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Subject: Re: Stylus Inspection

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sat, 15 Dec 2018 23:51:22 GMT

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My first examination is of a brand-new replacement stylus for my Audio Note AT20 cartridge.

Audio Technica AT20 cartridge in case

Audio Technica AT20 cartridge, top view

Audio Technica AT20 cartridge, front/bottom view

Audio Technica AT20 cartridge, bottom view

The stylus I'm examining is a "Bliss" branded shibata stylus, purchased from TurntableNeedles.com. The specific part is called an "ATN20 Type Shibata for Audio-Technica AT15 AT20 Cartridges" and they claim it is made by Jico. Their part number is 203-DQX.

ATN20 "Bliss" (Jico) shibata stylus for AN20 cartridge

The first thing I noticed about this stylus is the cantilever is not positioned properly, so it's a non-starter for me. I've already written the folks at TurntableNeedles.com for a replacement. You can easily see that it is offset to one side, even with the naked eye, especially when it is installed in the cartridge.

Viewed with the microscope, it is even more obvious:

Cantilever offset is clearly visible

Inserted into the cartridge, the cantilever offset is even more visible

Focusing in the tip, I can see that the built-in lighting is not ideal for stylus examination. I think the magnification is sufficient, but the lighting angle isn't right. So I'll build a fixture that houses a bright white LED on each side, to illuminate the sides of the stylus more.

## Magnified ATN20 stylus tip

### File Attachments

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- 1) [AT20\\_top.jpg](#), downloaded 743 times
  - 2) [AT20\\_front\\_bottom.jpg](#), downloaded 823 times
  - 3) [AT20\\_bottom.jpg](#), downloaded 828 times
  - 4) [ATN20\\_bliss.jpg](#), downloaded 811 times
  - 5) [AT20\\_in\\_case.jpg](#), downloaded 829 times
  - 6) [ATN20\\_bliss\\_cantilever\\_offset.jpg](#), downloaded 786 times
  - 7) [ATN20\\_bliss\\_installed.jpg](#), downloaded 787 times
  - 8) [ATN20\\_bliss\\_magnified.jpg](#), downloaded 826 times
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