

# Audiomods tonearm - cartridge compatibility

These are cartridges that have been extensively tested in combination with the arm and are recommended as a very good match. The list is compiled from my own listening and owner's feedback. If your cartridge isn't here, then look for one of similar weight and compliance that is listed.

As the compliance of the cartridge goes down, so the "effective mass" (the inertia load it needs to work properly) should go up. You will find that most manufacturers will accomplish this by making the bodies of low-compliance cartridges heavier. Two counterweights and a mass tuning kit are included with each Series Five arm to allow fine matching to most cartridges.



## **Benz Micro**

*Quite a number of the cartridges from this range have been matched with the arm, from the MC gold to the wood-bodied SL. All work very well and the range is stocked and recommended by Audio Emotion. All the Benz cartridges give a very balanced, natural presentation with great dynamics. Highly recommended.*

*Benz cartridges like to see a medium to high mass arm so they give their best when set up with a medium-weight headshell shim.*

## **Cartridge Man Musicmaker (any version)**

My own choice (Music Maker III). Exceptional combination and a popular choice with Audiomods users, especially for the realism and detail of voice and acoustic instruments. A popular combination, TNT-Audio concluded: *"the Audiomods as easily the No1 arm for the MusicMaker at its price point"*

**MusicMaker Classic:** *"Overall, I can say that the sound has warmed up considerably from my modded TecnoArm. Bass is much more prominent, I am also hearing more depth and better placement of sounds. Some sounds seem to float off above the soundstage and out the room. In fact, everything just sounds very natural in its realism - effortless would be a good description."*



## **Clearaudio Virtuoso Wood (6g, 15cu)**

## **Dynavector dv20XL (8.5g, 12cu)**

*Used for the "enjoythemusic" review, so highly recommended and a popular choice.*

## **Dynavector Karat 17D2**

*On a Michell Orbe the owner reports:*

*"Apart from detail retrieval and a fabulous tonal quality what I really love is the coherence it gives to music. Bands are pulled together to work as a whole with none of that spotlight on each player lesser arms hail as musical".*

*Having heard this setup, it does work very well, so much so that I now own one!*



## **Grado Gold, Grado Reference series (6.5g, 20cu), Grado Sonata (6.5g, 20cu)**

*Just about any Grado is an ideal match, and the arm is capable of bringing out the very best in the top-of-the-range models. The wood-bodied ones work very well.*



# Audiomods tonearm - cartridge compatibility



## **Goldring 1012/1042 (6.2g, 24cuh, 16cuv)**

*Excellent performance at the price. A lot of the development work for the arm was done with these so they match well.*

## **Goldring 2500**

*Owners report this works very well. It has a slightly heavier body than the 10xx series.*

## **Koetsu Black**

*The heavy body helps to make the match work.*

*A very special cartridge, I am saving for one.*

*There are now a number of Koetsu versions, including the rosewood, and some early Supex, partnered with the arm and owners report very good results. Care needs to be taken when buying one, especially if it has been re-tipped and the very early ones need special cartridge tags.*



## **Ortofon MC25 E/F (10.5g, 16cu), Ortofon MC30 (7g, 13cu)**

*The MC30 combination is becoming a very popular choice.*

*Ortofon Rohmann (9g, 12cu) This combination on a slate-plinth 401 was quite exceptional. Beat the Teres/Musicmaker combo in several areas.*



## **Ortofon Kontrapunkt B, Kontrapunkt H (10g, 12cu)**

*All the Ortofon MCs are very good match and a popular choice..*

## **Ortofon Rondo Bronze (10g, 15cu)**

*Ortofon 2M Black (7g, 22cu) Works superbly when the arm is set up in the same way as for Goldring MMs. Owners are reporting very good results.*

*Ortofon Cadenza Black These new cartridges follow the Ortofon "house style" with great dynamics and drive coupled with excellent detail. A very good match.*

## **Sumiko Blackbird (9.6g, 13cu)**

*Owner's comment: "Big improvements in all areas, especially soundstage depth."*

## **Van Den Hul MC10 (8.2g, 14cu)**

*A number of owners are very happy with this combination.*

## **Van den Hul Grasshopper III**

*This was the cartridge choice for the Hi-Fi Choice review, so critically tested and a very strongly recommended match.*

