



AGD Productions, Inc.







AGD “Alto” Reference Preamplifier by AGD Productions, Inc. Operating Manual

Rev.01

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CAUTION

THE UNIT CONTAINS NO USER SERVICEABLE PARTS.

DO NOT REMOVE THE PANELS OR ANY SCREWS OR CONNECTORS.

DO NOT OPERATE THE UNIT WITHOUT THE GLASS TUBE FULLY INSERTED IN THE PROPER SOCKET.

DO NOT OPERATE THE UNIT IF WET OR NEAR WATER OR IN UNCONTROLLED OUTDOOR CONDITIONS.

BE CERTAIN TO INSTALL IT IN A SECURE LOCATION FROM WHICH IT CANNOT FALL OR TIP OVER.

TIME SPENT FAMILIARIZING YOURSELF WITH THIS MANUAL WILL BE WELL REWARDED.



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1- ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This Owner's Manual covers unboxing of, familiarization with, and configuration of your new amplifier. This manual will enable you to expertly tailor the behavior and performance of your preamplifier to fit your preferences of your equipment and listening room.

This user manual is integral part of the AGD "ALTO" and must be available and consulted prior the installation of the equipment.

The AGD "ALTO" is designed to operate indoor and must be utilized uniquely for the scope of audio signal amplification within the specifications and conditions defined in the manual.

It is strongly recommended that you follow this manual in the order in which it is written so that you understand the safety considerations before configuring the unit.



Dear Customer,

I have always been driven by my passion to merge perfection and beauty in the art of Audio reproduction.

After the launch of the AGD “TEMPO” we wanted to create a perfect companion preamplifier and so, the AGD “ALTO” is our new compact reference analog preamplifier.

Crafted with the same care and dedication as all AGD products, the “ALTO” is a superior musical preamplifier that incorporates all the design features already adopted in the bigger sibling, the AGD “Andante”.

The Phono stage, a full balanced topology, has superior performances that will satisfy the most demanding Audiophile.

While The “ALTO” is by design the perfect companion preamplifier for our “TEMPO” and “Audion” Stereo GaN Amplifier, it will also deliver the most sublime and purest sound with any audio systems of any standard.

The AGD Audio Design team is confident the “ALTO” will meet your expectations and as a team we will always stand in support of your needs and future requirements.

Sincerely

Alberto Guerra

CEO, AGD Productions, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alberto Guerra', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.



3- IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION



READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS: All the safety and operating instructions of your AGD ALTO PREAMPLIFIER should be read before power is applied to the equipment.

RETAIN OWNER'S MANUAL: These safety and operating instructions should be retained for future reference.

READ WARNING: All warnings on the unit and in the operating instructions should be adhered to.

FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS: All operating and use instructions should be followed.

CLEANING: Unplug the unit from the wall outlet and leave for at least 10 min. - make sure the unit is not hot before you start cleaning. Use dry or damp soft cloth to clean the surfaces. Do not use corrosive/abrasive spray for cleaning.

VENTILATION: Do not block any ventilation openings. Do not install near any heat sources such as radiators, heat registers, stoves, or other apparatus (including other amplifiers). The unit should not be installed in a built-in location such as a bookcase or rack unless proper ventilation is provided.

GROUNDING: Do not defeat the safety purpose of the grounding-type plug. A grounding-type plug has two blades and a third grounding prong. The third prong is provided for your safety. If the provided plug does not fit into your outlet, consult an electrician for replacement of the obsolete outlet.

POWER CORD PROTECTION: Protect the power cord from being walked on or pinched particularly at plugs, convenience receptacles, and the point where they exit from the apparatus.

LIGHTNING: Unplug this apparatus during lightning storms or when unused for long periods of time.

SERVICING: Refer all servicing to qualified service personnel. Servicing is required when the apparatus has been damaged in any way, such as if the power-supply cord or plug is damaged, liquid has been spilled inside the appliance or it has been exposed to moisture, the appliance does not operate normally, or has been dropped.

