

Thank you for selecting the Sonographe SA250 as the power amplifier for your audio system. The SA250 draws on two decades of research at conrad-johnson design into the reproduction of recorded music. The result is an amplifier with a remarkable ability to recreate the dynamics, textures, tonalities, and ambience of live musical performances. With the Sonographe SA250, we believe that you will experience the excitement of discovery in hearing more from your favorite recordings than ever before.

At conrad-johnson, we expect our products to be a source of satisfaction and of pride to their owners for many years to come. Accordingly, circuit designs, parts and materials for all our products are selected with a view to maintaining optimal performance over the years. Our reputation for producing among the industry's most reliable components is a natural consequence of this engineering approach.

Although operation of the SA250 is quite straightforward, please take a few minutes to read this manual for useful information on it's installation and operation.

We want you to enjoy your Sonographe product to the fullest. To this end, our staff stands ready to answer any questions you may have about the function and application of your SA250, and to provide any needed service both during, and after the warranty period. Our goal is to heighten your enjoyment of recorded music.

Limited Warranty For Sonographe Components

conrad-johnson design, inc. will provide service under warranty to the original owner on Sonographe products sold new in the United States 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 Sonographe dealer. During the warranty period, conrad-johnson will repair defective units without charge for labor or parts (with the exception of batteries).

Exclusions. The following are not covered under this warranty:

- a) Units which have been damaged by misuse, abuse, or accident.
- b) Units which have been modified, altered, or improperly repaired by anyone not specifically authorized by conrad-johnson design, inc.
- c) Units not purchased from an authorized Sonographe dealer in the United States for use in the United States.
- d) Normal wear.
- e) Incidental or consequential damages are not covered under this warranty. Some states do not allow the exclusion of incidental or consequential damages, so this exclusion may not apply to you.

Obtaining Warranty Service: To obtain warranty service, the unit must be shipped, along with evidence of purchase, in factory packing to conrad-johnson design (or designated service center) with freight and insurance prepaid by the owner. After repair, the unit will be returned with freight and insurance prepaid by conrad-johnson design to any destination in the United States.

All implied warranties, including merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose are limited in duration to the duration of this express warranty. Some states do not allow limitations on the duration of implied warranties so the above limitations may not apply to you.

This warranty gives you specific legal rights and you may also have other rights which vary from state to state.

Sonographe 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.

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

If your Sonographe audio component requires service, repack it using the original box and packing material and ship to the Service Department address above. Boxes and packing materials can be obtained from our service department for a nominal charge, if you no longer have yours. Include with the unit a note describing the problem you are having in as much detail as possible. It is especially important for our technician to know if the problem is intermittent. 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**

As is the case with any high-power amplifier, the SA250 dissipates a significant amount of heat. Provision must be made for adequate ventilation. Mount the unit on a flat, hard surface, taking care that the ventilation holes in the bottom are unobstructed. Maintain at least four inches of clearance above the unit, and at least three inches on the sides. The cabinet or shelf should be open at both front and back. For more restricted installations, cooling fans are essential.

All SA250 amplifiers sold in the United States are configured for operation on a 60Hz ac power line producing between 108 and 126 volts. Export versions of these amplifiers will have the correct operating voltage and frequency clearly marked on the back panel of the unit, near the ac power cord. In all cases, the actual line voltage should be within + 5/- 10% of the nominal rated voltage.

Electromagnetic Interference (EMI)

Considerable care has been taken in the design of the SA250 to minimize susceptibility to radio frequency interference and other forms of EMI. Choice of materials, physical layout, grounding practice, and power supply design have all been specified with a view to reducing the impact of electromagnetic fields on the performance of this unit. At the same time, however, our primary goal is the accurate reproduction of recorded music in the normal home environment, and we have elected not to compromise this objective by the application of heavy-handed RFI filters, or by using grounding practices that reduce RFI at the expense of degraded audio performance. We find that the approach we have taken has worked extremely well, resulting in only rare instances of EMI problems which could be treated locally as needed, rather than compromising the performance of our product in the 99.9% of installations where EMI is not a problem.

