

What do I do if my turntable hums?

First of all turntables have some level hum as do all vacuum tube products. **That is why the two technologies are essentially obsolete.** Tube equipment along with turntables are still used because of their natural sounding replication of music and the nostalgic use of these products. You will hear some level of hum in between songs and sometimes when the music is at low levels in the program material. This is normal and should not be considered a defect to either the turntable or the tube preamp or tube amp you may be using. The new digital formats are used because of the low noise factor that they produce over the old technology. Turntables and tube equipment are used for their natural sound reproduction but there is a trade off that every music enthusiast has had to make between the two.

The Rolls VP series is intended for use with Moving Magnet cartridges only, **NOT MOVING COIL CARTRIDGES!!!** While Moving Coil cartridges will work, you will be required to turn the volume of the preamp up as well as your receiver/amplifier to a much higher level to compensate for the Moving Coil cartridge. This will make the system hum because you are dramatically amplifying the noise floor of all units to compensate for the low output of the Moving Coil cartridge. We do not recommend that you use the Rolls VP series with anything other than a Moving Magnet cartridge.

You must have the turntable connected to the Rolls VP series at all times or it will create hum. **The turntable is part of the RIAA circuit without the turntable connected to the tube preamp the preamp will hum because the circuit is not complete.** We recommend connecting the turntable up to the VP preamp before all other connections are made.

The best advice for people having excessive hum or radio interference is to try different grounding schemes, to alleviate ground loops which are inherent when hooking up a turntable to a preamp and separate amplifier. The best way to alleviate a ground loop is to connect the turntable ground directly to the amp, essentially bypassing the VP's ground. By doing this the ground loop is still there between the unit, it is just heard less. This is a normal operation of turntables and is going to be noticed with any combination of units. Other grounding schemes are to connect the turntable ground to the RCA cable ground at different locations to see if less hum is experienced. This is worth trying if you have excessive hum but in most cases has a low percentage of getting results. Grounding is the most common hum related problem and there are many different grounding combinations that can be tried.

If you are still experiencing hum it may be caused by a signal to noise ratio problem. This is when your amplifier is not only amplifying your music it is amplifying the noise floor of all units. This is a common problem with all multiple unit systems not just turntable and tube gear. The best solution is to start with all units volume on half or (5) this is commonly done in initial studio setups since you do not know exactly where every unit needs to be set at first you start with them set at the middle. After this is done turn the last unit down (the amp) to get the appropriate level desired. Having the amp or "last unit in the system" at a lower volume level will help get the signal to noise ratio down and you will experience lower hum. I recommend turning the VP series up in volume and having your amp at a lower volume to get less noise in all applications.

Reading posts on the internet is sometimes a good way to get information that otherwise is not available anywhere else. Be careful about this, there have been many different revisions to the VP series and we have had a few different models and not all suggestions will work if your unit is a different revision or you have a completely different unit than the poster has. Our units are well built and very reliable so if you are experimenting with different ways of grounding or using different methods of connection this will not necessarily damage the unit in any way but please be careful. **Do not open the unit ever unless you are a qualified tech. Inside the preamp there are very high voltages that are very dangerous. Be certain that the power adapter you are using is of the proper polarity,** using an adaptor with a reversed polarity will permanently damage the unit and the only way the unit will be operable is to have it professionally repaired. The adapter should be 12 to 15 VDC and 700 to 1000 mA. There is no difference between a 12V and 15V adapter they will both properly power the unit. Internet posts of using higher voltage adapters were for previous products and if you are reading this your preamp is of a different design and will be damaged by using a higher voltage than 15 VDC.

If this does not answer your hum concerns calling the Rolls factory is not going to resolve any further issues. There is only so much a phone call about noise problems can do. I would recommend calling the authorized dealer you purchased the item from to report your problem. If you can not resolve a noise issue after reading and trying these suggestions the next step is to send the unit back to the dealer. In some instances the VP unit may not be compatible with your equipment. It is not possible for Rolls to test our equipment with all possible combinations of other products. The age of your turntable and makeup will vary from what century it was made.