DO NOT OPEN THE CABINET: There are no user serviceable components inside this product. Opening the cabinet may present a shock hazard and any modification to the product will void your warranty.

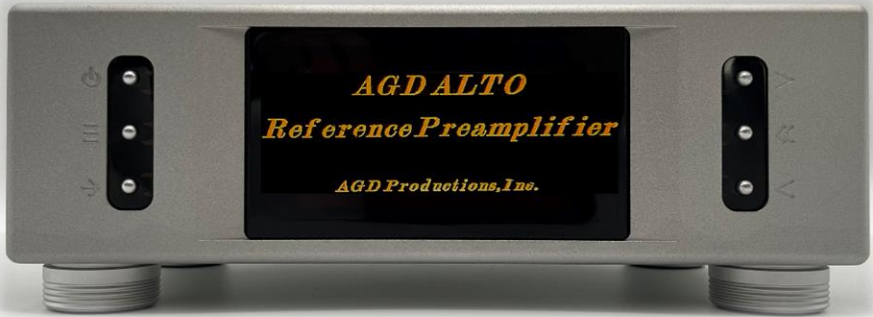


WARNING: To reduce the risk of fire or electric shock, do not expose this apparatus to rain or moisture.



4- INTRODUCTION

The AGD “ALTO” is a complete audiophile Line and Phono Reference Preamplifier that delivers a unique set of features and components in a very compact beautifully crafted single billet aluminum cabinet. With his built-in fully balanced phono stage (MM & MC), a volume control with the most thermally stable and high precision resistor ladder circuit, the “ALTO” is by design the perfect companion preamplifier for our “TEMPO” and “Audion MkII” power GaN Amplifiers.





5- MAIN FEATURES

- Fully Balanced Phono preamplifier stage with MM & MC cartridges support (selection via Menu and Remote control) and with dedicated ultra-low noise linear power supply and ultra-low noise linear professional grade amplifiers stage.
- Analog boards fully shielded and separated from digital boards to deliver the lowest possible noise and prevent any undesired interference.
- High Dynamic low noise professional grade instrumentational amplifier stages for the output buffer stage (configurable as bi-amp X-Over upon request).
- Fully balanced design and full DC coupling (no capacitors in line with analog signals).
- Three Analog inputs with one input fully balanced (XLR connectors).
- 8bit fully balanced passive Ladder volume control.
- Three analog outputs (for multi-amplification solutions).
 - 1 XLR balanced output (6.4VRMS max)
 - 2 Single-ended stereo output (low/high pass X-Over customizable)
 - Remote control.
 - 12V output Trigger.



6- UNPACKING

Unpacking

All AGD products shipping boxes have been specially designed to protect their contents and special care has been taken to prevent damage under normal shipping conditions.

When unpacking the product:

- Mishandling should be evident upon inspection of the flight case.
- Carefully remove the component from its packaging and examine it closely for signs of shipping damage.
- We strongly recommend saving all original packaging to protect the unit from damage, should you wish to store it or ship it later.



Please check the content of the shipping is complete and all the following items are included:

- 1- AGD ALTO Unit
- 2- Power Cable
- 3- Remote control
- 4- Gloves
- 5- Operating Manual



7- INSTALLATION

POWER REQUIREMENTS:

The AGD “ALTO” has universal voltage input configuration and can operate between 90~264VAC 50/60Hz single phase.

A detachable IEC power cable intended for use in the region where the unit is sold is included.



WARNING: The unit should be operated only at the rated voltage indicated on the power connector. If you are not sure what the main voltage supplied to your home is, consult with your unit dealer.

