

C46
Audio Control
Center



**“Trust McIntosh to create
an elegant combination
of audio purity and flexible control”**

With eight source input selections, one of them a balanced input, all fully assignable and programmable, plus separate processor loops for both listen and record sections and enough outputs, both balanced and unbalanced, to drive multiple amplifiers, the C46 Preamplifier is a control center that can easily coordinate even the most complex audio system.

Sonic integrity is enhanced through use of digital logic controlled electromagnetic switches which provide the most reliable, lowest distortion signal switching in existence. Master volume control is accomplished through an ultra-precision digitally controlled attenuator, enhanced with Variable Rate Volume circuitry and adjusted through an optical rotary encoder that results in resolution and tracking accuracy within 0.5 dB. The exclusive McIntosh equalization circuitry allows “tailoring” the sonic performance over 8 frequency bands and a separate programmable bypass control totally eliminates the equalizer from the signal path when not in use.

Behind McIntosh’s signature black glass front panel, LED-driven Fiber Optic Light Diffuser Panels provide all illumination - reducing heat and power consumption and increasing the lighting’s life span many times over that of ordinary light bulbs.

Programmable Balanced Input
Eight Programmable Source Selections
One Main and Two Switched Outputs
Logic Driven Electromagnetic Switching
Fiber-Optic Light Diffuser Illumination
Exclusive McIntosh Eight Frequency
Equalizer Circuit
Input Level Matching
Separate Listen and Record Input Selection
Dual Programmable Processor Loops
Precision Digitally Controlled
Volume Attenuator
Blue 16 Character VF Display
Gold Plated Connectors
Precision Resistors and Capacitors
Wide Dynamic Range
Remote Power Control
Data Output Ports
Front Panel Headphone Jack

A Tradition of Excellence



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Silent Electromagnetic Switching

McIntosh Silent Electromagnetic Switches, located literally at the input panel, eliminate the need for audio signals to travel through any internal wiring where it would be subject to noise pickup. The state-of-the-art switches consist of ruthenium contacts—the finest conducting material known—which are sealed within a glass tube containing an inert oxygen-free gas that eliminates all possibility of contamination and results in a distortion-free switch that never needs cleaning. The glass tube is enclosed within a multi-layer copper coil, which provides the means to actuate the switch and also provides additional shielding.

The entire assembly is finally encased in a shock-absorbent plastic housing for protection.

VRV (Variable Rate Volume) Digitally Controlled Attenuator

The output attenuator controls volume over 214 steps of .5dB each with accuracy within .1dB. The volume vs. rotation rate varies as preamplifier gain varies and attenuation changes occur at the zero crossings of the audio signal to prevent audible artifacts during adjustment.

FREQUENCY RESPONSE

20Hz to 20kHz, +0 / -0.25dB

TOTAL HARMONIC DISTORTION

0.002% max. from
20Hz to 20kHz

A-WEIGHTED SIGNAL-TO-NOISE RATIO

Phono: 86dB
High Level: 97dB

RATED OUTPUT VOLTAGE

5 Vrms at balanced outputs
2.5 Vrms at unbalanced outputs

INPUT IMPEDANCE

Phono, MM: 47K ohms, 65pf
High Level: 47K ohms (balanced)
22K ohms (unbalanced)

OUTPUT IMPEDANCE

240 ohms (unbalanced)
480 ohms (balanced)

VOLTAGE GAIN

Phono to Tape Out: 40dB
High Level to Tape Out: 0dB
High Level to Main Output: 15dB

MAXIMUM VOLTAGE OUTPUT

10.0 Vrms unbalanced, 20 Vrms
balanced

SENSITIVITY

Phono: 4.5mV for rated output
High Level: 450mV, 900
balanced for rated output
Balanced: 900mV for rated
output

POWER REQUIREMENTS

120V 50/60Hz, 50 watts

DIMENSIONS (H X W X D)

5 3/8" (13.65 cm) x 17 1/2" (44.45
cm) x 19" (48.26 cm)

Panel clearance required in front of
mounting panel is 1 3/4 inches (4.5
cm) for connections

WEIGHT

26 lbs. (11.79kg) net
40.41 lbs. (18.33kg) boxed

C46 Remote Control

