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Clearaudio Concept MC

Clearaudio Concept MC Moving Coil Phono Cartridge User Manual

Model: Concept MC

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Clearaudio Concept MC Moving Coil Phono Cartridge is engineered for high-fidelity audio reproduction, designed to extract detailed musical information from your vinyl records. It features an innovative aluminum-magnesium alloy body with ceramic coating for superior damping and resonance control. Equipped with a Micro-line stylus on an ultra-rigid Boron cantilever, this cartridge offers precise tracking and an expansive soundstage. This manual provides essential information for the proper setup, operation, and maintenance of your Clearaudio Concept MC cartridge.

2. SAFETY INFORMATION

Please read and understand all safety instructions before installing or operating the Clearaudio Concept MC cartridge. Failure to do so may result in damage to the product or other audio components.

- **Handle with Care:** The stylus and cantilever are extremely delicate. Always handle the cartridge with utmost care, avoiding contact with the stylus.
- **Keep Out of Reach of Children:** Small parts can be a choking hazard.
- **Static Electricity:** Discharge any static electricity from your body before handling the cartridge to prevent damage to sensitive components.
- **Proper Tools:** Use only appropriate, non-magnetic tools for installation to avoid damaging the cartridge or tonearm.
- **Stylus Guard:** Always use the provided stylus guard when the cartridge is not in use or during installation/removal.

3. PACKAGE CONTENTS

Verify that all items are present in the package:

- Clearaudio Concept MC Moving Coil Phono Cartridge
- Stylus Guard
- Mounting Screws (various lengths)
- Hex Key or Screwdriver for mounting

- Stylus Cleaning Brush
- Alignment Protractor (may be included with turntable or sold separately)

4. PRODUCT OVERVIEW



Figure 1: Clearaudio Concept MC Moving Coil Phono Cartridge. This image displays a close-up view of the cartridge, highlighting its black aluminum-magnesium alloy body, the delicate cantilever, and the Micro-line stylus.

The Clearaudio Concept MC cartridge is a precision instrument. Key components include:

- **Cartridge Body:** Constructed from an aluminum-magnesium alloy with a ceramic coating, providing excellent rigidity and damping properties.
- **Cantilever:** An ultra-rigid Boron cantilever transmits vibrations from the stylus to the coil assembly.
- **Stylus:** A Micro-line diamond stylus, designed for optimal contact with the record groove and superior detail retrieval.
- **Output Pins:** Four color-coded pins (Red, Green, White, Blue) for connecting to the tonearm wires.

5. SETUP

Proper installation is crucial for optimal performance. Refer to your turntable and tonearm manuals for specific instructions where applicable.

5.1 Mounting the Cartridge

1. Ensure the stylus guard is in place.
2. Carefully attach the cartridge to the tonearm's headshell using the provided non-magnetic screws. Do not overtighten.
3. Connect the tonearm wires to the corresponding color-coded pins on the cartridge:
 - Red: Right Channel Hot (+)
 - Green: Right Channel Ground (-)
 - White: Left Channel Hot (+)
 - Blue: Left Channel Ground (-)

Ensure connections are firm but do not apply excessive force.

5.2 Cartridge Alignment

Accurate alignment minimizes tracking error and distortion. Use an alignment protractor (not included with all cartridges) specific to your tonearm's geometry.

1. **Overhang:** Adjust the cartridge position in the headshell until the stylus aligns with the specified points on the protractor.
2. **Azimuth:** Ensure the cartridge body is perfectly parallel to the record surface when viewed from the front. Some tonearms allow for fine azimuth adjustment.
3. **Vertical Tracking Angle (VTA):** Adjust the tonearm height so that the tonearm tube is parallel to the record surface when the stylus is in the groove.

5.3 Tracking Force Adjustment

The recommended tracking force for the Clearaudio Concept MC is typically between 2.0 and 2.2 grams. Refer to the specifications section for the precise range.

1. Balance your tonearm according to its manufacturer's instructions.
2. Set the tracking force using your tonearm's counterweight or a digital tracking force gauge to the recommended value.

