Subject: Stereo Turntables Making A Comeback
Posted by Georgiana on Wed, 02 Oct 2013 20:07:36 GMT
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I was browsing the electronics section of Walmart.com and found a stereo turntable. I was really surprised. Anybody think there's a chance they might start making vinyl again?

http://www.walmart.com/ip/Jensen-JTA-460-3-Speed-Stereo-Turntable-with-MP3-Encoding-System/20550021

Subject: Re: Stereo Turntables Making A Comeback
Posted by gofar99 on Thu, 03 Oct 2013 02:39:48 GMT
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Hi, Yes but not as a mainstream product. I have three and several hundred LPs. There has been a resurgence over the past say 10 years and there are now several manufacturers of turntables and associated equipment. Also several new companies are making the disks. CD plants are closing and vinyl plants opening - wow. A lot of the new disks are by current musicians. There are also a goodly number of high grade re-issues of older stuff. Do not be misled by the Walmart thing. It is a gimmicky fake retro thing and yes it will play records, but not even close to what they really can do. Also the turntables that let you copy your disks to a PC via USB are virtually all junk. It is unfortunate that to get a good new turntable now you have a fairly high entry price. Nothing under about $300 for just the turntable will be worth bringing home. Then you will still need either a preamplifier or amplifier that has one built in to use it. The alternative is to refurbish a vintage one. This is a very common thing now. High end turntables from the heyday of vinyl are readily available and reasonably priced. You can get $500 worth of performance for just over $100. Still you will need the rest of the setup. I personally find that in my system - which is admittedly way above the entry level that a well recorded LP is equal to and in some ways perhaps better than anything available except high definition (24 bit/ 96 K or better) downloads. I find that the LPs, particularly NOS ones from the 60s, 70s and 80s are better mixed and recorded than most CDs of the same music. I have a high end Blue ray player (by OPPO Digital) that made the "A" list for Stereophile recommended components for its audio quality. Even with SACDs and audio DVDs the vinyl of the same material is better.

I agree with the reviewers that probably CDs will continue to diminish and high end digital will be the medium of choice and quality, but there will always be a significant vinyl following.

If you want to really see more about LPs and turntables check out the vinylengine.com site. It has a huge following and extensive resource files.

Subject: Re: Stereo Turntables Making A Comeback
Posted by Chicken on Sat, 16 Nov 2013 13:25:02 GMT
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I don't believe they ever stopped making vinyl, but it has definitely enjoyed a comeback in recent years, which is why you now see these cheap turntables at Walmart and Target. I agree with Bruce, though, that ones like the one you linked aren't worth your money.

Subject: Re: Stereo Turntables Making A Comeback
Posted by Nico on Wed, 20 Nov 2013 01:12:10 GMT
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Bruce, where would you recommend looking for a quality turntable. I have a collection of 50 to 75 LP's but no way to play them. I would be willing to invest the money in a quality set. Quality is important. I would hate to ruin my collection.

Subject: Re: Stereo Turntables Making A Comeback
Posted by gofar99 on Wed, 20 Nov 2013 02:16:12 GMT
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Hi, That is a tough question to answer. The reason is that there are basically two ways to get a decent turntable at present and how you would go about it depends on your basic knowledge of them. The two ways are (1) used and (2) new. New will cost you but is a generally safe bet. The ones worth taking home are from a bottom of about $180 to the sky's the limit. A new one is just coming onto the market by a company called U Turn (http://uturnaudio.com/)the model is the Orbit. A no frills basic unit, but by all accounts a decent turntable. They make an upgraded one at $100 more. Of the two I would personally think it to be worth the difference. There are mainstream ones from Pro-ject and Rega in the $300-350 range. I have a Pro-ject Debut III as a back up. An OK unit, I didn't like the steel platter and spent $100 more for an acrylic one. Steel ones make cartridges with strong magnets (that many have) suck down to the platter and mess up the tracking force. I could not use several cartridges I like on the P-J. There is a Rega at about the same price that is equal to the P-J. I just don't have personal experience with it.

The alternative is a used one either refurbished or not. There are many available. The problem is to avoid getting one that is damaged or so worn out as to be useless. I would suggest that you search local second hand shops - particularly ones that specialize in musical stuff (LPs CDs etc) and see if any are there. One I visit from time to time in Phoenix had three decent turntables the last time I was there. A way to get some feel for what is good and not is to prowl the vinylengine.com forums. Many nice folk there. Some sell things on it as well.

All this presumes you have a way to amplify the sound...a stereo system with a phono preamp stage. Most new ones do not. A phono preamp though can be had for as little as $50 and be fairly good. If you are good at diy check out the project I posted on diyaudioprojects.com It is an IC based one that sounds a lot better than it should. It can be built for $50-75.

I hope I haven't discouraged you, but vinyl is a different animal from what most people listen to and the cost and complexity to get decent sound is higher than for other formats. Do not however get any of the new crop of "retro" players. They not only don't sound very good, they can damage the LPs.

Subject: Re: Stereo Turntables Making A Comeback
Posted by Azuri on Mon, 06 Jan 2014 17:44:54 GMT
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I would definitely spend $300 on a good turntable unit. I still have 100+ vinyl records and I would love to be able to play them scratches, white noise and all.

Subject: Re: Stereo Turntables Making A Comeback
Posted by The Noise on Mon, 06 Jan 2014 17:56:03 GMT
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I wouldn't get mine from Wal Mart though. I'll go through a reputable online dealer. Someone who knows electronics. You may pay a bit more, but turntables are turning into somewhat of a specialty item.

Subject: Re: Stereo Turntables Making A Comeback
Posted by gofar99 on Mon, 06 Jan 2014 20:07:17 GMT
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A thought...if it made of plastic or has a plastic (not acrylic though) platter don't buy it. Likewise a "retro" name is a red flag.