- Connect the power supply to the power source indicated on the rear panel.
- Avoid power conditioners that float the ground pin.
- ALWAYS connect power cord to component before plugging it into an AC outlet and make sure that unit's main switch is set to the “OFF” position before making the final connection.
- For best performance, try to position the power cord away from any input signal cables if possible.
- Pay close attention to power quality and be aware that different power cords can alter the sound.
- For initial power-up, operate the main switch located on the back-panel power entry module.
- **BE CERTAIN TO INSTALL THE UNIT IN A SECURE LOCATION FROM WHICH IT CANNOT FALL OR TIP OVER.**
- Do not operate on carpet or any other surface that might block air flow.
- Do not allow the chassis to touch any metal parts, such as the frame of an equipment rack. This might create a parallel ground path that could degrade the sound of your system.
- Connect the source's cables to their appropriate inputs.



IMPORTANT: READ THE SECTIONS “BACK PANEL”



8- FRONT PANEL FUNCTIONS AND OPERATION

All keys of the AGD “ALTO” are touch-sensitive (no mechanical movement) hence attention to familiarize with their operation is required.

The functions of the left end side switch group are:



Stand-by - Switches the unit from stand-by to operational mode.



Function/Menu selection: sequential rotation of the following:

- Balance control
- Selection of the **Menu pages**
 - **Page 1:** Phase inverting / Remote control setup / Display brightness / Phono stage source type - MC or MM



Input Selector

- Toggles between input sources as follow:
 - PHONO, RCA2, RCA3, XLR

Switches back to the home screen if one of the menu pages is open.



8- FRONT PANEL FUNCTIONS AND OPERATION

The functions of the right end side switch group are:



Volume up

- Turn the volume control up by one step
- Menu navigation (up).



Enter

- Apply input selection
- Select highlighted menu item.



Volume Down

- Turn the volume control Down by one step
- Menu navigation (down)



9- BACK PANEL CONNECTORS

ANALOG INPUTS:



The AGD “ALTO” has four different analog inputs.

- All the Analog input connectors are located on the bottom left area of the back panel.
- Please refer to the above picture to locate their positions and identify the functionality.

ANALOG INPUTS

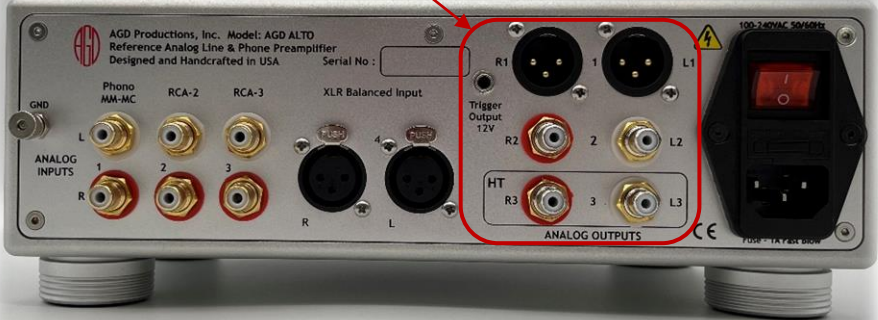
- 1x Phono Input L-R – Input #1
- 2x RCA Single-Ended (Line level) Input # 2 & #3.
- 1x XLR balanced level input

Note: A ground screw connection is made available next to the Phono Input (Analog Input 1). Use this ground binding terminal to secure the connection of the ground wire from the Turntable.



9- BACK PANEL CONNECTORS

ANALOG OUTPUTS:



The AGD ALTO has three sets of analog output terminals.

- One pair of XLR (balanced output)
- 2 pairs of RCA (single ended outputs).

The ALTO output interface is then capable of driving up to six different independent amplification channels.

The buffer output stage circuit is designed around a professional grade operational amplifier ICs with output characteristics capable to drive any system of amplification thanks to an output impedance of $\sim 50\Omega$ and maximum voltage swing of $6.4V_{RMS}$.

