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Subject: Re: Does Volume Matter?

Posted by [gofar99](#) on Tue, 31 Dec 2013 03:20:52 GMT

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Hi, A good question that many assume the answer is like you said. There really is no set standard for what the control is set at in relation to the loudness. First most volume controls are logarithmic not linear. So the mid point on the dial is not 50% of its electrical value. To complicate things.... there are three common places in electronic equipment for volume controls. One is sort of a relative of another though. The volume control (AKA gain) is often just after the stages that have the most gain and most inherent noise. So low settings, say less than 25% rotation of the control will minimize the noise going to the following stages or equipment. The variation of this is placing the volume control at the output of the device such as is done in some line stage preamps. The other main location is at the input of a given piece of equipment. This is valuable if the device can be easily overloaded by strong input signals. The down side is that there is no attenuation of noise. In things I design I usually place the volume control at the input of line stage preamps as they have rather low gain and thus are quiet. I also place the control at the input of power amplifiers for a similar reason. Other designers will often use the alternative locations. There is no right or wrong way. I find that if you pair the power amps I design with the line stage preamps I design that the normal ... comfortable listening level with most speakers will be with the control set in the 25-33% of rotation range. Full power output with normal sources (phono, CD etc) is at about 75% of rotation.

Sorry for the long dissertation but the answer while simple needs explanation.

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