Subject: Balance control
Posted by Shane on Wed, 19 Jul 2006 00:40:59 GMT
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Well, I've started to notice that most music seems to be a tad louder in my right ear than my left and I'm having to adjust the balance on my NAD and old Kenwood gear just slightly to the left to compensate.When I finally get around to building an amp (yeah, I know I keep talking about it, but stuff like going to Stugis keeps coming up --glad my old man is footin the bill $$ for that trip otherwise it wouldn't happen!), would it be better to put in a balance pot, or to go with dual volume controls? Seems like a balance pot would just add one more link in the signal chain that didn't need to be there.

Subject: Re: Balance control
Posted by Damir on Wed, 19 Jul 2006 09:43:41 GMT
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Well, doctor examination of the ears are in order, and maybe washing out - IME. And for the volume control, IMO/IME - the "proper" way is two volume controls, if possible - 24 pos. stepped attenuators (Goldpoint, DACT...).

Subject: Re: Balance control
Posted by Shane on Wed, 19 Jul 2006 15:59:26 GMT
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Yeah, maybe they just need a good cleaning. Seriously, though. I had someone shoot a 7MM mag rifle off right next to my head on a hunting trip several years ago. It wasn't completely the shooters fault, but partly mine for not giving him a better signal on when to shoot so I could plug my ears. Couldn't hear a thing for three days except extreme ringing. It never has been quite the same since. And many years of playing rock music in a band at too high of levels with no hearing protection are probably taking their toll as well.Is there any cheaper way to go with dual volume besides stepped attenuators? You can drop a hell of a lot of cash on just those!

Subject: Re: Balance control
Posted by Damir on Wed, 19 Jul 2006 18:32:51 GMT
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The same thing with me - rock music (practicing in 4x4m room - real drums, 3x >100W guitar/bass

amps, years ago). Right ear...and even wax problems now. Friend of my has explosion-induced hearing loss (right ear, again) - and you can only imagine our conversation in the bar with loud music. About stepped attenuators - yes, they are too expensive, IMO, even if you DIY with "Elna" switches... I have two monoblocs with "ordinary" pots - I just adjust them "by ear", but with simple measurements in a few "favorite" positions I checked the L&R volume...good enough for me. But stepped attenuators in 2dB steps are really something else.

Subject: Re: Balance control
Posted by Shane on Wed, 19 Jul 2006 18:58:28 GMT
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I remember seeing a picture over at Bottlehead where Wardsweb had done a dual on his Foreplay, adjusted them where he needed, then there was a small belt that looped around the knobs so when you turned up one, the other went with it according to the predetermined difference.Found the pic. Here's the link.
Wardsweb's Foreplay

Subject: Re: Balance control
Posted by SteveBrown on Thu, 20 Jul 2006 17:47:51 GMT
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I have a similar slight loss in my left ear - a nice present from a business flight while I had a bad head cold. At any rate, I find that if I just bring the left speaker a tad more forward (a couple inches is plenty), it compensates. This eliminates the need for a balance control - and I hate dual volume pots, seems like a real pain to me. Now I will add that I do find a need for a balance pot when I'm playing with new amp designs. This happens when I try to compare one amp with another, they may have different gain, sometimes by a bunch. So I keep on hand a tube pre that I built and it has a balance control. It also has helpful functions like a mono-stereo switch, a mute left/right switch, etc.. What I did was take an old Mac C26 (solid state) and gutted it. Then replaced the guts with tubes - preserving all those great front panel controls (except the tone controls). Works great for experiments, but I find for day to day listening I prefer the simplest possilbe signal path rather than this more complex setup.