ANALOG OUTPUTS

- 1x XLR 1(Balanced Output) Output #1 Full Range
- 1x RCA (Single ended output) Output #2 Full Range
- 1x RCA (Single ended output) Output #3 HT Pass-Through

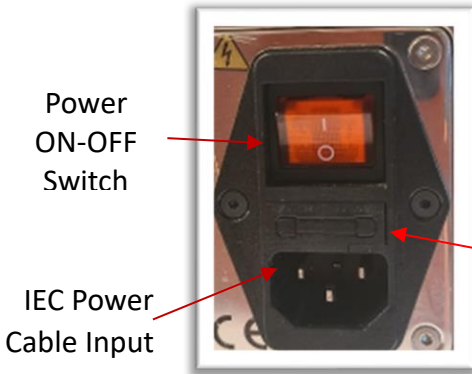


10- AC POWER ENTRY MODULE

AC POWER ENTRY MODULE



AC Power Entry module functions:



The AGD "ALTO" has universal voltage input configuration and can operate between 90~264VAC 50/60Hz single phase.

A detachable IEC power cable intended for use in the region where the unit is sold is included.







WARNING: The unit should be operated only at the rated voltage indicated on the power connector. If you are not sure what the main voltage supplied to your home is, consult with your unit dealer.



11- OPERATION

OPERATION

- After all the connections of the input signals are verified and are correct, and the power cable is plugged-in, turn the power switch of the back panel ON. A red light will illuminate. The unit is powered-up.
- Please note that LED lights of the “ALTO” will illuminate the front panel area.
- At this point the unit enters automatically in STAND-By mode.
- To bring the unit in operation mode, touch the “Stand-by” switch. 
 - Please note it will take 2~3 seconds after turning the main power on before the front panel touch sensors are operational, including the stand-by switch.
- Use the “INPUT” selector switch  to toggle between input sources and set the one you will be using by touching the ENTER  button.
- The Menu button  gives access to the following functions:




Screen 1:

- Balance control Operation


Screen 2:

- Output Phase
- Remote control setup
- Display brightness
- Phono stage source select - MC or MM

BALANCE ADJUSTMENT:

- To shift the Left/Right balance, press Menu  once, and use the navigation keys on the remote or on the front panel   to adjust the balance of the LEFT-RIGHT channels.

PHONO INPUT

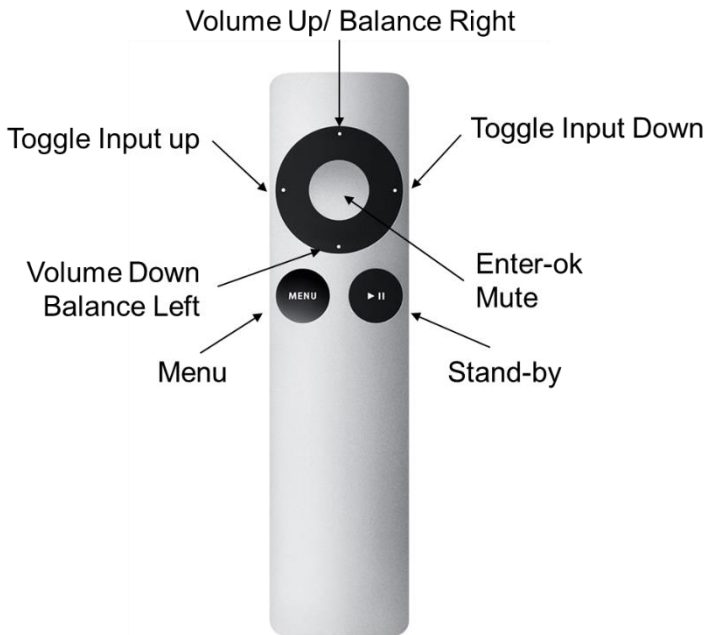
- To select the appropriate setting for the type of the cartridge mounted on the tonearm (MM - moving magnet or MC - moving coil), press the MENU function twice to enter the second page of the menu and select the radio button MM or MC and press ENTER. 





12- REMOTE CONTROL

REMOTE CONTROL FUNCTIONALITIES:

- All functions of the AGD ALTO are available via Remote control.
- The “ALTO” is compatible with a standard Apple Remote type, included with the unit,
- The Remote control delivered with the unit is already setup to work with the “ALTO” and does not require any additional setup.
- By factory settings, the remote keys assignment is as follow:



- The user can reassign each button’s function through the device’s menu as follow:
 - Touch the Menu button  on the front panel twice
 - Select Remote Control Setup and press ENTER 
 - Follow the instructions on screen.
 - Once completed, the AGD “ALTO” will restart and apply the new settings.
 - The Remote control is now re-programmed.



