

# Recording

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Ever since the invention of the wax cylinder we can listen to recorded music, ever reproducible moments from a more or less remote past. When recording equipment became available for the masses, it became even possible to make these reproducible moments yourself, without a producer, recording studio etc.

At a certain time, I bought two electret microphones in a summer sale and made my first recordings with an old tape (reel) recorder and cassette recorder. It introduced me to a few peculiar phenomena.

**First:** The very moment I pressed the *Record* button, I sensed the same effects as I observed during playing in front of an audience: Stage Fright. If you want to cope with that: Ed Westeriks' tips are quite useful (see the subject about performance).

**Second:** When listening to the recording, you have full opportunity for evaluation and even worse over-evaluation.

If you perform in public, your play is volatile, the audience -including yourself- hears it once and then it is gone. Everything that remains is the memory of an impression. This is definitely not so with recordings, you can evaluate and re-evaluate all details. This is far from enjoyable if you cannot succeed to break out the vicious circle of destructive self-criticism.

A recording is a fine measure for your progress with a piece. You are simulating something of the pressure of performance and are able to judge how your music comes through. As a listener, you observe details which are hidden for the player, because he is too busy with making music to notice. I experienced that it is sensible to wait some time before you listen to the recording, in order to obtain some (mental) distance. Only then you are able to judge and evaluate the result with an open mind, at the moment you have forgiven yourself the errors you made during playing.

At this moment, I own a Fostex Harddisk Recorder with two high quality condenser microphones, perfect gear for a beautiful clean recording, there is no wow and flutter -an ill-famous problem with tape recording- at all!

The Fostex has some nice features like reverb. That's perfect to add a bit of colour to a dry recording. I did notice that you should apply reverb with care. A reverb time of 3 seconds at the most and a bit filtered reflection add the little something to the sound. It is little use to blow the sound up to football stadium size!

For solo recording, I use the microphones in a cross-setup, about a meter from the guitar. That partly cancels the effect of poor acoustics, though my sleeping room is not too bad.

Once I will complete my CD!