## **Van den Hul "The Canary"**

*The arm is capable of bringing the best out of this very fine, hand built cartridge. I am using one myself as my personal high-end indulgence and my reference cartridge. I don't think I've heard better. This is a high-compliance cartridge for a moving coil and the Audiomods arm is one of the few gimbal-pivots that can match it properly.*



*"This combo gives so much sonic light and transparency, it's delicious, delightful, delectable. There aren't many times when I hear into the inner vibratory world of each of Mulligan's sax notes where*

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*you poise above his fingers as he presses the keys. It's that close. ....This is audiophile heaven."*  
(Edwrd Barker, 6 Moons Audio review, VdH Frog)



## **Zu-bodied Denon 103R (14.5g, 10cu)**

Owner's comment: *"What happened next was truly amazing... I couldn't believe how fantastic things sounded! All the things people look for - PRAT, cohesiveness, soundstage, tonal accuracy, spatial clues, unearthed previously unheard details - were greatly improved."*  
*I was especially pleased because these are not easy cartridges to match.*

*This combo is also highly recommended by Scott Faller and Nels Ferre:*

*"The Zu is better than I could have hoped for, the perfect compliment to your arm. You need one."*  
*The "Enjoy the Music" review of the Zu-Denon used the Audiomods arm so you can match these two with confidence.*

*Such a good combination, I'm now using one on my own Denon DP-80. Highly recommended.*



*The latest version of the Audiomods arm has been chosen by Zu Audio to partner the Zu-103 cartridge on their new Technics turntable project, so definitely a recommended match.*

## **Denon DL301, Denon 103**

*These cartridges can offer excellent value for money but need careful matching because of their lightweight plastic bodies and low compliance. To get the best from them extra mass needs to be added to the headshell. The 301 is an easy match, but the 103 gives its best performance in an aluminium or wood body.*



*Mass shims are supplied with Series Five arms and are used with many moving coil cartridges to tune the response. Use the lighter one for the 301, the 10g shim for the 103.*

## **Denon DL S1**

*A very fine cartridge from Denon and highly recommended. The Arm works well with its low tracking force.*

## **Ortofon Nightclub MkII E (5g, 7cu)**

*An unusual choice, but this very low compliance cartridge was fitted to a Technics 1210. To make it match properly a 10g plug was fitted into the arm tube bringing the bare arm effective mass up to 21g.*



# Audiomods tonearm - cartridge compatibility

## ZYX

*I had the chance for some extended listening of this combination when it was used at the 2010 Hi-Fi show by Angelsound Audio to demonstrate the Feckert turntable. Very detailed sound but with warmth and texture.*



*A great combination, highly recommended. The arm did have the advantage of having been set up by Dr Chris Feckert, so it was probably the most accurate at the show!*

*The lightweight ZYXs need a small headshell mass shim to match perfectly, either our supplied copper one or ZYX own rather expensive solid silver shim.*

*The Woodpecker/Audiomods/Van den Hul Grasshopper III is another very highly recommended combination, used for the Hi-Fi Choice review of the turntable.*

## Lyra Argo

*This combination is running as part of a very mature, very revealing system and the owner spent a great deal of time to get the combination just right. For the final setup we added a custom-made 2.5gm shim, which is now included as part of the set with the arms. At this level of resolution the difference of a gram or two of loading at the headshell makes all the difference.*

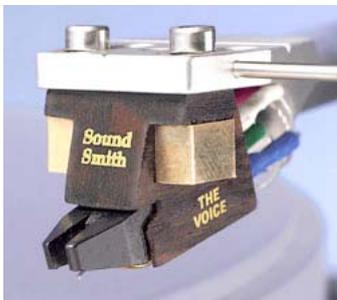


## Lyra Dorian

*A very nice combination with a lot of the character of the high-end Lyras, this cartridge gives a very accurate and detailed presentation. It might benefit from the addition of the light headshell shim for the best match.*

## Garrott

*I've not heard this as they are quite rare in the UK, but in combination with a Michell Orbe, it's been declared as one of the best analogue combinations ever by some who have.*



## SoundSmith

*I got to know of these cartridges through American owners and they are worth very serious consideration, especially if you need to match to an MM phono stage. As moving iron (variable reluctance) designs they give a very natural presentation.*

# AUDIOMODS

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