

Friday, April 04, 2008

## **SPECIFIC DETAILS OF MY SYSTEM FOR LP TO CD CONVERSIONS**

### **MY SYSTEM**

1] After much research, especially on Amazon and their reviews, I went with **DAK** for the “software” – price about \$20 - \$70 - depending on what you want to do and what you already have. They also have just about everything else you would need to do basic LP to CD conversions.

Their complete system with a turntable is about \$250. Check out their web site [[www.dak.com](http://www.dak.com), phone **1-888-707-1897**] and you can see the details + many of their other electronic and related products. They give VERY detailed directions / pictures / print screens with numbers / arrows added, etc on how to use their system and a lot of educational information on some of the technical aspects involved, but again in very understandable ways.

A lot can be printed off for free from their site without buying anything. I have at least one storage box of printed info from their site. Technical support I have found to be great. I do not know how they stay in business doing all this.

They were popular in the 1980's & 1990's with printed catalogs that were mailed on a regular basis. They were very dependable in supplying great innovative electronic devices at very reasonable prices. It is now nice to see them back as a web site. Most of their software stuff is for immediate download, so you do not have to wait for it to be shipped.

2] After a lot of research, I decided on the **Audio-technica AT-PL120** “turntable.” It is certainly a lot better in many ways than my old and worn Radio Shack Garrard stereo system from the 1970's [very highly rated and expensive at that time]! It can also do 78 records like the old RS. Price on Amazon several years ago was about \$220 with free s/h. It got very good reviews.

I would suggest if anyone is serious about doing LP to CD conversions that they do not waste their time trying to use their older turntables [greater than 5 – 10 years old, if not less]. The new turntables are just so much better in so many ways and many are very modestly priced.

Of course, any purchases can be a **very personal decision** with many factors involved. It is just important that you have the right information to make your best decision in your particular situation.

3] Supplies for the turntable system have many very good sites that are very educational and can offer very reasonable prices [see list on other areas of this web site by me], especially if you are going to get into more sophisticated areas like **78's**.

## **SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

4] I got into all this when my Mother in Law died and we got her fantastic and very diverse LP collection in really perfect condition – she was a great housekeeper! It contained big band music from the 1940's, which I was always interested in.

Playing records as you know can be difficult on a turntable. CD's offer the advantage of listening to about 1 hour of music – 4 sides of LP's- per CD. Besides, the CD player is very portable. So I started copying them after I got my system down the way I wanted it – it is very efficient and I do the copying while I am working around the house or on the computer.

My wife thought that these old LP's would be valuable, but alas, they are almost worthless in the open market – just great sentimental / emotional value – as Harry Rinker says in his local Morning Call newspaper feature! It is sad that after that generation dies off, their great record collections are just trashed.

My concern as a retired Ph.D. organic chemist with a lot of experience in industry, academe and even a government position, is what are all these LP's going to do to the already critical landfill situation. LP's made of PVC are almost indestructible – good news when you are using them – very bad news for long term disposal!

The good news for us, is that we can get the music we like from that era and our generation at very low prices and on very rugged media – almost indestructible, much less than if we would have bought it during those times.

### **Note – 78's are a special case and some can be very fragile!!!**

I now have a very diversified collection of LP's and 78's I could never afford in my younger days. I have over 200 CD copies of some of this music and a lot more to copy yet.

However, new LP's still have a very small active market for a variety of reasons [e.g., some of the younger generation see some of the advantages and buy them, some DJ's still prefer to use “vinyl” in their sessions rather than the music in a computer, some people prefer the different sound of LP's compared to CD's, some dance clubs have

“scratching” sessions where two turntables “mix” different sounds from different LP’s & other techniques – this is out of my area so more details would be most welcome].

5] Also, I have been doing some **Science, Technology and Society [STS]** research for many decades. I have found that **music** can be a very good way of getting across some of my STS information in a way that many people can readily related to, especially the society aspects. So my copying of LP’s to CD’s is serving that purpose also.

The goal of this research is to help people better understand how dramatically and relentlessly **STS** is changing our everyday lives. Hopefully, they will then be able to better anticipate and manage STS issues, especially in their personal lives.

Two common phrases kind of sum it all up:

“You cannot know where you are going, unless you know where you have been.”  
- e.g., importance of past & history.

“We do not know where we are going, but we are making good time!” – used a lot by us all at a big company I worked for once!

6] In addition, I have always loved **polka music**, which you probably know is not a popular any more as it once was. I am now able to get many polka LP’s from many years ago for almost nothing and I can make them into CD’s and preserve this music more than on LP’s and, of course, the more delicate 78’s.

Much of this polka music will never make it to CD’s and once the LP’s / 78’s are gone, the music is lost forever. How sad, but that is part of my **STS** research to show how **STS** dramatically changes our lives irreversibly.

7] Another factor, that applies to many of us who are retired and many who are homebound for various reasons [I am not homebound, just very busy], is that you can have your music inexpensively from any era anytime you want and anyplace you want especially while you are doing various projects.

It can make life a lot more pleasant for those who have little else than the music they enjoy so much, especially their own ethnic specialized music [e.g., polkas, etc.].

I guess my wife Lois and I are sensitive to this, since some of the relatives we recently lost got so much continued pleasure out of the music of their generation, especially in their later years.

As many know, much of radio leaves a lot to be desired today, as compared to in the past, even the few classical stations we still have. TV is another matter and requires you to be stationary, but radio doesn’t. Radio is also good when you are working on the computer or around the house, of course.

We still do not have DSL, since we live in a very rural area. Maybe we will get it sometime later this year they. So internet radio is just not very satisfactory over landlines, with our present computer setups and under our conditions.

In fact right now, while I am doing this document, I am listening to some old polkas from the 1940's and 1950's, since the radio stations I normally listen to are just not very good today.

In addition, CD's occupy a lot less space, so as we continue to downsize in retirement, we can still have our music, but without all the bulk LP's and turntables require, besides the hassle of playing LP's on turntables.

Note in the Morning Call local newspaper in their weekly feature on what people are looking for – so many continually want someone to transfer their LP's and even cassette tapes to CD's, so they can access them better.