

The second possible problem relates to equipment with certain types of 'pseudo-balanced' output. A very few components have been found to use so-called 'balanced' outputs which cannot work properly unless they are connected to a ground-referenced input. Because the HP4's balanced inputs are fully floating, such components when connected to it will produce little or no sound and a very odd frequency response. Again, this is not a fault with the HP4 and should be rectified at source (or simply use an unbalancing lead to one of the HP4's unbalanced inputs, if this does not result in hum).

SETTING UP YOUR AMPLIFIER - CABLES

Yoshino does not make or market cables and does not endorse any particular brand. In fact the HP4, in common with all Yoshino amplifiers, will work with any cables we are aware of. This means that you are completely at liberty to select cables which match your tastes. However, the following guidelines may be helpful.

Interconnect cables should be low capacitance and well screened. High capacitance cables can give a slight subjective treble loss with many source components, while unscreened cables have a greater tendency to pick up interference. Avoid excessively long cables. If interconnects longer than approx. 1ft (30cm) are being used, it is wise to twist the right and left channel cables together to minimise the chance of hum pickup. With screened cables, this will not have any adverse effect on channel separation.

The balanced inputs of the Yoshino HP4 allow for optimum performance when connected to suitably equipped source components. The most important advantage of balanced cables over unbalanced is that over long runs they are much less prone to picking up interference, especially mains hum, and they are less likely to introduce unwanted ground connections between equipment which can themselves produce hum. However, be aware that many source components use an extra stage of amplification to generate the balanced signal from the unbalanced outputs and that extra stage may have its own 'sound signature', in some cases making the unbalanced connection preferable. If in any doubt as to which to use, experiment!

When using a balanced connection, make sure that the cables are properly connected 'pin for pin' - i.e. pin 1 at the male end to pin 1 at the female end, and so on. If a supposedly 'balanced' cable has been connected in unbalanced mode for some reason, most of the virtues of balancing will be lost - however this may in practice have little or no audible effect. If one cable of a stereo pair has accidentally been connected 'out of phase' (pin 2 at one end to pin 3 at the other and vice versa) the result will be exactly the same as if one loudspeaker were connected out of phase, with very vague stereo images and mono sounds seeming to come from outside the speakers.