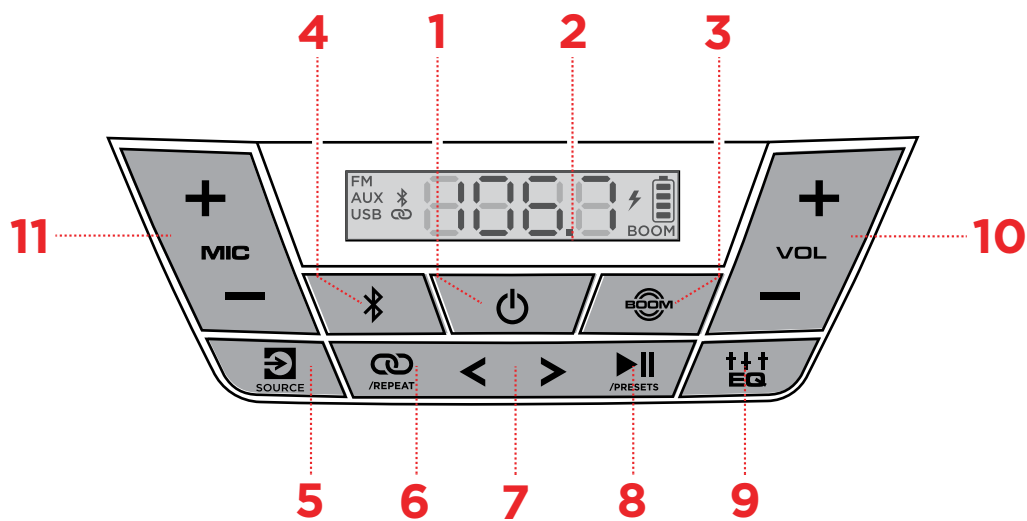
1. Power Button

Press and hold this button to turn Explorer™ Express on and off.

2. Display

This screen shows information relevant to the current operation on Explorer™ Express.

Note: The **Display** comes with a plastic protector on it. Remove this for optimal viewing.

3. BOOM Button™

Press to simultaneously enhance the bass EQ and volume.

4. Bluetooth® Button

Press this button to enter Bluetooth pairing mode. When connected to a Bluetooth device, double-press this button to disconnect a paired device and re-enter pairing mode, or single-press to disconnect a paired device and enter Aux mode. See *Operation > Pairing a Bluetooth® Device* to learn how to connect a Bluetooth device.

Press and hold this button to enable or disable voice prompts.

5. Source Button

Press this button to cycle between FM, USB, and Aux modes.

6. Stereo-Link™ / Repeat Button

See *Operation > Linking Two Speakers* to learn more about linking two Explorer™ Express speakers together using this button.

In USB playback mode, press this button to cycle between repeat modes. See *Operation > USB Playback Mode* to learn more.

7. Previous / Next Buttons

In FM mode, press these buttons briefly to go to the previous or next station. Press and hold these buttons to seek the previous or next strong station.

In Bluetooth and USB modes, press the **Previous** or **Next** button to go to the beginning of the current track or skip to the following track, respectively. Press the **Previous** button again within one second to skip to the previous track.

8. Play/Pause / Presets Button

Press this button to start and stop Bluetooth or USB audio.

In FM mode, use this button to save and recall radio presets. See *Operation > Using the Radio* to learn more.

9. EQ Button

Press this button to cycle through the Low, Mid, and Hi EQ frequencies. Then press the **VOL +/–** buttons to adjust the EQ frequency settings. If no changes are made within five seconds, Explorer™ Express will exit EQ adjustment.

10. Volume Up/Down Buttons

Press these buttons to adjust the speaker's volume. Press and hold **VOL + or –** to navigate Bluetooth tracks.
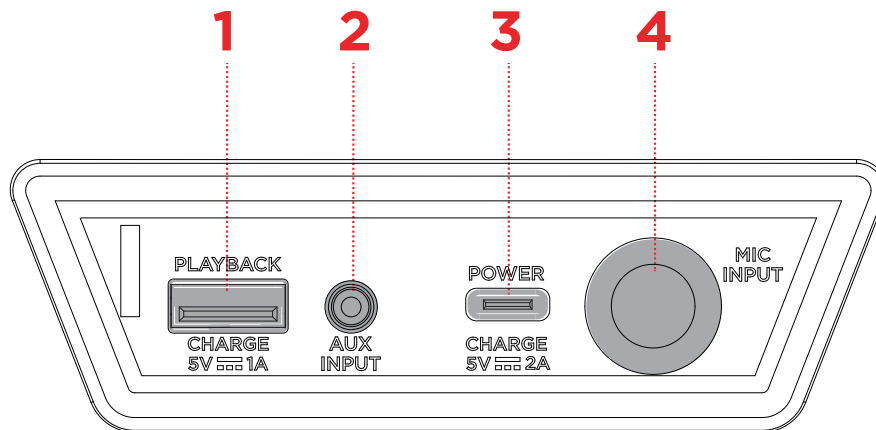
Press and hold both **VOL +** and **–** buttons for 5 seconds to reset the speaker to factory settings.

