direct box

also known as a DI, a direct box is a device typically used in recording studios to connect a high-impedance, line level, unbalanced output signal to a low-impedance microphone level balanced input, usually via XLR connector. DIs are frequently used to connect an electric guitar or electric bass to a mixing console's microphone input. The DI performs level matching, balancing, and either active buffering or passive impedance matching/impedance bridging to minimize noise, distortion, and ground loops. Read more at Wikipedia.org.