

Congratulations on your purchase of the conrad-johnson Premier Nine vacuum tube DAC and Digital Control Center. You have acquired one of the finest pieces of music reproduction equipment available today. The Premier Nine is a state of the art implementation of new technology in the service of music. It has been designed to establish the reference standard among digital converters for reproducing the dynamics, tonalities, textures and ambience of a live musical performance. The design and materials have been carefully selected to yield years of unvarying excellence.

Please take a few minutes to read this manual so that you will better understand the features and capabilities of your Premier Nine.

LIMITED WARRANTY FOR CONRAD-JOHNSON AUDIO COMPONENTS

1. **conrad-johnson design, inc.** warrants that conrad-johnson brand audio components purchased from an authorized conrad-johnson dealer in the United States for use in the United States will be free of defects in materials and workmanship for the lesser period of three years from the date of purchase by the original purchaser, or five years from the date of shipment to the authorized conrad-johnson dealer.
2. During the warranty period, **conrad-johnson** will repair defective units without charge for labor or parts (with the exception of the vacuum tubes) subject to the following conditions:
 - a) The unit must not have been altered or damaged through misuse, abuse, negligence, accident, or improper operation;
 - b) The purchaser must provide evidence of purchase at the time service is requested;
 - c) All repairs must be undertaken at the factory or other service center designated by **conrad-johnson design, inc.** Units submitted for warranty repair must be shipped in factory packing to conrad-johnson design or its designated service center, freight and insurance prepaid by the owner, and will be returned to the owner, freight and insurance to any destination in the United States prepaid by conrad-johnson design.
 - d) Normal wear and maintenance are not covered by this warranty.
3. Where permitted by law, conrad-johnson design's liability shall be limited to that set forth in this warranty. No other warranty of any kind, expressed or implied, is made by conrad-johnson design, inc., and all implied warranties, including merchantability and fitness for a particular "purpose", which exceed the obligations and time limits set forth herein are hereby disclaimed. conrad-johnson design, inc. shall not be liable for incidental or consequential damages. Some states do not allow the exclusion or limitation of incidental or consequential damages, or limitations on how long an implied warranty lasts, so the above limitations or exclusions may not apply to you.
4. This warranty gives you specific legal rights, and you may also have other rights which vary from state to state.
5. Conrad-Johnson products purchased outside the United States are covered by warranty terms of the importing distributor in the country in which the product was originally purchased, which may differ from the terms set out herein. Importing distributors are not obligated to provide

warranty service for products originally purchased outside their country. Conrad-Johnson will provide warranty service for products outside the United States, but the customer must pay all shipping, handling and customs costs both to and from our Service Department.

6. The warranty on the conrad-johnson Premier Series of products is transferable to subsequent owners provided that the warranty registration card has been filled in and returned to conrad-johnson design, inc. within 30 days of the original purchase, and that the registered owner provides the factory with a signed notice giving model and serial number of the unit, and the new owner's name and address.

Questions about this warranty should be addressed to:

Service Department
conrad-johnson design, inc.
2733 Merrilee Drive
Fairfax, VA 22031

The Service Department can also be reached by phone at 703-698-8581, or by fax at 703-560-5360

SERVICE

In the event your conrad-johnson audio component requires service, repack it with the original packing material and ship to the Service Department address above. If you do not have the original packing material, replacements are available from conrad-johnson design for a nominal charge. Be sure to include a copy of your sales receipt from the original purchase, along with a note explaining the problem you are having in as much detail as possible. If the problem is intermittent, please indicate. If you want an estimate of cost for out of warranty service, be sure to request it in this note. Be aware that requesting an estimate will delay service to your unit as we will have to contact you for your approval before commencing service.

REGISTERING THE WARRANTY

Please return the enclosed card to the factory within 30 days of purchase to register the warranty.

***I*NSTALLATION**

The Premier Nine dissipates a significant amount of heat. Accordingly, proper attention should be paid to ventilation. The unit should be mounted horizontally on a flat hard surface so that the ventilation holes in the bottom are unobstructed. At least two inches of clearance should be provided above the unit and the cabinet or shelf should be open at the back. Vertical installation is not recommended.

To minimize hum pickup, keep the unit well away from the power amplifier, and route power cords away from input cables.

The Premier Nine requires an ac power line providing between 108 and 125 volts at 50 to 60 Hz. Alternatively, the Premier Nine is optionally available for operation on 100, 220, or 240 volt power lines.

CONNECTION

The Premier Nine provides five separate digital inputs (three coaxial, and two optical) and a coaxial digital output. Connect your digital sources (CD transport, Laser Disc Player, DCC recorder) to any of these inputs, and a DCC or other digital tape recorder to the digital output.

