How to Replace a Turntable Cartridge, Stylus, and Headshell

Learn how to replace your turntable's headshell, cartridge, and stylus.

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INTRODUCTION

High quality turntables are only as good as the stylus and cartridge actually playing the records. Learn how to replace these components as they wear out over time.

TOOLS:

- Phillips #0 Screwdriver (1)
Step 1 — Cartridge, Stylus, Headshell

- Identify headshell by opening the turntable dustcover.

Step 2

- Remove stylus from cartridge.

⚠️ Do not pull aggressively as to break the plastic.
Step 3

- Turn tonearm nut toward you to release headshell from the tonearm.

Step 4

- Remove screws with phillips screwdriver #0 to release the cartridge.

Use standard turntable head screws found at a local audio shop if missing.
Step 5

- Unplug wires from pins.

Step 6

- Replace with new cartridge
  - Plug pins in reverse from removal
  
  - Pay attention to matching the colors from wire to pin
  
  - Screw cartridge in in the same way it was removed.
Step 7

- Insert new stylus into cartridge before mounting headshell

Step 8

- Screw assembled headshell onto tonearm.
Step 9

- Test new needle and allow for a break-in period.