Subject: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Antonio on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 04:06:18 GMT
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Hi!!This is my first post here and I must say that this is my first "vinyl experience".I just repair (uhummm....) the turntable i got from a friend as a present (Toshiba S-100, its also a tuner and a tape player), the drive belt was broken, so i bought a new one and replace it (intuitivelly).Its working fine, but i need the best signal to noise ratio i could get, without expendig USD$1400 on a cleaning machine, i know this has been discussed here, but i need step by step instruccions, 'cause im afraid to screw the records up and i also need to know how to clean up the needle.Thanks in advance.

Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by BillEpstein on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 08:25:00 GMT
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You can clean the needle with isopropyl alcohol on a Q-tip. Make sure the cotton is just damp, not soaking or the alcohol will be drawn up the cantilever and damge the suspension. Just touch the cotton to the needle and twirl it a bit. When no more stuff comes away it's clean. Then get a Mr. Clean Magic Eraser or one of it's clones. A white brick of micro-fibers. Daily maintenanace is to gently push the needle into the brick and release.I have gone from using just the Dawn soap to a mixture of 8 parts distilled water to 2 parts 91% isopropyl alcohol and a few drops of Dawn in a spray bottle. Don't bother with trying to find 99% pue alcohol, the other 9% of the cheap 91% stuff is just distilled water anyway.After the tap water rinse, do a final rinse with distilled water.
Cheap Clean up

Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Manualblock on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 12:37:49 GMT
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Personally; I would be hesitant to use a q-tip on my expensive stylus. The fibres tend to wrap around the tip and could cause damage. I would spend the 8 bucks for a stylus brush from needledoctor or one of the other sites that deal with turntables. They also carry Disc Doctors Record Cleaner which is what the Library Of Congress uses on their records. It is very inexpensive and easy to use and made specifically for records. There is some anecdotal evidence that Isopropyl alchohol can leach out the stabilisers in the vinyl and cause surface noise. Regular dish soap can do that also. If you value your albums,(and they are the most expensive part of your stereo) then I would spend the twenty bucks to do it right. Elusive Disc is another site that carries this stuff. Good Luck, J.R.

Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Russellc on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 21:02:45 GMT
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Welcome to vinyle,I clean my records with excellent results using the disc doctor cleaner and brushes. Cheap and work great, really opens up the midrange even on albums I thought were clean. for the stylus, go to the supermarkets cleaning section and spend 2.00 bucks or so on a "Mr Clean Magic Eraser"get the all white ones, not the ones with the blue side. Forget the instructions that come with it, you will not be using it in that fashion. Take one of the two erasers out and lay it down like a loaf of bread. Slice off a slice about 1/4 of an inch thick. I use sissors. Stick a small wooden toothhpick in it for a handle. Holding it by the tooth pick,raise the pad up to your stylus carefully until the stylus is buried in it, and carefully and slowly pull it straight down, and repeat. I do this with the arm in its mount, and I use a small brush to dust it before and after the Mr clean treatment. agreat brush can be made from the appropriate size painters brush cut down to 1/2 inch long bristles, and cutting the handle off short. I realize all this sounds like a crock, but under the microscope the stylus is bone clean! So reliable is the proceedure I have all but quit using the scope to look, its always the same. Two bucks gives years of use!Party on,Russellc

Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Manualblock on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 21:08:05 GMT
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I would agree with all of that except maybe the arm in it's mount part. A little too much enthusiasm could cause a problem. I let the arm sit on it's riser then gently use the brush from back to front; using just enough force to lift the arm slightly off the cueing rest with the arm in the unlocked position and the cue lever in the up setting.

Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Russellc on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 21:19:00 GMT
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Forgot to mention, Using the disc doctor products like any record cleaning fluids, proper rinsing is important if you dont want residue. I don't care if it says it "leaves no residue" in my experience all will if not appropriately rinsed. The disc Doctor set is two brushes (one wash one rinse) two replacement pads, and a bottle of concentrate. You do not apply pressure, just guide the brush as directed. Once done, I go to the sink and blast warm (not hot, mildly warm) water on them, carefully at an angle, turning the album until all is exposed. Then rinse well with distilled water, THEN do the recommended rinse step in the disc doctor intructions. I still pick up a little residue the first time or two I play them, but if really well rinsed, it isn't audible, and appears under magnification as pure white fluff which if dried, brushes right off. (Let albums dry well) If I only

follow the instruction method, I had residue which was audible for the first 2 or 3 plays, then great. Maybe I didn't rinse well, but I like the sink method.Russellc

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Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Antonio on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 21:23:34 GMT
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I cant thank you enough for your fast replies guys!!!ill be trying some of this advices later on, and then ill come back and post my results.Thanks again!!!