11. Mic Up/Down Buttons

Press these buttons to adjust the microphone volume.

Rear Panel

Click a control below to jump to that section.

Note: Pull the tab on the protective rubber panel to release it and access the rear panel ports.

1. **USB-A Charge/Playback Port**

   You can use this port for charging the USB device, such as a tablet or smartphone. To charge a device that is streaming music via Bluetooth, pause the music first and then wait for it to reconnect after the USB cable (not included) is inserted. See *Operation > Using the USB Charge Port* for more information.

   You can also connect a USB flash drive here to play music. See *Operation > USB Playback Mode* for more information.

2. **Aux In**

   Connect a CD player, MP3 player, or other audio source to this 1/8" (3.5 mm) input.

3. **USB-C® Charging Port**

   Connect the USB-C® end of the included cable to Explorer™ Express here. Then connect the USB-A end to a 5V, 2A USB power adapter (sold separately) and plug it into a power outlet, or your computer (powered on). See *Setup > Charging and Battery Information* for more information.

4. **Mic In**

   Connect a microphone (not included) to this input using a 1/4" (6.35 mm) cable. Press the **MIC +/-** buttons to control the mic volume.

OPERATION

App Control

IMPORTANT: To ensure the best possible experience with the app, use the most current Android OS or iOS on your device.

Follow these steps to download the free app on your device:

1. Open the Apple App Store or Google Play on your device. Then, search for the **ION Sound Control**™ app.

2. Follow the on-screen instructions to download and install the app. Once downloaded, the **ION Sound Control**™ app will appear on your device's home screen.

3. Connect your device to Explorer™ Express via Bluetooth. See *Operation > Pairing a Bluetooth® Device* to learn how to do this.

4. Open the ION Sound Control™ app. If prompted, allow the app to access your device's Bluetooth and Location Services.

5. Follow the steps on screen to find and connect to your Explorer™ Express. Once connected, you can control various functions of the speaker, such as:

   - **Source Selection:** Select the source to use (Bluetooth, USB, FM or Aux).

   - **Volume:** Adjust the speaker's volume.

   - **Mic Volume:** Adjust the volume of the Mic input.

   - **EQ:** Adjust the speaker's equalization.

   - **Voice Prompts:** Enable or disable the voice prompts.

   - **Battery Life:** Check the speaker's battery life status.

   - **Over-The-Air Firmware Updates:** Stay up to date with the latest firmware installation. Press and hold the **Source** button on Explorer™ Express to view the firmware version.

   - **Support:** Visit *ionaudio.com*, contact Technical Support, and view Warranty information and Frequently Asked Questions.

Pairing a Bluetooth® Device

1 - PRESS

2

3
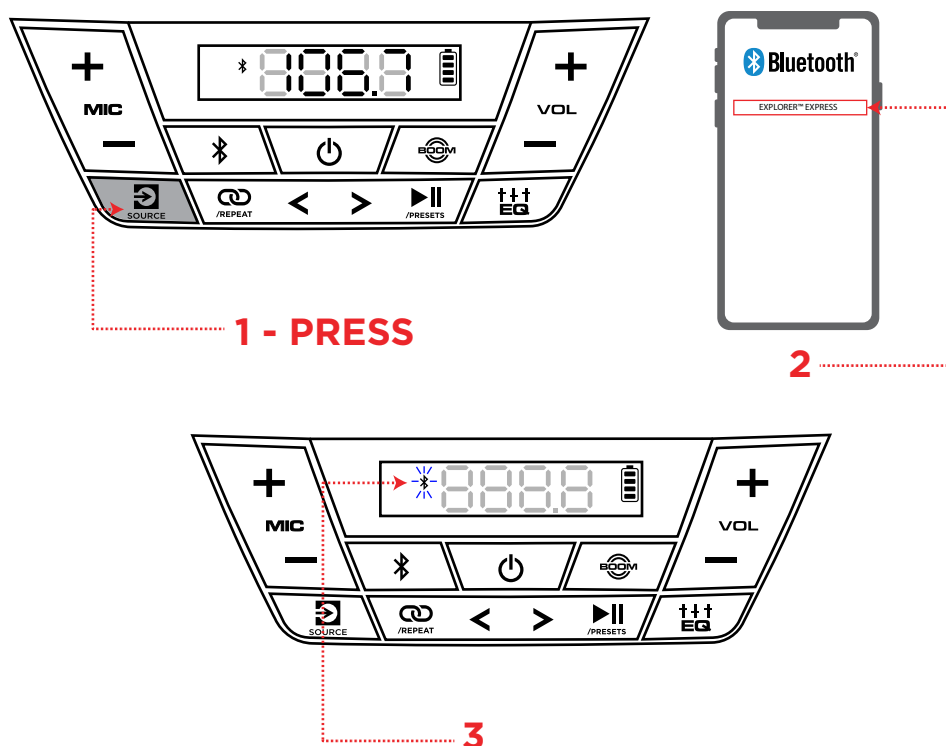
1. Turn on your Bluetooth device.

