

ARCAM



HINTS AND TIPS

Introduction

To help you get the very best from your hi-fi system, we have prepared this booklet for your assistance and guidance. We hope you will find the enclosed information helpful.

If you have a query about an Arcam product in particular, or hi-fi in general, do not hesitate to contact your dealer or the Arcam factory direct.

Cables

The best results will be achieved when good quality cables are used in your hi-fi system. This includes digital co-axial and optical cables, interconnects and speaker cables. Many specialist cables are directional. Follow the manufacturer's guidelines for correct orientation.

AudioQuest manufacture a wide range of cables to suit all types of systems and budgets. These are distributed in the UK by Arcam.

Please ask your dealer or Arcam directly which AudioQuest cable will be best for your system.

Warming up

Like all high quality hi-fi components, Arcam products will sound better once they have warmed up fully. Improvements are usually noticeable after about ten minutes, but in some cases this may take 24 hours or more.

Positioning

For the best results, try to avoid stacking hi-fi components. A good solid platform is required for a CD player or turntable to work properly.

When units are stacked, it is possible an interaction of the mains transformers could create hum.

If you do have to stack components, avoid placing the amplifier at the bottom, as the heat generated may affect the units above.

Many manufacturers produce a range of dedicated equipment tables. Not only do they provide a solid platform for the system, they can also make the system look attractive. The spaces between the shelves avoid the problem of hum whilst allowing adequate ventilation space. Please contact your dealer for advice on suitable tables and stands.

CD players and Digital to Analogue converters

Always place the CD player on a level, firm surface. Placing your player or transport on a set of AudioQuest CD Feet will isolate the unit from its surroundings as well as absorbing the vibrations created within the player itself. You will generally hear considerable sonic improvements, which makes this an extremely cost effective upgrade.

Both CD players and digital to analogue converters (DACs) generate, and can radiate RF (radio frequency) energy. In some cases, this can cause interference with FM radio reception.

If this is the case, keep the DAC and its connecting cable as far from the tuner as possible. Connecting the DAC and the tuner to different mains sockets can help to reduce interference.

Using an optical cable between your CD player or transport and the DAC will usually eliminate the interference.

Tuners

For optimum radio reception, we recommend a roof mounted aerial. This should be connected to your tuner via a low loss co-axial cable.

If roof mounting is not possible, install the aerial in the loft. You should contact your local aerial contractor to discuss installation.

If circumstances do not allow either of these options, use an indoor FM ribbon aerial. This should be spread out into the shape of a 'T' and fixed as high as possible. You may need to orientate it for the best reception.

When using a tuner with an automatic tuning facility, some stations may be ignored if the signal strength is too weak.

Amplifiers

It is quite normal for amplifiers to get warm during use. Therefore, it is important to allow adequate ventilation space.

Never place records, tapes or CD's directly on top of the amplifier.

Ensure the earth lead from the turntable is fixed to the amplifier's ground terminal correctly, otherwise hum will be heard through the speakers.

Ensure the speaker cable is connected correctly, and no strands of wire are exposed.

If the wire creates a short, damage can occur to the amplifier, the speakers, or both.

Always set the volume to minimum before switching the amplifier off, and ensure it is set to minimum before switching on.

Loudspeakers

Apart from models specifically designed to be floor standing, you should always use your speakers on rigid stands-NEVER place them directly on the floor.

Never place a speaker in the corner of a room unless specifically designed to do so. Corner positioning emphasises bass notes, but can cause a boomy sound. Follow the manufacturers guidelines for correct positioning, but don't be afraid to experiment.

If the speakers are bi-wireable - bi-wire them! The cost of the extra cable will be justified by the superior performance.

Pay attention to cable connections. Never allow stray wires to come into contact with the speaker's terminals. If the wires short out, you may damage your speaker or your amplifier or both.

Cassette decks

Always try to use good quality branded tapes. Apart from the obvious loss in sound quality, cheap tapes are liable to deposit oxide on the heads and mechanism. Not only will this cause a significant loss of quality, but if the mechanism is allowed to become continually contaminated in this way, it can cause serious permanent damage. If the deck is designed for them, use metal tapes. They sound better, and are the least susceptible to partial erasure (gradual loss of treble) when played on inferior car or portable cassette players.

Ensure that the heads, capstans and pinch rollers are kept scrupulously clean at all times. Contamination caused by tiny particles shed from the tape can cause drop-outs, loss of high frequencies and affect wow and flutter characteristics. If the pinch rollers become contaminated, the tape can easily become wound around the capstan or pinch roller itself. This is one of the most common causes of "chewed" tapes. A proprietary head cleaner should be used on a regular basis. For heavier contamination, it may be necessary to use cotton buds and a suitable cleaning fluid, such as isopropyl alcohol.

After a long period of use, residual magnetism can build up in the heads and capstans which can lead to noise and cause a significant loss of sound quality. If the magnetism is allowed to build up, eventually the tape can be wiped blank as it passes over the heads. To prevent this, these parts should be demagnetized after approximately every 50 hours use.

Ensure the tension of your tapes is taken up before inserting into the machine. Very loosely wound tapes can get snagged in the mechanism.

Remember to rewind tapes and put them back in their boxes after use. This will help to make your tapes last longer.

Never leave tapes in direct sunlight or near a source of heat. Never leave tapes near a powerful magnetic field such as a loudspeaker or TV set.

ARCAM

Pembroke Avenue
Denny Industrial Centre
Waterbeach
Cambridge
CB5 9PB
England

Telephone: 0223 440964
Fax: 0223 863384

If you have any queries regarding Arcam or AudioQuest products, or simply require advice about improving your hi-fi system, please telephone or fax us during normal working hours. If you prefer to send your query in writing, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

You may find it helpful to record the model, serial number and date of purchase of your hi-fi system here:

Integrated amplifier _____
CD player or transport _____
Cassette deck _____
Pre-amplifier _____
Nicam tuner _____

FM tuner _____
DAC _____
Loudspeakers _____
Power amplifier _____
Other _____

ARCAM

AUDIOPHILE PRODUCTS