13- TROUBLESHOOTING

- The unit is designed to prevent damage to itself and associated components.
- Incorrect operation is sometimes mistaken for malfunction.
- If problems occur, see this section for troubleshooting information.
- If problems persist, contact your authorized AGD Productions' dealer.

NO POWER

- Examine the power cord to ensure that it is connected to both the AC mains connector and a working, un-switched, electrical outlet.
- Make sure the unit is powered on with the rear-panel power switch. Examine the electrical circuit breaker to ensure that power is being supplied to the electrical outlet to which the amplifier is connected.
- Make sure the light of the ON/OFF switch of the AC power entry module is on.

NO SIGNAL AT THE OUTPUTS

- Examine all audio cables to ensure a solid connection between the unit and all associated components.
- Examine the speaker cables to ensure a solid connection between the amplifier and the speakers.
- Make sure that the connected units (CD player, Turntable etc.) are powered-on.
- Make sure the volume is set to an audible level.
- Make sure every input cable is correctly inserted.
- Make sure the preamp is not muted.
- Make sure all associated components are connected to working electrical outlets and powered on.



13- TROUBLESHOOTING

AUDIO HUM

- Disconnect components one at a time to isolate the problem.
- Once the problem is identified, make sure the problematic component is properly grounded and connected to the same electrical socket of the AGD “ALTO”.

IF ALL ELSE FAILS...

- Contact your authorized AGD Productions, Inc. dealer and/or contact AGD Productions Customer Service at www.AGDproductions.com

**14- SPECIFICATIONS**

Parameter	Description
Phono Input	Moving Magnet and Moving Coil selectable via Menu MM Input Impedance: 47k Ω , S/R \geq 80db MC Input Impedance: 420 Ω , S/R \geq 70db RIAA Accuracy: <0.1dB Frequency Response: 20Hz-20kHz \pm 0.1db THD%: \leq 0.05%
Line Analog Inputs	2 Single ended (RCA2, RCA3), 1 XLR inputs (XLR) Frequency Response: 1Hz-100kHz \pm 0.2db (Passive front-end direct coupling)
Analog Outputs	1 XLR Output, 2 RCA Outputs (Output #1&2 full range, Output #3 HT Pass-Through). Output Impedance: <50ohm Frequency Response: 1Hz-100kHz \pm 0.2db THD+N (Balanced): \leq 0.005% THD+N (Single Ended): \leq 0.009% S/R \geq 130db Direct output coupling.
Net Dimension	11" x 7.1" x 3.5" (280 x 180 x 90mm)
Remote	Infrared
Trigger Output	12V, 0.1A DC
Flight Case Dimension	20" x 16" x 7.5" (500 x 406 x 190mm)
Net Weight	11lb/5Kg
Gross Weight	17lb/8Kg
Input voltage	Universal (110-240V, 50-60Hz)



15- EU Statement of Compliance

EU Statement of Compliance

Manufacturer : **AGD Productions, Inc**
2644 Via Valdes
Palos Verdes Estates
90274 CA (USA)

Product name: **AGD “ALTO”**
Reference Analog Preamplifier

Standards : EN 55032 : 2015 Class-B
EN 61000-3-2 : 2014
EN 61000-3-3 : 2013
EN 55024: 2010
EN 60950-1: 2006 + /A11:2009/A1:2010 + /A2:2013 +
/A12:2011

The manufacturer declares that the product complies with specified above and meets the essential requirements of the Directive: 2014/30/UE (EMC), 2014/35/UE (LVD), 2011/65/UE (RoHS)



Palos Verdes Estates, March 28th, 2020

Alberto Guerra, President and CEO AGD Productions, Inc.

