



## The TEAC TN-4D-SE Turntable Review

Peter Lo Raso April 13, 2026

### How to Redecorate Your Living Room With a Black Sabbath Record

There aren't many things that transport you back in time, yet themselves feel timeless... but the TEAC TN-4D-SE will take you down that wormhole, through the slipstream – back to the High School Afternoon when you bought Master of Reality from the record store, walked home, and got your life changed.

I'm sure some of you out there are longing for some sort of time machine, and the TEAC TN-4D-SE is about as close as I have come to discovering one. From the nostalgia-tinged design to the absolute breadth of quality regarding the sound and performance, this is a turntable for those people who find themselves constantly muttering, *"they don't make 'em like they used to."*



## Highlights

### TEAC TN-4D-SE Turntable

- Sturdy, high-class build with late 20th-century appeal
- Superb playback quality and fidelity
- Direct Drive motor
- Easily accessible speed switch
- Packaged with a SUMIKO Oyster MM cartridge
- Dust lid that stays put when lifted, no slamming or falling
- Silky smooth tone arm action that would make machinists blush

## Introduction

I'm sure that all of this nostalgic pining-for-the-fjords sounds somewhat derivative, on top of the fact that this is coming from some miserable cretin that wasn't pushed out until late in two-thousand-one... I'm even a post-9/11 baby. However, having two parents who were born in the mid-to-late sixties served as a virtual guarantee that my infant life was to be characterized by the culture of that time. Not an upbringing I objected to, for that matter. I was raised on a healthy, steady diet of ZZ Top, Led Zeppelin, Steely Dan, Journey, and Stealers Wheel.

All of this is to say that I have always felt a certain unnatural kinship with the music of the era. From the unparalleled riff-screaming hell-terror of Jimi Hendrix, to the "Sharp-Dressed-Man," whom every girl seems to be crazy for, then to the tale of Aja, with the Chinese music, once all the dime dancing is through. I have always loved those classics that preceded my conception by thirty-plus years. I was, therefore, immediately drawn to the TEAC TN-4D-SE as soon as I set my paws on it. This turntable represents a piece of hardware that would look at home in any vintage, bespoke, second-hand Hi-Fi shop, a picture of high technology circa 1976...

Therein lies its greatest deception.

...because the TEAC TN-4D-SE is anything *but* outdated or antiquated. It is an elevated, modern, precision-oriented piece of hardware camouflaged as a relic of a bygone era. Something that could slice up a Bee Gees record as readily as it could a Death Grips album. The comfort of *then*, brought to you in the *here and now*.

## TEAC TN-4D-SE TURNTABLE SPECIFICATIONS

### Product Type:

Direct Drive Turntable

### Rotation Speeds:

33- $\frac{1}{3}$  rpm, 45 rpm

### Platter Material:

Die-Cast Aluminum

### Phono Preamp:

Yes. Defeatable MM phono stage built-in

### Tonearm Type:

223mm S-Shaped Static Balance with Knife-Edge Pivot Bearing

### Anti- Analog Outputs:

RCA Pin jack x 1 pair (PHONO/LINE switchable)

### Skate Adjustment:

Yes

### Dimensions (W×H×D):

420 × 117 × 356 mm / 16.5" × 4.6" × 14.0"

### Net Weight:

6.1kg / 13.5 lbs.

### Accessories:

Felt Mat, EP Adapter, Counterweight, Head-shell (SUMIKO Oyster installed), Platter, Dust Cover, Hinges x 2, RCA Audio cable with GND terminal, AC Adapter, Owner's Manual (including Warranty card)

**Headshell Type:**

Universal Style

**Cartridge:**

Included. SUMIKO Oyster MM

**Wow-and-Flutter:**

0.1%

**S/N Ratio:**

67dB or higher (A-weighted, 20kHz LPF)

**Stylus Pressure Range:**

0g to 5.0g

**Compatible Cartridge Weight:**

4.0g to 13.0g

**MSRP:**

\$849.99 USD

**Website:**<https://teacusa.com/products/tn-4d-se-direct-drive-turntable>**Company:**

Teac

**SECRETS Tags:**

teac, turntable, direct drive, cartridge, vinyl, hifi

## Design

As stated at great length previously, the unit feels like a welcome reminder of something that got lost. To me, it's the tonearm and the trimmings off to the right that drive that feeling home. The clean brushed aluminum backdrop, set firmly in a jet-black housing... a pitch-colored chassis that cements the stylings at the late 70's to early 80's mark.



Whether consciously or subconsciously, this does the TEAC a lot of favors. It *feels* familiar. No frills, no sharp-postmoderny-frou-frou bull, no strange UFO-shaped battle station for your vinyl to be seated in... just an old friend. Something (or someone) dependable, consistent, down-to-earth – a sentiment that is reflected in how all of the mechanisms and functions feel during use. Smoothness. Finesse. The types of things that impress upon you the fact that the machinery inside the device is just as well-conceived and well-engineered as all the pieces that are worn

across its face. Even down to the soft-closing dust lid that sits firmly in the upright position when raised – no flimsy hinges that risk failing the weight and sending that transparent guillotine plunging down on your wrists when you’re trying to change sides. Intention combined with quality effort. Nothing less.

