Subject: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Anonymous on Sun, 19 Feb 2006 21:15:07 GMT
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Hello everyone,I have been here about 2-3 months ago, with my questions about fixing an old Dual CS-505-2 turntable, and later about purchasing a new turntable. Well, I haven't done much with my old turntable (not really into it right now), but I still have a question (many, perhaps) about a NEW turntable (which I haven't yet purchased as well).The Technics SL-1200 suggested by manualblock is a great one, although some say it is only great for DJing (where the quality of sound is not really important). Personally, I found it too expensive mostly because it has a lot of functions that I am never going to use (and that would bother me as well, more than the fact that I paid too much would). It is a DJ turntable, meaning it has all the functions necessary for scratching and beat matching, while I am looking for a turntable that would simply sound great.Does anyone know any worthy and less-expensive alternatives to the Technics SL-1200? (I am looking for a new one.)An ideal one would be a direct-drive turntable and have the same or nearly the same specifications on which the quality of sound depends (signal-to-noise ratio, Wow and flutter, and so on...) and features (three speeds (33, 45, and 78), pitch control, and a stroboscopic light)....In other words, it would be a turntable that would compromise unnecessary DJ-functions (rather than compromising sound quality) to a lower price.I have been able to locate one: http://www.audio-technica.com/cms/turntables/c2b92193a60be297/index.html. Need your opinions as well.Thank you very much!

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 19 Feb 2006 23:36:05 GMT
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Let me speak to your concerns here as best as I can in terms of what I think about record players.I suggest the Technics to people because it is a no-brainer for those who need a quality trouble-free unit to play their records on that won't destroy them due to bad main and arm bearings slopping around and killing dynamics and detail and bass definition and high end response.I have no loyalty to Technics except for those reasons; any table that provides the quality of motor/main bearing/arm bearing and specs would do just as fine. The problem is there just aren't many tables that can provide those qualities at such a low price. Under the price of the SL 1200 you cannot possibly get that quality; no company could afford to produce tables like that.When you say the 1200 is a DJ table; what does that mean? It has very good bearings and materials in the set-up of the motor-bearing; the arm is a pretty good gimbaled bearing with very good tolerances; the speed drive system is extremely accurate and well made and the plinth and platter are machined to very tight tolerances and made of good alloys with good weight and balance. Thats what is required for good sounding playback. DJ's like them because they are built like tanks not because of their features. On the job you don't want your tools breaking down.The options available for upgrading offered by KAB will ratchet up the performance sound-wise exponentially should you ever get some spare cash.Regarding cost; I have seen new SL 1200 tables going for 389$; which to me is amazing for what you get. But unfortunately that is pretty much the bottom line in terms of realistic and quality players. Go below that and I really don't care

what they offer as specs; there is just no way they can produce and still make money.My humble opinion? If you have a budget; wait. Save the extra 100$ and buy a table that will sound decent and work for a long time. And remmember they hold their value, keep that table in good shape and in five yrs you will sell it for what you paid for it. Not so for the cheap tables; buy it and take it home and it is pretty much worthless.I have no knowledge of any of the cheaper tables; I would like to be of more help but they are just below my radar.Now some people say the Project or MMF tables are decent for 350$; but they are belt drive and truthfully; the arms suck and they wobble.As long as you require the table be new then I suggest holding out for a better quality.I hope this explains my position without sounding pompous.

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Anonymous on Sun, 19 Feb 2006 23:47:35 GMT
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Thanks, manualblock.Another interesting thing is that this Audio-Technica turntable looks pretty much the same as the Technics. I wonder why?I have seen other tables that look almost or exactly as the Technics.

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 01:26:07 GMT
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I would assume they are trying to copy the look in order to get people to look at them. Actually I am not sure why they look alike.I just picked up a SL 1600 for 90$. Runs like a watch and it came with a new Shure M95 ed. Only have it for three weeks so I can't attest to it's logetivity but; so far so good. They are out there and pretty cheap.The SL 1600 series is the same arm as the SL 1200. And it has the pitch control. I am not so thrilled that it is semi-automatic; I may disable that feature. But it sounds real nice.I only bought it because I want to try the silicon paddle modification to the arm and the DC speed controller outboard. Something to play with.One thing I forgot to address. If you have a lot of albums that kind of tweaks the equation some; you want to preserve them if possible and that means a good arm is a neccessary.

