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Subject: Buying Vinyl Records

Posted by [Jorel](#) on Sat, 18 Dec 2010 18:43:28 GMT

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Do you think it is still good to buy vinyl records? Is there any advantage of getting vinyl rather than getting it on CD's or MP3's?

I would like to have a collection of vinyl recordings but I'm not sure if this is a good idea.

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Subject: Re: Buying Vinyl Records

Posted by [Adveser](#) on Sun, 19 Dec 2010 00:47:38 GMT

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Stick with me, this has a point.

There is something the internet audiophiles don't understand. It has been the subject of much debate and moaning. The loudness has been scapegoated more than anything.

It is that 16-bit Digital technology has the overbearing quality that it must be mastered with very little headroom or else the volume will not peak in certain areas of the audio spectrum and it will truncate bits.

To understand this, let's start with a bass guitar being mixed in 16 bits. If it is the only thing in the 50-200Hz Range in the mix, other than the kick drum, and it peaks at only -12db, you are getting much less than 16-bit resolution in those frequencies. The solution is to compress everything in mastering to at least -6db. I don't know the db to bits ratio, i'm afraid, so I can't say what is what. It could be 6db or it could be 1db. I don't know if it is linear or not. Volume is directly proportional to bit depth and hence, resolution.

Now, Vinyl has absolutely none of these problems, but it has a vast array of it's own problems to be considered.

The bottom line is that, if it is a classical recording, soft jazz or anything that requires a lot of headroom and accuracy far below it's volume threshold, Vinyl will sound far more accurate.

If it is a digital recording where the mean volume is only about 6db lower than the peak, CD is your best best. Vinyl will never be able to touch such recordings in accuracy or sonic detail.

The debate has been muddied treating the two as equals of some sort, when they function much differently.

Briefly, the loudness war complainers are only right in one area and on area only, which is CD's should never clip past 96db. However, their other gripes are ill-informed and they relying on the logic that analogue devices use, that is, that quiet sounds and loud sounds have the same resolution. They do not in the digital world. Until 24 bit recordings are commercially viable, get used to hot and over compressed masters because that is the only way for digital to present an accurate measure of the audio. Albums that peak at 90db instead of 96db (common around the

1986 era of CD) were only 14-bit recordings.

With CD, you take your noise as truncated bits or distorted peaks. With Vinyl, you take your noise as tracking noise. Pick your poison until 24-bits is viable.

I'm not going to say yes or no on the vinyl. These are the real limitations of digital and analogue.

Go read the wikipedia page about vinyl and can read exactly why they were discarded. It simply takes a high quality copy for vinyl to work.

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Subject: Re: Buying Vinyl Records  
Posted by [Jorel](#) on Sun, 19 Dec 2010 17:17:23 GMT  
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Thanks a lot for the explanation. I wanted to collect classical music and thus I thought of having it on vinyl. I don't know much about the technical theories of music but I guess the best thing to do is to experience it myself. I have to look for turntables and vinyl records and compare it to CD's.

By the way, how much is an original vinyl record these days?

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Subject: Re: Buying Vinyl Records  
Posted by [Adveser](#) on Mon, 20 Dec 2010 01:23:03 GMT  
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The cost is tricky issue.

It could be anything. I've paid 50 bucks for common 80's stuff and I've paid 3 bucks for more hard to find pressings from the 70's...from the same store with one guy pricing everything.

Expect to pay what A CD costs, but some shops sell cheap. Don't rule out the thrift store. I've found great stuff in like new condition for a couple bucks each there. It isn't all Herb Alpert records, even though most of it is.

Go for pre-1980's pressings. It seems that vinyl got incredibly cheap towards the end. You know, thin, tight grooves, impure material, the works. 80's records warp unless kept cool.

Classical music puts you in a good position. They made huge box sets that no one ever played that came on stiff thick vinyl. These are super cheap and should sound great if the source recording is good.

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Subject: Re: Buying Vinyl Records  
Posted by [Jorel](#) on Thu, 30 Dec 2010 15:29:22 GMT  
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Wish me luck then that I can find the best quality vinyl with the cheapest yet reasonable price.

As for the players, should I look for the vintage gramophone? Or do the current vinyl players have no difference at all with the old?

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Subject: Re: Buying Vinyl Records  
Posted by [Adveser](#) on Thu, 30 Dec 2010 16:30:15 GMT  
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There is nothing wrong with new equipment as far as I am concerned.

The most important thing is the cartridge, IMO, and making sure the platter spins at precisely 33 1/3.

When going out to get an amplifier, make sure it has a phono pre-amp. One of the inputs will be labelled as "phono" or indicate that is where the record player's output goes. Without this pre-amp the sound will be incredibly quiet with nothing but tinny high end.

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Subject: Re: Buying Vinyl Records  
Posted by [Jorel](#) on Tue, 04 Jan 2011 17:02:46 GMT  
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Adveser wrote on Thu, 30 December 2010 10:30 There is nothing wrong with new equipment as far as I am concerned.

The most important thing is the cartridge, IMO, and making sure the platter spins at precisely 33 1/3.

When going out to get an amplifier, make sure it has a phono pre-amp. One of the inputs will be labelled as "phono" or indicate that is where the record player's output goes. Without this pre-amp the sound will be incredibly quiet with nothing but tinny high end.

Thanks a lot for the advice. I have copied and printed this for me to check when I buy the vinyl player. I just need more money for this investment but I'm sure it will be worth it.

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Subject: Re: Buying Vinyl Records  
Posted by [Manilyn](#) on Wed, 05 Jan 2011 01:44:55 GMT  
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I'm sure they will eventually be worth something. My dad has a huge collection of them and I think

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it's really cool. I personally wouldn't collect them though because I have no use for them. I love my CDs.

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