5.4 Anti-Skate Adjustment

Set the anti-skate mechanism on your tonearm to match the tracking force. This compensates for the inward force on the stylus as the record plays.

6. OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

Once installed and aligned, your Clearaudio Concept MC cartridge is ready for use.

1. Ensure your phono preamplifier is set to the correct input (Moving Coil - MC) and gain settings appropriate for a low-output MC cartridge.
2. Carefully remove the stylus guard.
3. Place a clean record on the turntable platter.
4. Using the tonearm lift, gently lower the stylus into the record groove. Avoid dropping the tonearm.
5. After playback, use the tonearm lift to raise the tonearm and return it to its rest. Replace the stylus guard.

7. MAINTENANCE

Regular maintenance ensures longevity and optimal sound quality.

7.1 Stylus Cleaning

Clean the stylus before each listening session or after every few sides of a record.

- Use a dedicated stylus cleaning brush, brushing gently from back to front (from the pivot point towards the stylus tip).
- For stubborn dirt, a small drop of specialized stylus cleaning fluid can be applied to the brush, then gently brush the stylus.
- Never brush the stylus from side to side or front to back, as this can damage the cantilever.

7.2 Cartridge Body Cleaning

Wipe the cartridge body occasionally with a soft, dry, lint-free cloth to remove dust. Avoid using liquid cleaners near the stylus or cantilever.

7.3 Stylus Inspection

Periodically inspect the stylus for wear or damage using a magnifying glass. A worn stylus can damage your records and degrade sound quality. Stylus replacement is recommended after approximately 1000-2000 hours of playback, depending on record condition and tracking force.

8. TROUBLESHOOTING

If you experience issues, consult the following table before contacting support.

Problem	Possible Cause	Solution
No sound or very low sound	Incorrect phono input selected; loose tonearm wire connections; incorrect phono stage gain; damaged cartridge.	Verify phono input (MC) and gain settings. Check all tonearm wire connections. Inspect cartridge for visible damage.
Distorted or muddy sound	Incorrect tracking force; improper alignment (overhang, azimuth, VTA); worn or dirty stylus; damaged record.	Re-check tracking force. Verify cartridge alignment. Clean stylus. Inspect records for damage.
Humming or buzzing noise	Ground loop; improper grounding of turntable/tonearm; proximity to electrical interference; loose tonearm wire connections.	Ensure proper grounding. Move components away from power supplies or transformers. Check tonearm wire connections.
Skipping or mistracking	Insufficient tracking force; incorrect anti-skate; damaged record; dirty stylus; turntable not level.	Increase tracking force slightly (within recommended range). Adjust anti-skate. Clean stylus. Ensure turntable is perfectly level.

9. SPECIFICATIONS

Technical specifications for the Clearaudio Concept MC Moving Coil Phono Cartridge:

- **Model Name:** Concept MC
- **Brand:** Clearaudio
- **Cartridge Type:** Moving Coil (MC)
- **Body Material:** Aluminum-Magnesium Alloy with Ceramic Coating
- **Stylus:** Micro-line
- **Cantilever:** Boron
- **Recommended Tracking Force:** 2.0 - 2.2 grams (refer to specific product documentation for exact value)
- **Output Voltage:** Low output Moving Coil (specific value not provided in source data)
- **Channel Separation:** (Specific value not provided in source data)
- **Frequency Response:** (Specific value not provided in source data)
- **Internal Impedance:** (Specific value not provided in source data)
- **Weight:** 2 Pounds (*Note: This is likely shipping weight. Actual cartridge weight is typically much lower, e.g., 8-10g.*)
- **Color:** Black

10. WARRANTY AND SUPPORT

Clearaudio products are manufactured to high standards and undergo strict quality control. This product is covered by a manufacturer's warranty against defects in materials and workmanship. The specific terms and duration of the warranty may vary by region and retailer. Please retain your proof of purchase for warranty claims.

For technical support, service, or warranty inquiries, please contact your authorized Clearaudio dealer or visit the official Clearaudio website for contact information.

Website: www.clearaudio.de



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