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Anonymous on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 07:11:58 GMT
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"If you have a lot of albums that kind of tweaks the equation some; you want to preserve them if possible and that means a good arm is a neccessary."Interesting, but isn't it actually the styli that

wears records?Actually, I only have about fourty LPs and about ten 7" 45s in total, but I am buying more from time to time, and I am looking at buying many more later. I've got Pink Floyd, Scorpions, and Queen. I am sure you know these artists.

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Manualblock on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 13:48:06 GMT
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Sure I know them; and if metal and arena rock is your style then you are in luck because those are available all over the map for next to nothing in price. You can build a nice collection.The styli must be held in the horizontal and lateral plane as rigidly as possible while allowing the arm to rotate across the record. That requires very tight tolerance well made arm bearings. If they are loose; the arm wiggles around the stylus and causes groove damage.

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by gumby1 on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 21:59:57 GMT
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I think you can find what you are looking for at www.kabusa.com

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Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Waynefi on Fri, 24 Feb 2006 03:39:33 GMT
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Forget the DJ tag, and take a look at this recent review on TNT. The audiophiles are finally coming out of the closet on this turntable , and with a few mods from KAB, you will have all you will want.
SL1200 review

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 24 Feb 2006 15:51:14 GMT
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I dig it, thanks for the link. I always liked that turntable.

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Manualblock on Fri, 24 Feb 2006 22:37:01 GMT
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Say Waynefi; Thanks much for that link. I know I have heard many quiet snickers behind my positive reviews of this table but if people opened their ears they would not have any trouble telling what sounds good.Thanks. (The only bad thing is now they rise in price after people wise up.)

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Waynefi on Sat, 25 Feb 2006 00:24:42 GMT
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manualblock, I have found a lot of supporters on several sites. That was a nice article on TNT. Also Vinylengine.com, Steve Hoffmans site, Audio Assylum, Audio Karma, and Audiogon, all have a ton of supporters. Of course Kabusa.com, has all kinds of mods for the SL1200.

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Waynefi on Sat, 25 Feb 2006 00:26:34 GMT
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Wayne, check out my list of sites I posted to manualblock, and you will find more positive info.

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 25 Feb 2006 01:52:03 GMT
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Yes; I'm getting creaky, must get out more. What do you see that is new on the mid-level price wise tables out there? I wandered into the Kabusa site and liked the idea of the silicon paddle mod and of course the outboard PS.I read some of Steve Hoffman and I find him down to earth and very knolwledgable regarding tech stuff. Audio Karma you need to wade through some silliness to get to the good stuff; I guess thats true everywhere though.So what do you use for your personal listening pleasure?

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by steve f on Sat, 25 Feb 2006 16:39:04 GMT
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Don't forget that besides a rigid and low friction mount, the arm must keep the cartridge aligned properly to the record. I've owned (now gathering dust) a few arms that simply don't allow for proper cartridge alignment at all.

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 25 Feb 2006 21:39:25 GMT
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Absolutely. I have an older Sumiko that is useless in that respect.Someday I would like to build my own arm. What do you think?

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by steve f on Sun, 26 Feb 2006 02:22:55 GMT
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Building your own arm would be quite a challenge. I have an old Lustre GST-801 arm. I wish I could bend an arm tube to replace the original, wrong angle design. Funny how there are some beautifully made arms, with all the 'goodies' like dynamic balance, and great bearings, but poor geometry. Sounds like you have a great idea for a group build project.

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 26 Feb 2006 14:32:39 GMT
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Couple people on the net; as I am sure you've seen, have tried it. All straight arm designs.I guess things like transfer function of materials and such would play the biggest part. I once spoke to the guy who owned Hammer Dynamics and he said he built his out of a No.2 pencil; suspended by a rubber band from a simple scaffold. As the arm arced acrross the record the rubber band would twist and apply anti-skate; or counter-rotational force. It was stabilised in the horizontal plane by an eye-hook tied to a massive teflon sleeve floating in a bath of silicon.Actually; may be too much work now that I think about it.The bearing on the Technics arm seems pretty close tolerance.

Subject: Re: Alternatives to Technics SL-1200
Posted by what tha fuck on Fri, 03 Mar 2006 05:43:07 GMT
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you shouldnt diss the 1200 it has no "special" dj functions .released in early70s made for listening to wax. what YOU DO WITH IT MAKES A DJ TOOL.

Subject: FINALLY BOUGHT ONE
Posted by Anonymous on Tue, 21 Mar 2006 03:48:45 GMT
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Well, glad to tell you all that I finally bought one! It is a Technics SL-1200M3D with a Shure M44-7 cartridge. I love it!It's not new, I bought it used on E-Bay. It's in great condition. Sometime I will go for a another cartridge, although the Shure sounds great as well.