2. Power on Explorer™ Express by holding down the **Power** button for 2 seconds. When the unit is first turned on, it will automatically enter Bluetooth pairing mode. If necessary, press the Source button to select Bluetooth mode. The Bluetooth icon on the display will flash to indicate the speaker is ready to pair and if voice prompts are enabled, you will hear "Bluetooth Pairing."

3. Navigate to your device's Bluetooth setup screen, find **EXPLORER EXPRESS**, and connect. The **Bluetooth icon** will appear in the display, and if voice prompts are enabled, you will hear "Bluetooth Connected".

Note: If your Bluetooth device prompts for a pairing code, enter "**0000**".

**To disconnect a paired device,** do any of the following:

- Turn off Bluetooth from your device's Bluetooth settings. The speaker will enter Bluetooth pairing mode to make it available for another device.

- Double-press the Bluetooth button to disconnect and re-enter pairing mode.

- Briefly press the Bluetooth button to disconnect and enter Aux mode.

Once you have disconnected, the Bluetooth icon will return to flashing, and you will hear "Bluetooth Disconnected" if voice prompts are enabled.

Tip: Press and hold the **Bluetooth** button to turn voice prompts on or off.
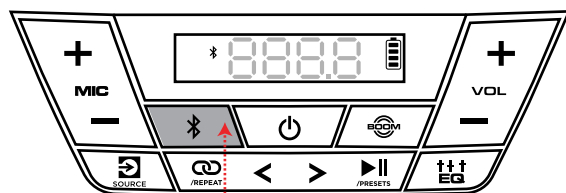
Linking Two Speakers

If you would like to play music from a Bluetooth device, you can first "link" two Explorer™ Express speakers together in order to listen to your music in stereo. One Explorer™ Express will serve as the left speaker and the other will serve as the right speaker.
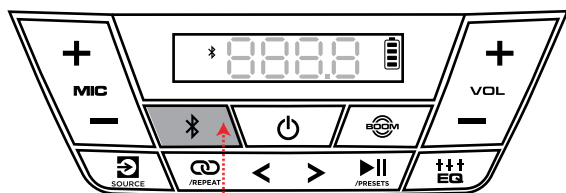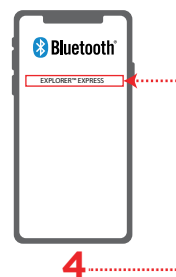

1 - DOUBLE PRESS
(on each speaker)
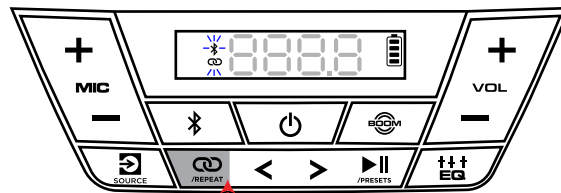
2 - PRESS & HOLD
(on each speaker)

3 - PRESS AND RELEASE
(on each Primary speaker)

4

To link two Explorer™ Express speakers together:

Note: When you begin the Stereo-Link™ process, any connected Bluetooth devices will be automatically disconnected. You can also disconnect your device prior to beginning by double-pressing the **Bluetooth** button.

1. Press and hold the **Stereo-Link™ / Repeat** button on both speakers to enter Stereo-Link™ mode. You will hear a tone and the **Stereo-Link™** and **Bluetooth** icons on each speaker's **Display** will begin flashing while they search for each other.

