

audiophile.

A standard is a standard is not non-standard — or shouldn't! However, DINs are difficult to pin down! Ron Harris explains.

FROM THE QUESTIONS I've had sent in to the Audiophile service, it is clear that the good ole DIN standard is still far from being all things to men (or plugs) and is still causing widespread confusion. Tape to tape connectors, for instance, have in two cases been responsible for near murder of silent and brooding hi-fi, whilst unbeknownst to all the missing signal was hiding away on different pins of the plug.

Speaking as someone who much prefers the simpler, but more bulky, solution of phono plugs where possible, DIN problems are usually solved with a pair of wire cutters! However, there are times when a five pin DIN is much more convenient (such as when the manufacturer of your equipment just doesn't fit phono sockets at all).

Since the five-pin plug and socket is by far the most popular, it is this we concern ourselves with in the main. DIN speaker plugs are simply not to be considered unless there is no choice, and NEVER with high power amps unless you wish to check the protection circuit.

Making a DIN

In all cases where a five pin DIN plug is used, the common earth is connected to Pin 2 — the central pin of the five. The earth is carried via the braid (or shield) of the coaxial cable. When making the lead yourself, the earth is connected by making a small nick in the braid and drawing the other signal-carrying leads out through the nick. The braid can then be worked tight and soldered to the pin.

When used for a turntable, twin core coaxial cable may be used rather than the more fragile four core cable. The braid is connected to Pin 2; the signal lead for the right channel is connected to Pin 5; and the signal lead for the left channel is connected to Pin 3. The DIN socket at the amp or at the turntable should be wired in the same way, with the signals going to the same numbered contacts — that is the right channel is fed through Pin 5 and the left through Pin 3.

For tape decks, four core coaxial cable must be used to obtain the full record and replay facilities for both channels. The earthing braid is prepared in the same way as for turntables, and again is connected to Pin 2. At the tape deck, the standard wiring configuration for the DIN plug is that Pin 1 carries the input lead for the left channel, and Pin 4 carries the input lead for the right channel. The output for the left channel is via Pin 3, and the output for the right channel is carried by Pin 5.

The left and right channels for a function (record or replay) always occupy adjacent pins, and the functions are separated by the earth pin.

When making up a lead to connect the tape deck to the amplifier the conductors within the coaxial cable are connected to the same pins at each plug — that is Pin 1 is connected to Pin 1 at the second plug, Pin 2 is connected to Pin 2 and so on.



It is important to remember that this lead is only suitable for linking a tape deck to an amplifier; it CANNOT be used between two decks when dubbing is required.

In the dubbing process, the output from one deck must be transferred to the input of the second, so it is necessary to connect Pin 1 at each plug to Pin 3 at the other and, similarly to connect Pin 4 at each plug to Pin 4 at the other.

The table below gives the possible connections to be found lurking inside the plastic outer.

Application	Pin connections				
	1	2	3	4	5
Microphone (balanced)	Left-live	Screen	Left-return	Right-live	Right-return
Microphone (unbalanced)	Left	Screen	Right	—	—
Turntable (mono)	—	Screen	Signal	—	Signal
Turntable (stereo)	—	Screen	Left signal	—	Right signal
Tape recorder (mono)	Input	Screen	Output	Input	Output
Tape recorder (stereo)	Left input	Screen	Left output	Right input	Right output

Where pins have the same designations, they are commoded together. All DIN plugs the pin numbers written next to the pins. Table numbers are as marked there.

Reviewing Reviews (and Viewing 'em)

This island fortress of ours is blessed with quite a flock of hi-fi publications of the monthly and 'one-off' variety, and since most people tend to keep magazines longer than is *absolutely* justifiable, wouldn't it be nice to have some overall index to allow immediate identification of that article a few months ago, the title of which you're not sure of, and the exact issue for which escapes you?

Well such a thing exists (else why would I be rattling on about it?) and is titled Sound Verdict. An annual publication, it lists and classifies all the audio articles, including reviews, which have been set to print in the preceding year from fourteen source publications.

To bring this order into your life will cost you £1 from the Director of Libraries and Arts, Holborn Library, 32-38 Theobalds Road, London WC1.

ETI

AUDIOPHILE has its own query service, independent of ETI's reader enquiry system. This is intended solely for those who may be having problems with hi-fi — be it choosing it or using it! Please mark the envelope "Audiophile" and include relevant details.