

new equipment reports

THE CONSUMER'S GUIDE
TO HIGH FIDELITY EQUIPMENT

SONY'S TOP-END RECEIVER SCORES HIGH



EQUIPMENT: Sony STR 6120, a stereo FM receiver. Dimensions: front panel, 18 15/16 by 5 9/16 inches; chassis depth, 14 1/2 inches. Price: \$699.50. Manufacturer: Sony Corp. of America, 47-47 Van Dam St., Long Island City, N. Y. 11101.

COMMENT: Having scored very impressively with its separate tuner and amplifier line, Sony now is offering a top-end receiver which combines a high-sensitivity tuner with a high-powered control amplifier. FM sensitivity measures 1.8 microvolts; full limiting (-46.5 dB) is reached with only 25 microvolts input signal. The set logged, in our cable FM test, no less than 55 stations, of which 43 were deemed suitable for long-term listening or off-the-air taping (the others were mostly stations that many lower-quality sets don't even hint at receiving). Harmonic distortion was low; IM, extremely low. Signal-to-noise ratio was unusually good; capture ratio, excellent. Frequency response, on mono and for each channel on stereo, remained very linear and smooth across the audio band. Stereo channels were amply separated and nearly perfectly balanced. The set is equipped with both an interstation muting control and a high-frequency separation adjustment. The former control cuts the noise between stations but lets normally strong stations come through; the latter control reduces some of the high-frequency hash on weaker stereo signals without appreciably lessening stereo quality.

The Sony's amplifier section furnishes better than 50 watts RMS power per channel at very low distortion. The power bandwidth, for a mere 0.2 per cent distortion, spans the range from below 20 Hz to 70 kHz—prodigious for any amplifier, more so for one included as part of a receiver. At normal to loud listening levels, harmonic distortion remains less than one-

tenth of a per cent across most of the audible spectrum. Note that on our harmonic distortion chart, we had to expand the percentage scale by ten to be able to accurately depict the very low amounts of distortion measured for 30 watts output from each channel. IM distortion measures no more than three-tenths of a per cent (at any load impedance) up to the set's rated output. Evidence of a slight roll-off in the extreme bass is seen in the response curves and in the 50-Hz square-wave response; it is, in sum, less of a roll-off than found in most receivers.

A generous array of man-sized controls dresses up the front panel and makes the set easy to use. The tuning dial, to begin with, measures nearly 7 3/4 inches long and has equal spaces between all channel markings. So, although no logging scale is provided, precise tuning is fairly easy. It's made easier, of course, by the set's two meters—one for maximum signal strength, the other for center-of-channel—and the red stereo indicator. The large tuning knob at the right is visually complemented by a same-sized knob at the left for volume and channel balance (actually the left control is a dual-concentric type with the two functions). To its right is a mode control with positions for normal stereo, reverse channels, full mono (left plus right), left input only through both channels, right input only through both channels, left speaker



Square-wave response.

REPORT POLICY

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only, right speaker only (the last two positions helpful in getting precise aural balance).

The power off/on switch is a separate toggle, as are the switches for low and high filters, loudness contour, tape monitor, FM mode (automatic stereo or stereo only), and the high blend and muting features mentioned above. Input signal selection is shared by a knob and three-position toggle. The toggle chooses FM, phono 1, or a position that switches over to the knob which then selects tape head, phono 2, auxiliary 1, or auxiliary 2. This last, by the way, is available as a front-panel connection that accepts a stereo phone jack—useful for making a quick patch-in of a tape recorder on playback or any other high-level signal source. For recording, also from the front panel, there's a line-out jack. A headphone jack is live at all times. Three more controls complete the front panel: a speaker selector knob (remote, main, both, or all off); treble control; bass control. The last two regulate both channels simultaneously.

At the rear are the inputs corresponding to the front panel selector, plus a duplicate set of auxiliary 2 jacks, tape inputs and outputs, and an additional tape recorder receptacle for 5-pin (European type) connections. There's also a "center-channel" (mixed left and right signal) phono jack for driving a separate mono amplifier—useful for piping sound to another room or perhaps to enhance the stereo panorama in the same room. The eight speaker terminals (four stereo pairs) are heavy-duty binding posts, as are the antenna connectors—the latter accommodating both 75-ohm and 300-ohm lead-in. Three AC convenience outlets—two of them switched, one always live—are provided.

Construction of the STR 6120 boasts the same superior workmanship and careful attention to detailing found in earlier Sony models. The set is clearly a quality product in every respect. Supplied in a metal case with four feet, it may be installed "as is" or fitted into a custom cut-out. Alternately, it may be housed in a walnut cabinet offered as an accessory.

CIRCLE 143 ON READER-SERVICE CARD

Sony STR 6120 Additional Data

Tuner Section

Capture ratio	1.5 dB		
S/N ratio	> 77 dB		
IM distortion	0.3%		
THD	mono	1 ch	r ch
40 Hz	0.42%	0.82%	1.1%
400 Hz	0.48%	0.96%	0.99%
1 kHz	0.42%	0.94%	0.88%
19-kHz pilot	> 64 dB		
38-kHz subcarrier	> 64 dB		

Amplifier Section

Damping factor	53	
Input characteristics for 60 watts output)	Sensitivity	S/N
phono 1, 2	1.3 mV	56 dB
tape head	1.4 mV	51 dB
aux. 1, 2	133 mV	85 dB
tape (amp)	140 mV	84 dB
rec/pb	148 mV	81 dB