   Note: The linking process can take up to 30 seconds to complete. The closer the two speakers are to each other, the quicker the link is established.

2. Press and release the **Bluetooth button** on either speaker to select Bluetooth mode and begin the Bluetooth pairing process. The speaker you use for Bluetooth pairing will serve as the primary speaker.

3. Navigate to your Bluetooth device's setup screen, find **EXPLORER EXPRESS**, and connect. The Bluetooth icon on the primary speaker will flash to indicate it is searching for a Bluetooth device to pair with.

   When the connection is successful, you will hear "Bluetooth Connected" from the primary speaker (if voice prompts are enabled). When audio playback begins, you should hear it through both speakers. The primary speaker will play the left channel while the secondary speaker plays the right channel. Playback controls are active on both speakers.

To disconnect two speakers or cancel linking between the two, double press the **Stereo-Link™ / Repeat button** on either speaker.

Note: Pressing and holding the **Power** button on the primary speaker while in Stereo-Link™ mode will power off all connected speakers. Explorer™ Express speakers powered off in Stereo-Link™ mode will automatically enter Stereo-Link™ mode the next time they are powered on and begin searching for secondary speakers to connect to.

Using the Radio

PRESS

PRESS - Previous / Next Station
HOLD - Seek
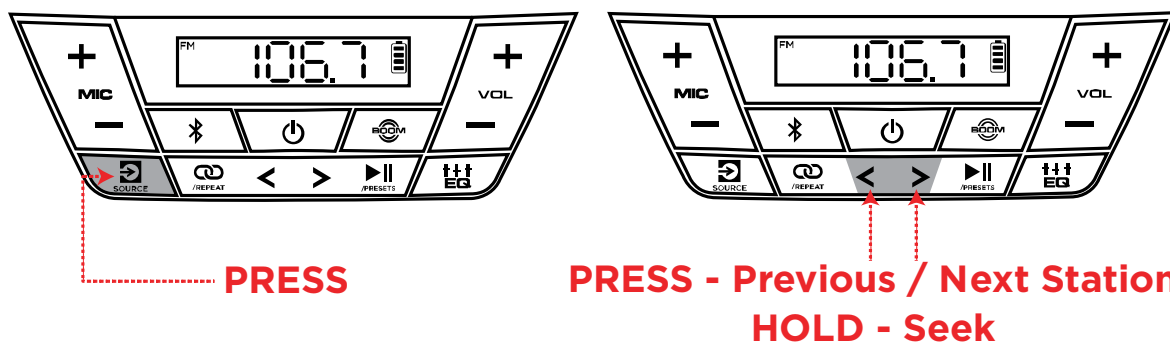
To use the radio, press the **Source** button so that **FM** is selected and shown on the display.

While in FM mode, briefly press the **Previous** and **Next** buttons (**</>**) to move to the previous or next station. Press and hold the **</>** buttons to seek for the next strongest station in that direction.