Care in installation can often avoid EMI induced problems. The following practices should generally be observed in any application, and will be especially important where EMI may be a problem.

Interconnect cables should be kept as short as possible (3 meters or less), and shielded cable should be used (cable which has two center conductors, and a separate external shield connected at only one end).

Physical location and cable "dress" can be an important factor in minimizing hum pickup. The installation should situate the preamplifier well away from the power amplifier, and power (ac mains) cords should be dressed to remain at least 4" (100mm) away from input/output cables.

Connection

INPUT: Connect the preamplifier to your amplifier at the RCA type connectors located on the back of the amplifier.

OUTPUT: Five way binding posts are provided for connection of your loudspeakers, with correct spacing to accept a standard "double banana" plug. They will also accept spade lugs, bare wire, or pin connectors. The two channels should be connected in correct "relative phase". This means that when the same signal is applied to both channels, the right and left channels speaker diaphragms will move synchronously - in and out together.

Terminals on speakers are usually coded - one designated "C", "ground", "-" or black, the other designated "+" or red. "In phase" connection of the speakers can normally be achieved by taking care to connect the wire from the "+" amplifier terminal to the red or "+" coded terminal on each speaker, and connecting the "-" terminal to the black or "-" coded terminal on each speaker.

In phase connection of the speakers can be readily ascertained by ear. Listen to a recording of a solo vocalist (use a mono recording if available). With the speakers in phase the voice should be clearly focused between the two speakers. With the speakers connected out of phase, the voice will be diffused, with no identifiable source. Relative phase may be reversed by switching the "+" and "-" leads at one speaker only.

***G*etting The Most From Your Amplifier**

In a system of commensurate high quality components, Sonographe amplifiers offer a high level of sophistication and refinement in music reproduction. To get the best performance out of any audio system, there are 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 either preserves the phase of the incoming signal, and is said to be phase correct, or inverts the phase and is said to be phase inverting. It is unimportant whether an individual component is phase correct or phase inverting, as long as the system as a whole is phase correct. This will be the case if the number of phase inversions is even (or zero).

The SA250 is phase correct. If your system has an odd number of inversions, then you must add one phase inversion. This is conveniently done by reversing the positive and negative connections to your speakers (be sure to reverse both channels).

If you are not sure about the phase of every piece in your system, you can establish correct absolute phase by careful listening. When the system is in correct phase, transients will be noticeably cleaner and more sharply defined. The effect is especially apparent on plucked string sounds. A final warning - not all recordings are phase correct (including some "audiophile" recordings), so listen to several before concluding your investigation of absolute phase.

The Importance Of Wires

Interconnect and speaker wires are an important element in your stereo system. Interconnects are available which will permit a reference quality system to blossom and fulfill its promise of musical reality. Others will strangle the system to the point where it becomes little better than average. To complicate matters, our experience suggests that the choice of interconnects will be system dependent - those that are top ranked on one system may be a poor choice for a different system. Consult your conrad-johnson dealer for recommendations for your specific system.

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

Specifications:

Power: 125 watts per channel RMS both channels driven into 8 ohms from 20Hz to 20KHz with no more than 1% total harmonic distortion or intermodulation distortion.

Gain: 25.5 dB

Phase: Phase Correct (non-inverting)

Frequency response: 20 Hz to 20 KHz +0, -.25 dB

Hum and noise: 96 dB below full power output.

Input impedance: 100K ohms.

Dimensions: 13.25"D x 17.125"W x 4.875"H

Weight: 30 lbs.

Fuses: The AC line fuse is user replaceable on the SA250. It is a type 3AG 7 amp slow-blow (5 amp slow-blow for 220 or 240V operation). **NEVER REPLACE THE FUSE WITH A TYPE OR VALUE DIFFERENT FROM THAT ORIGINALLY SUPPLIED BY THE FACTORY.** If the fuse blows repeatedly, contact your dealer, or Conrad-Johnson's service department.