Subject: Re: Perhaps I should point out.....
Posted by BillEpstein on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 21:24:32 GMT
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.....that I got ticked at the V.O.A. when they raised the price from 50 cents to 69 cents each album. And my cart cost $39. Perhaps when the Ariston/SME is up and running I'll buy a few lightly used or even new records and some bottled cleaner.I should also point out that my late lamented vinyl colleciton was mostly acquired through years when my stereo consisted of a Panasonic 2 piece player with ceramic cartridge, then a Garrard Lab 80 with Shure cart of obscure origin and length of service. When I moved on up to the East Side and acquired first a Kenwood 650, then an AR-XA and finally a VPI HW-19 III with ET arm and Talisman Virtuoso DTI cart the albums still sounded good and quiet. My care regimen back then was the Discwasher brush with the fluid bottle in the handle and never touching the playing surface with my hands.Now I read all this obsessing over the care of a polymer that is designed to have a piece of diamond dragged over it at very high P.S.I. and temperatures over 120 Celsius.I appreciate the advice but will remain a curmudgeon for now.

Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Russellc on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 21:34:32 GMT
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Agreed, but with the Mr clean method, you have to use Very little force of any kind, shakey hands should dose themselves with a beta blocker! I put it in the "locked" position because of the extremely light touch involved, plus, you must use enough upward pressure to make sure the needle buries into it. I stare fixedly at the cantalever for minimum movement. Also, the eraser will ever so slightly stick to the stylus, and when you get a good clean you can almost feel the popping free of the release. This is EXTREMELY slight and can only be felt with the lightest of safecracker touches. If the eraser were to stick (hasn't happened to me) DO NOT pull it away until it pops! If

you don't lock it, I'm afraid the arm would just go up with no penetration (I use an ultra low mass black widow arm), or fly off upon release, or follow your downward movemnt until it hits the rest, etc. With the arm in its "holder" I lightly and carefully do the mr clean thing. So slight is the touch of my brush and this clean proceedure, I can perform it with the sound on and every thing fired up, with out making anyone winch! This with well over 100db efficient altecs!Try it, you'll like it,Russellc

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Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Russellc on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 21:41:32 GMT
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You can also just go to disc doctor dot com, call him on the phone and talk to the guy! I had it in 2 days! It did cost more than 20 bucks however, but with the larger bottle of fluid and the audioquest carbon fiber brush, I think it was less than 90.00 shipped. The audioquest carbon brush is an important part of preplay maintenance after use of the disc doctor products. All sorts of archival type places use this system.Russellc

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Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Manualblock on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 21:53:43 GMT
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Fair enough. You are experienced and competent; I'm just not sure of the new guy. I can see where the arm could launch with too much pressure as you say, so the poster is well advised here to be extra carefull either way! Do you happen to know if the 515b's are alnico?

Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Russellc on Wed, 19 Jan 2005 22:22:19 GMT
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Its all just what one got comfortable back when they started learning about all this stuff. You're used to your way, and might mess up "relearning my way" and vise versa. I know I tore up plenty of stuff before "learning" new ways. You should have seen me try to put up a gutter system. Big learning curve. I got one 12 foot section up, which needs redone, and created a pile up torn up guttering that probably would have done the whole house. Its only natural to do it the way it works for you. Your method has the advantage (once mastered) of having the arm where IT would move rather than than forcing something on the cart/stylus to move as it shouldn't, breaking something. I'll think I'll try it when brushing, but for the eraser I'm more comfortable with it in the holder, but thats just me and what I'm comfortable with. I do find that doing it with the sound on

really inspires a light touch, and I can see everyone out there tensing up thinking about it, but its really that soft with the right touch. Regards, Russellc

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Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Manualblock on Thu, 20 Jan 2005 00:09:19 GMT
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The Gutters; it's so cheap to get done and the guy comes with a truck;all the gutter stock, the helpers; why do it yourself? Boom boom they in and they're out. I do most of the work on my house but those kind of things are just easier to pay for. Did you happen to notice the 515b question? I know you know Altec so I was wondering about those drivers. Thanks; J.R.

Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Russellc on Thu, 20 Jan 2005 13:43:00 GMT
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Holy cow! I hope his trash man isn't into vintage audio, If I looked in a dumpster and saw a pile of drivers from 6 or 7 cabs, and they said 515b altec on them, I would definately have a heart attack.He also mentioned "plywood cabs with horns" If he means A7 cabs, (or more likely A5 w/ the 515b) The cabs are worth money as well, 200-300 a pair restored & painted. If he meant by horns the metal horn on top of the cab, who knows. If they are A5s those are likely 1505, 1005, or something similar. 1505 go anymore from 800-1500 a pair! Other large format driver horns are also going sky high. I wish I could stumble upon such a treasure trove of altec! Then there would be the high freq compression drivers, look at 288 prices lately?excuse me,I'm going dumpster diving!Russellc

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Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Manualblock on Thu, 20 Jan 2005 14:33:55 GMT
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Naah! Those stories have a way of disapearing when closely examined. Like the guy who finds the Renoir under a painting of dogs playing cards at a flea-market.If that were true we would have diving equipment on already.We should have stocked up when people were giving 288's away and 1505's and A-7 cabs. Jesus; I remember people tearing out the woofers and using the box for shelves.Just gotta let the past be the past.

Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Russellc on Fri, 21 Jan 2005 00:54:07 GMT
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Yes, even back in the 70's I liked A7s. A friend of mine at the time worked summers in a warehouse and used his money to buy a stereo. He had aturntable the brand of which I do not remember, a Marantz 30 watt SS intigrated amp, and speakers were a set of A7s. All this was bought brand new. I think I remember the A7s were 800 or so for the pair. Unfortunately, by the time I got around to getting into altec the change had come, and I think I have about 1600 in my pair. they can of course be had for less, but I got everything just the way I wanted it, 828 sealed back cabs, 515 8g woofers, 902 compression driversand the dampened version of the 511B horn, all cosmetically very nice and clean.The 515B, for whatever reason, is the one that seems to make every one crazy bidding. I selected the 515 8g because I liked the hugh ferrite magnets that you don,t have to recharge. However, for home use a recharge should last a very long time, you likely may never have to do it again. all the altec drivers I've heard have that same magic, but I feel by a slight subjective margin, I like the 416 8c better than my 515 8gs. Either sound fine however. I really hope those 515bs drivers don't get tossed, it would really be a shame. Usually, I've found that if they have remained in the same location since install and are still in the cabs, the drivers are in good cosmetic condition. At worst only requiring recone and possible recharge. I think even the raw frames would bring a price worth putting on ebay for sure. To anyone interested in altec, it would be worth paying for the restoration of these fine drivers. restored, these drivers can play for another 40 or 50 years. This stuff was made in the US when labor was cheap. Like works of art. Built to last more than a life time. and then rebuilt for more! The recone replaces the cone, cloth accordian surround as well as the voice coil, so you can recone 8 or 16 ohm, like most "pro sound type" high efficiency Drivers. These shouldn't be tossed...people will likely be discussing these same drivers and what to do with them on the year 2050 audioroundtable site! Save the altec, please.Russellc

Subject: Re: Is my first time, im nervous
Posted by Manualblock on Fri, 21 Jan 2005 01:59:19 GMT
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Truley a plea from the heart! Anecdote; I was young and a buddy had A7's driven by Crown and Phase Linear. The sound could peel paint and of course he played them LOUD. Turned me off from pro stuff for years, so naturally he needed to sell when he was drafted. I offered to hold them until he returned but refused to buy them and he asked very little, almost nothing.He was injured and had no interest for speakers so I gave them to a guy who played in a band and shot my buddy a small stipend. Funny old world now; I pay 600$ for the model nineteen components a year ago.They do have a magic that none of the other big bore drivers seem to have. It's like if JBL are Hemi Mopar ; Altec is a Shelby GT.