1 - HOLD

2 - PRESS - Select Preset
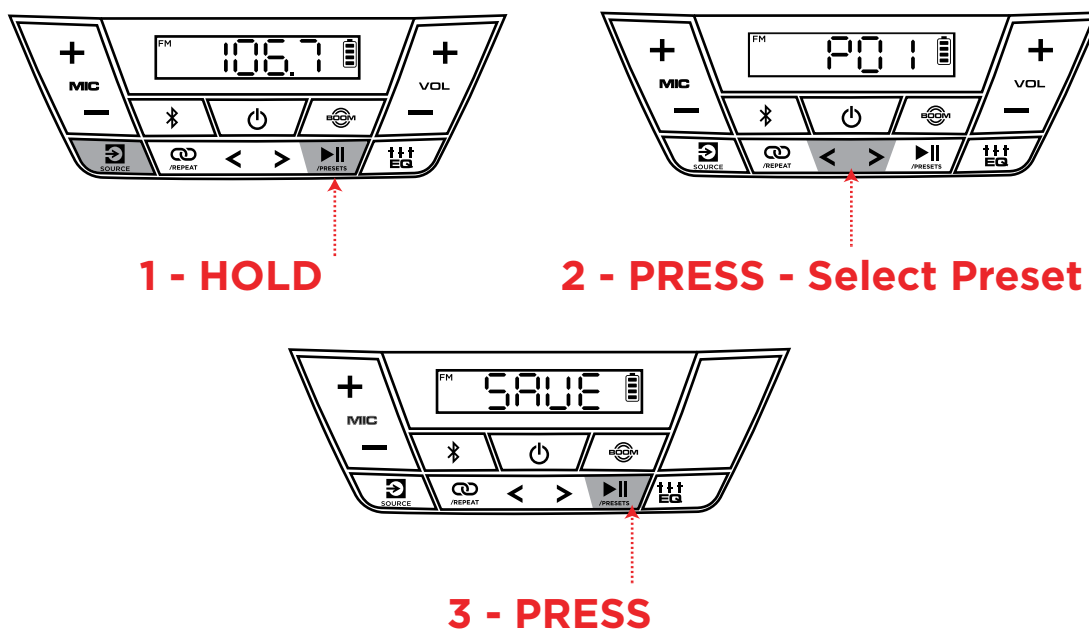
3 - PRESS

**To save a radio station as a preset:**

1. Press and hold the **Play/Pause / Presets** button.

2. Use the **</>** buttons to select a preset number, 1–12, shown on the display.

3. When you have selected the desired preset number, quickly press and release the **Play/Pause / Presets** button again to save it.

To recall a previously saved preset, briefly press the **Play/Pause / Presets** button to cycle between the 12 presets.
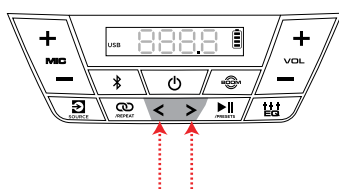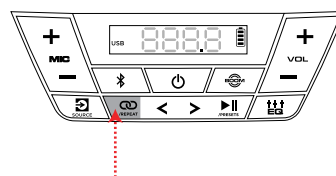
USB Playback Mode
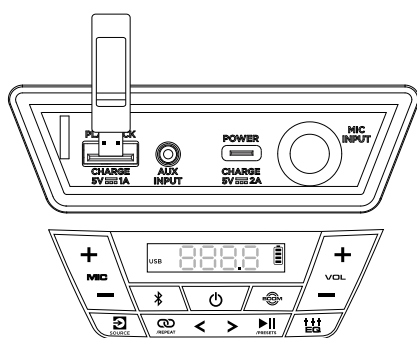
1 - CONNECT
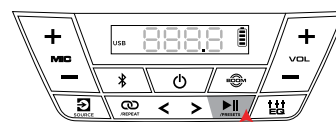
2 - PRESS
(Play/Pause Playback)

3 - PRESS
(Previous/Next Track)

4 - PRESS TO CYCLE
(ALL, FOLDER, ONE RANDOM)

When a USB drive with compatible files is inserted into the **USB Charge/Playback Port**, Explorer™ Express will automatically switch to USB mode. If the USB drive has already been inserted and you are using another mode, press the **Source** button until USB mode is selected.

Explorer™ Express will automatically play the first compatible MP3 file. Files are played in alphabetical order of what is on the root level, then alphabetical by folder, and then alphabetical by track name. Media playback will stop when all media has been played on the USB drive.

Note: The USB drive must have playable MP3 files for it to appear on the media panel's display.

Press the **Next** and **Previous** (</>) buttons to go to the next or previous track. Press and hold these buttons to fast forward or rewind within the track.

Press the **Stereo-Link™ / Repeat** button to cycle through the repeat/shuffle options (abbreviations will show on the display):

- Play the current USB track on repeat (**OnE**). This is the default mode when powered on.

- Play the tracks in random order (**rAn**).

- Play all the tracks on the USB drive on repeat (**ALL**).

- Play the current folder's tracklist on repeat (**FOLd**). The folder used is based on what song is playing when it is activated. For instance, if a song playing is on the root level, selecting FOLd will repeat only songs at the root level. If a song is in folder "A", then only songs in folder "A" will be repeated.

Using the USB Charge Port
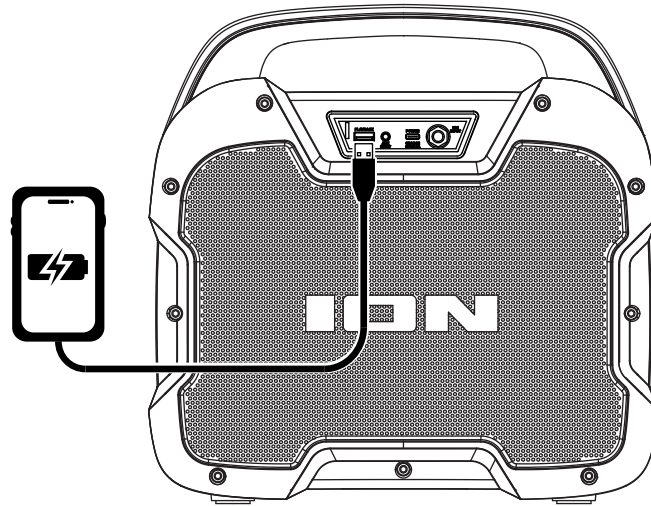
To use the USB charge port:

1. Connect a USB type-A cable to the **USB Charge Port** on the rear panel of your Explorer™ Express speaker (see image).

