

Setting up your turntable



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A good vinyl experience is built on solid foundations. Spend a little time now setting it up, and you'll be rewarded with great sound.

This starts with the stand.

- Firstly, it needs to be stable as an unsteady turntable will result in unwanted vibration and poorer sound quality.
- Secondly, the platter (where the record sits) needs to be perfectly flat. Use a spirit level to check. There are free spirit level apps available for smartphones that can be very accurate. If the turntable or stand has adjustable feet, now's the time to use them.

The signal from a turntable is extremely sensitive.

- The most common issue you will come across is a humming sound. A poorer quality cable with bad shielding, feedback or an issue with the ground lead can cause this.
- Make sure all power leads sit as far away from your turntable stylus (needle) as possible.
- If your turntable comes with a ground lead, connect this to the earth terminal on your amplifier or phono-stage. Try switching between equipment to see which terminal gives the cleanest results. Ensure the cable and spade on the ground lead do not touch the phono-lead plugs when connecting it up.
- Avoid placing the turntable on the same shelf as your speakers. The same applies to the amplifier. However, if this is not possible, place the amp to the left of the turntable, away from the sensitive cartridge pick-up.

For belt-driven turntables make sure the belt is positioned evenly across the motor and platter.

- Keep the belt as clean as possible, as grease from fingers can cause slips and deterioration of the rubber. If provided, use the white gloves. If you don't have a pair, then ensure your hands are washed and dried.

Now it's time to balance the tone arm.

- Remove the protective cap on the cartridge (be careful not to touch the needle). Adjust the counter-balance at the rear of the tone arm so it balances perfectly horizontal.
- Now move the counter-balance inwards to the same amount as the cartridge tracking weight. (This can be found in your instructions or specifications.)

- The tone arm should put enough weight on the record to keep it in the groove, but not too much as to cause distortion. A light contact between the two is usually enough.
- If the music skips, (and it's a clean record) try increasing the downward weight of the tone arm a little.

To avoid skipping, correctly set the anti-skating weight.

- The natural inclination of a record player's tone arm is to spin outwards. The anti-skating weight is designed to make sure there is not too much force inwards or outwards. This is so the needle gets the best possible contact with the groove of the vinyl.
- The anti-skating weight should be set to the same setting as the tracking weight. On Project turntables, each notch equals 1g of anti-skating weight.
- If you find the record skipping and the arm jumps inwards, try reducing the weight. Likewise, increase the weight if the stylus (needle) skips outwards.

A turntable needs a phono-stage (phono pre-amp) to boost the signal.

- If your record player contains a phono-stage built in, then you can connect it directly to a standard input on your amplifier. If not, connect it to the input on your amplifier labelled "Phono". Check the specifications of your turntable on richersounds.com or ask in-store for more information.
- If your amplifier does not have a phono input, then you will need to connect the turntable to an external phono pre-amp and connect this to the amplifier.
- If the turntable is much quieter than other sources (CD players, radio etc.) then the turntable isn't running through a phono-stage.
- If it's loud and distorted, then the chances are it's running through two phono-stages, which is also not advised.

There are two types of cartridge, moving magnet (MM) and moving coil (MC).

- They both require their own type of phono-stage, so make sure your equipment is set up for the correct type (some are switchable between MM and MC). The vast majority of turntables sold come with MM cartridges.

If set up correctly, your turntable will give a sound like nothing else - warm, dynamic and musical.



If you require any further information about getting the very best out of your turntable please give your local store a call.

Store details can be found in our catalogue or on www.richersounds.com.



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