One particularly welcome deviation from my previous daily-driver rig was that the speed setting is readily available on the face of the unit. This is, of course, a Direct Drive turntable after all. Imagine the sound of a stadium full of people cheering – that’s how I felt when I first used it. My regular turntable required the complete removal of the giant glass platter (often nervously, with sweaty palms), and adjustment of the belt drive underneath in order to change the RPM. The dial selection seems a simple enough feature, and barely anything worth a gripe against my old rig... but it serves as definite proof that Occam’s Razor is still applicable in most circumstances. Why sacrifice ease of use for more aesthetic distinction? Put a knob right on the damn front, make it easy... but also make it satisfying. Nice and clicky.

Attention to simplicity and character – not much can outshine that.



The TEAC TN-4D-SE comes with a silent killer of a moving magnet cartridge preinstalled – a SUMIKO Oyster MM. The fact that this cartridge sits stalwart on a removable Universal type headshell makes swapping cartridges straightforward... ease of use for the detail-oriented audiophile that gets the itch for absolute control of all minutiae. The sheath to this cartridge is an aluminum tonearm of the familiar S-Shaped style, affixed to what TEAC calls a “knife-edge” bearing. This arm dances across the platter with incredible ease and feel, held aloft by anti-skate adjustments and an uncompromising level of precision engineering.

The turntable also boasts a high-quality built-in MM phono preamp that is governed by a switch at the back of the unit. I would consider it a backdoor to a unique upgrade path should the owner desire a better yet separate phono stage in the future... or leave it alone if it doesn’t mean anything to them.



## In Use

The TN-4D-SE delivers on the trait I find most desirable in any sort of physical product or tool: the care in its design is reflected during its performance. The quality is palpable. In turn, its high level of performance is a platform to highlight the artistry of whomever charted the grooves and did the singing on the record. The end user experience was tailored with intense detail, intentionality, and care – this is no deception, no trickery behind the outward appearance of the TEAC. The sound is just as smooth and familiar as any of the mechanisms, that tactile satisfaction seeming to reverberate through the wax that spins across its platter.

This turntable only writes checks that its ass *can* cash.



### Black Sabbath, “*Black Sabbath*”

One of the first things that I turned on the TN-4D was Black Sabbath’s self-titled debut. It seemed fitting, owing to the unit’s vintage appeal. Who better to christen the thing than the Ozzman himself? The recent death of Osbourne was still a fresh wound. Not that a loss of such magnitude could ever be forgotten... but it felt symbolic at the time. The *right* way to do a little product testing and a little private mourning at the same time. Now, it could have been my sentimental attitude at the time, combined with the 1970-era recording... but the TEAC TN-4D-SE at that moment seemed to exude a sound and a warmth that I tend to associate with period-accurate hardware. I could swear that the cover grilles on my speakers had turned to tweed, and the bodies themselves into varnished wood. That magical feeling that I imagine

happened when the music got turned up loud in a shag carpeted basement roughly fifty years ago – creeping down my spine, here, in this distant decade. I live in a smoke-free apartment complex, but I swear I could smell overflowing crystal ashtrays and dirty King Crimson shirts.

*This is why I refer to it as a “Time Machine.”*

It takes you to the period of whichever record sits on its platter. From the function of lining up the tonearm and setting it down, to the actual caliber of performance itself, it plays nice in any situation, and it almost curls your own surroundings to fit the contour of the sound. Want to spin some Brahms? Sit back in awe as silver candelabras fill your peripheral vision. How about some Aphex Twin? Hope you can fly the spaceship on your couch. Don’t worry, the aliens fixed the punch bowl, and it tastes delicious. The TEAC TN-4D-SE feels futuristic and also authoritatively vintage all at once, and it needs only a wax prism to focus that energy.



### Code Orange, “Underneath”

After the final guitar sting of “Warning,” I elected to change gears and test music from a different century – Code Orange’s masterpiece, *Underneath*. In an instant, the room changed from mom’s wood-finished basement circa ‘71 to concrete walls and stretchers, cold metal things that rest in deep places, dark parts of the sea that require robust titanium-walled submarines to be explored. Inexplicably, the TEAC also felt at home with this drastically different atmosphere, suddenly changing from something that rested next to a green velvet chair to something futuristic, self-aware, machined, and yet also full of thought... like the T-1000 camouflaged on the bottom shelf of your entertainment center. Furious, god-screaming-quick songs like “You and You Alone” or “Erasure Scan” make it sound like one is drowning in a sea of computer code... then the gentle reprieve of

“Autumn and Carbine” lets you swim to the surface.

Shine a flashlight through a piece of colored glass, and the whole wall will turn that color. Put a record on the TN-4D-SE... the whole room looks like that record.

## Conclusions

**The TEAC TN-4D-SE is a truly timeless turntable that delivers immense fidelity without wasting time on unnecessary bells and whistles.**

Likes

- Excellent visual appeal
- Incredible precision and fidelity
- Regard for calculated simplicity

Would Like To See

- Nothing of consequence

I, personally, tend to fall on the *past* end of time-travel desire. I yearn to see the inside of that wood-paneled basement, with vintage speakers pumping out Rush and discussing the plot of *2112*. Call it small-minded, call it misty-

eyed, call it what you like; if I were to hop into the DeLorean, that's where I'm headed. The point is that the TEAC can take you there. It can take you wherever (or whenever) you like, so long as you have a vinyl with a corresponding release year.