2. Connect the other end of the cable to the charging input on your smartphone, tablet, or other compatible device.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the unit is not charging: Make sure the USB-C® cable is properly connected to the power input, the power adapter, and the power outlet.

If the sound is distorted: Try lowering the volume control of your sound source.

I hear a hum when cables are connected:

- Disconnect cables from the input jacks to see if it's a faulty cable.
- Make sure the signal cables are not placed near power cables.
- Connect all audio equipment power cables to outlets which share a common ground.

If there is a high-pitched whistling noise when using microphones: This is probably feedback. Point the microphone away from the speaker.

If you can't hear the microphone over the music volume: Turn down the music volume from your source.

If there is too much bass: Try adjusting the tone or EQ control on your sound source to lower the bass level. This will allow you to play the music louder before clipping (distortion) occurs. You can also check to see if the **BOOM** function is enabled, and disable it by pressing the **BOOM** button™ to disable it.

If you cannot connect your audio device to Explorer™ Express via Bluetooth:

- Have your audio device (e.g., smartphone or tablet) and Explorer™ Express as close together as possible while trying to connect. Make sure both the audio device and Explorer™ Express are unobstructed by walls, furniture, etc.

- Double-press the Bluetooth button to disconnect Explorer™ Express from any other audio device and restart the search process. If this does not work right away, power off Explorer™ Express and then power it back on. See *Operation > Pairing a Bluetooth® Device* for more information.

- Reset the Bluetooth connection on your audio device by turning Bluetooth off and back on. You can find this under the Bluetooth menu in the Settings for your phone or other audio device.

If this does not work, and you have connected to Explorer™ Express before, find Explorer™ Express in the list of available or previously connected devices in your audio device's Bluetooth menu, tap the "gear" or "i" icon located next to it and then select **Unpair** or **Forget**. Turn Explorer™ Express off and back on and try pairing again once it reappears in your available devices list.

Note: If Explorer™ Express has been paired to another audio device recently that is still within range, you may need to repeat this process with that audio device to fully disconnect.

If you experience audio dropouts while playing music from a Bluetooth device, this may be happening because your unit is trying to link to another speaker. This can occur if you power off a speaker that was linked to your unit or if you have just turned on your unit and it is in Stereo-Link™ mode. To stop the audio dropouts, exit Stereo-Link™ mode by double-pressing the **Stereo-Link™ / Repeat** button. Alternatively, you can wait for your unit to link to another speaker if there is one within range.

APPENDIX

Technical Specifications

Output Power	65 W (peak)
Speakers	**Low Frequency:** 6.5″ (165.1 mm) woofer
	High Frequency: (2) 2.5″ (63.5 mm) tweeters
Frequency Response	65 Hz – 16 kHz (-3 dB)
Bluetooth	**Profile**: A2DP, AVRCP
	Bluetooth Version: 5.0
	Range: Up to 100 ft. (30.5 m) *
	Stereo-Link™ Range: Up to 100 ft. (30.5 m) between speakers
USB	**Audio:** Music playback from USB drive
	Supported File System: FAT32
	Supported File Type: MP3
	Maximum File Size: 4 GB
	Maximum USB Drive Size: 16 GB
Battery	**Capacity**: 2000mAh/11.1V, 22.2Wh
	Battery Life: Up to 10 hours **
	Charge Time: Up to 3 hours
Power	**Cable:** USB-A to USB-C® Charging Cable
	Input Voltage: 5V DC, 2A
Dimensions (width x depth x height)	13.48″ x 6.50″ x 13.23″
	343 mm x 165 mm x 336 mm
Weight	7.65 lbs.
	3.47 kg

Specifications are subject to change without notice.

* Bluetooth and wireless reception and range are affected by walls, obstructions, and movement. For optimal performance, place the product so it is unobstructed by walls or furniture and is raised off the ground.

** Battery life may vary based on temperature, age, and volume usage of product.

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