Digital Inputs

One: Transformer coupled coaxial input with BNC connector

Two: Transformer coupled coaxial input with phono connector

These transformer coupled inputs offer the correct termination if the source conforms to the industry standard 75 ohm impedance, and if a 75 ohm interconnect cable is used. These inputs should offer superior performance to the direct coupled coaxial input if these conditions are met. Some digital sources do not conform to the standard, and may not perform correctly with the transformer coupled inputs. In this case, the direct coupled input must be used.

Three: Direct coupled coaxial input with phono connector

Four: TOSLINK optical connector. The TOSLINK connector is supplied with a plug to prevent dust from accumulating on the lens of the receiver. Leave this plug in place whenever this input is unused.

Five: ST glass optical connector. This connector is supplied with a cap to prevent dust from accumulating on the lens. Leave the cap in place if this input is unused.

Outputs

Digital Out: A BNC connector is provided to send the digital signal out to another digital device (normally a DCC recorder).

Analog Outputs: These are the audio outputs, to be connected to a line-level input on your preamplifier.

CONTROLS

OFF, POWER: Because of the delayed warmup characteristics of vacuum tube equipment, a time delay muting circuit is incorporated in the Premier Nine. Relays ground the audio outputs for approximately 90 seconds after the unit is turned on in order to suppress warm-up transient noises. The muting relay also grounds the outputs immediately at turn-off or in the event of any power line interruption.

DIGITAL SOURCE SELECTOR: Coaxial One, Two, Three, Optical Four, Five: This selector switch is used to choose a digital input for listening. The selected digital signal is also sent to the digital output.

Phase: This switch will invert the absolute phase of the audio output signal to compensate for phase incorrect recordings.

Vacuum-Tubes:

The Premier Nine uses two vacuum tubes, both 6GK5s. This tube is a medium gain, high current single triode chosen for low noise and microphonics. It is well known that tubes of a given type vary sonically depending on the manufacturer. We have chosen the brands of tubes we supply based on extensive auditioning of available brands with the choices being made solely on the basis of sonic performance without regard for either cost or prestige. We know of no vacuum tubes available which will improve the sonic performance of your Premier Nine. In addition, the tubes in your preamplifier have been tempered by a controlled burn-in procedure that permits them to perform for a greatly extended period without sonic degradation. We anticipate two to three years of operation without degradation in normal use. The tubes have also been hand selected to achieve the minimum residual noise in your preamplifier. Therefore, we highly recommend that you purchase replacement tube sets from conrad-johnson design.

***G*ETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR Premier Nine**

The Conrad-Johnson Premier Nine offers an unparalleled level of sophistication and refinement in music reproduction, but it cannot transform an inferior stereo system. Only high quality amplifiers and loudspeaker systems will be capable of fully revealing the capabilities of this precision instrument.

Given a system of high quality components, there remain a number of important details which must be attended to.

ABSOLUTE PHASE

Musical notes are heard through the ear's response to waves of alternating rise and fall of air pressure. Musical transients are almost exclusively positive: that is, the initial effect is a rise in pressure. The ear is capable of distinguishing these positive transients from the musically unnatural alternative of a negative transient (an initial fall in air pressure). In terms of your stereo system, these transients are created by your loudspeakers. If the speakers respond to musical transients by first moving out, they are creating a rise in pressure, and the system is said to be "phase correct". If they respond by moving in, they create a fall in pressure and the system is said to be phase inverting.

Each component in the stereo system is either phase correct or phase inverting (including the source and speakers—these are normally phase correct). It is of no consequence if an individual component is phase inverting, as long as the system as a whole is phase correct. This will be the case as long as the number of phase inversions is even (or zero). A system with an odd number of phase inversions can be corrected by adding one more inversion by reversing the positive and negative speaker leads.

We recommend that you connect your system for correct absolute phase, and use the phase invert switch on the Premier Nine to correct for phase incorrect recordings.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WIRES

Both digital and analog interconnect wires are an important element in the performance of your digital playback system. Interconnects are available which will permit a reference quality system to fulfill its promise of musical reality, whereas others will fall far short. Consult your Conrad-Johnson dealer for recommendations for your specific system.

TIP

Warm up the Premier Nine before listening: The sonic performance of the Premier Nine improves noticeably as the unit warms up. The mid-range becomes more lucid, the highs smoother, and the soundstage expands. The warm up period can be expected to last for up to an hour.

Questions: If you have questions about the installation or function of your Premier Nine do not hesitate to call Customer Service at (703) 698-8581.

Premier Nine SPECIFICATIONS

Output @ 0 dB: 1.0V

Frequency Response: 5Hz to 20kHz +0,- .5 dB

Hum and noise: 92dB below 1.0V output

Output impedance: less than 200 ohms

Mechanical:

Dimensions: : 19"W x 3.5"H x 14"D

Net Weight: 30 lbs.