Cleansing agent

Lee Dunkley prepares to clean up his LP collection with this ultrasonic wonder, which promises to rejuvenate vinyl old and new.

We've often discussed the benefits a thorough wet clean can bring to those covered LPS in your collection that have been well played over the years and are in need of a refresh or secondhand purchases that just need a bit of TLC to sound their best, but few people realise the process, residues such as mould-release agents can often be left behind embedded in the grooves of newly pressed vinyl. Equally, grime can quickly build up on precious LPs of even the most fastidious record collector with traces of dust and dirt retained inside the sleeve that can contaminate a disc every time you slip it back inside. With several wet cleaning products already on the market, many look like adapted turntables complete with rotating platter, wet clean applicator arm and some kind of suction system to remove the dirt along with the moisture and dry off the record once the cleaning process is complete. With these machines, to clean the opposite side of a record users often need to lift the vinyl over and start the entire process all over again.

The curiously named Degritter isn't like that. Developed with the help of online cult fans by a young team of vinyl enthusiasts and engineers based in Estonia, the new company has been fine-tuning its record cleaning machine since 2017, and it goes about the business of cleaning up records in a refreshingly different way.

Lacking a specific model name for now – except the aforementioned Degritter monicker – this inaugural record cleaning machine looks like a large, single-slot toaster. The graceful curves of the wraparound brushed alloy casing afford it an elegance that seems me want to keep it out on display and the embossed branding on the front in what appears to be an achingly retro font is eye catching in a way I really like – rarely has a record cleaning machine looked so cool.

First impressions after unpacking the unit from its shipping crate are of a product that is well thought out and neatly put together. With around half the footprint of a regular-sized turntable, it sits on my hi-fi rack with room to spare and is conveniently close to my desk to enable me to quickly playback and hear the results.

What becomes clear during setup is the remarkable attention to detail that this young company has lavished on every area of the product's manufacture process, from the robust packaging to the feel and finish of the unit and the impressively informative instruction manual that demonstrates just how seriously the Degritter team takes the business of cleaning records.

The two rotary controls on the front provide navigation to a surprisingly slick menu system displayed on the circular screen above that offers a choice of three automated cleaning programs: Quick, Medium and Heavy. Features include a pre-programmed cleaning sequence for the Dustcover. The status display counts down the remaining cleaning time, and it goes about the business of cleaning process without touching the playing surface. Degritter recommends using impurity-free distilled water. The removable 1.4-litre reservoir at the back of the machine aids filling and with it topped up for the first time from a new batch of distilled water purchased online, it's recommended that the machine goes through its cleaning program to rid any excessive gas from the water before the ultrasonic cleaning process for the best results.

With some drops of cleaning fluid added to the water to aid cleaning, I opt for the Quick program and press the chamber surrounding the playing surface fills with the distilled water and the record slowly rotates as the ultrasonic cleaning process takes place. The status display counts down the remaining cleaning time followed by the desired drying time that's set separately (up to 20 fan speeds can be selected). Even after the machine's shortest clean, I am left with a shiny piece of vinyl that looks to be rejuvenated from careless fingerprints while avoiding any moisture contamination on the record label itself. The disc looks pristine, I play it immediately to hear the result and there's no doubt the sound is brighter and more focused and there's a significant decrease in surface noise.

Conclusion

The Degritter automatic record cleaning machine does a remarkably thorough job and is one of the most sophisticated models we've seen. It's a great addition to any vinyl collection and only the slightly high price counts against it.


details

| Product | Degritter
| Type | Automatic record cleaning machine
| Weight | 6kg
| Dimensions (Width x Height x Depth) | 320 x 290 x 310mm
| Features | ● 120kHz ultrasonic cleaning process  ● For customizable cleaning programs  ● Progress screen  ● Automatic cleaning programs  ● Full automated and Effective
| Features | ● Teflon

The Degritter cleaning machine is fully automated and effective, taking the business of cleaning records to a whole new level. With its sleek design and user-friendly interface, it offers a choice of three cleaning programs – Quick, Medium and Heavy – to suit different needs. The machine is easy to use, with a simple interface that guides the user through the cleaning process. The machine is designed to work with distilled water, which helps to remove impurities from the vinyl without leaving any residue. It is a great addition to any vinyl collection and offers a significant improvement in the overall sound quality. Overall, the Degritter cleaning machine is highly recommended for anyone looking for a top-of-the-line record cleaning solution.