

Stereo Cassette Deck

Operating Instructions

TC-W490/WR590/WR521

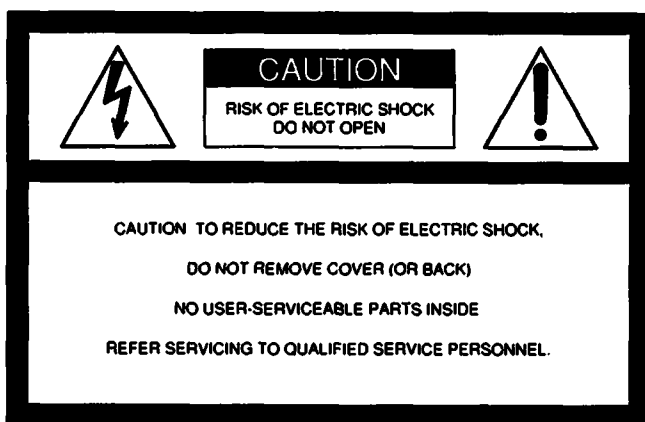
WARNING

Owner's Record

The model and serial numbers are located at the rear. Record the serial number in the space provided below. Refer to these numbers whenever you call upon your Sony dealer regarding this product.

Model No. _____ Serial No. _____

To prevent fire or shock hazard, do not expose the unit to rain or moisture.



This symbol is intended to alert the user to the presence of uninsulated "dangerous voltage" within the product's enclosure that may be of sufficient magnitude to constitute a risk of electric shock to persons.



This symbol is intended to alert the user to the presence of important operating and maintenance (servicing) instructions in the literature accompanying the appliance.

* The graphical symbols are on the rear enclosure.

INFORMATION

This equipment has been tested and found to comply with the limits for a Class B digital device, pursuant to Part 15 of the FCC Rules. These limits are designed to provide reasonable protection against harmful interference in a residential installation. This equipment generates, uses, and can radiate radio frequency energy and, if not installed and used in accordance with the instructions, may cause harmful interference to radio communications. However, there is no guarantee that interference will not occur in a particular installation. If this equipment does cause harmful interference to radio or television reception, which can be determined by turning the equipment off and on, the user is encouraged to try to correct the interference by one or more of the following measures:

- Reorient or relocate the receiving antenna.
- Increase the separation between the equipment and receiver.
- Connect the equipment into an outlet on a circuit different from that to which the receiver is connected.
- Consult the dealer or an experienced radio/TV technician for help.

You are cautioned that any changes or modifications not expressly approved in this manual could void your authority to operate this equipment.

For the customers in Canada

CAUTION:

TO PREVENT ELECTRIC SHOCK, DO NOT USE THIS POLARIZED AC PLUG WITH AN EXTENSION CORD, RECEPTACLE OR OTHER OUTLET UNLESS THE BLADES CAN BE FULLY INSERTED TO PREVENT BLADE EXPOSURE.

INFORMATION

This apparatus complies with the Class B limits for radio noise emissions set out in Radio Interference Regulations.

For the customers in U.K.

IMPORTANT

The wires in this mains lead are coloured in accordance with the following code:

Blue: Neutral

Brown: Live

As the colours of the wires in the mains lead of this apparatus may not correspond with the coloured markings identifying the terminals in your plug proceed as follows: The wire which is coloured blue must be connected to the terminal which is marked with the letter N or coloured black. The wire which is coloured brown must be connected to the terminal which is marked with the letter L or coloured red. Do not connect either wire to the earth terminal in the plug which is marked by the letter E or by the safety earth symbol \perp or coloured green or green-and-yellow.

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Chapter 1 Getting Started

Features

For higher quality recording/playback


- **B and C type Dolby NR* systems** which reduce tape noise.
- **The Dolby HX PRO** system** which improves the linearity of the tape's high-range response during recording. (TC-W490, TC-WR590 only)

For your convenience


- **Automatic tape type detection** during playback and recording.
- **A relay function** for long playback.
- **Synchronized dubbing** at normal or high speed.

For easier operation

- **Twin easy-to read digital counters** which show the elapsed recording or playing time on each deck.

* Dolby noise reduction manufactured under license from Dolby Laboratories Licensing Corporation.
"DOLBY" and the double-D symbol  are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories Licensing Corporation.

**Dolby noise reduction and HX Pro headroom extension manufactured under license from Dolby Laboratories Licensing Corporation. HX Pro originated by Bang & Olufsen.

"DOLBY", the double-D symbol  and "HX PRO" are trademarks of Dolby Laboratories Licensing Corporation.

Differences between the models

This instruction manual covers the TC-W490, TC-WR590 and TC-WR521. The TC-WR590 and the TC-WR521 have the following features which are not found in the TC-W490.

- Bidirectional tape movement
- Auto reverse

Note: All illustrations in this manual show the TC-WR590.

Precautions

On safety

- Should any solid object or liquid fall into the cabinet, unplug the unit and have it checked by qualified personnel before operating it any further.
- Unplug the unit from the wall outlet if it will not be used for a long time. To disconnect the cord, pull it out by grasping the plug. Never pull the cord itself.
- The unit is not disconnected from the ac power source (mains) as long as it is connected to the wall outlet, even if the unit itself has been turned off.

On operation

- When the unit is not used, turn the power off to conserve energy and to extend the useful life of your unit.
- Because of a safety mechanism, the function buttons will not operate if the cassette holder is not completely closed, if there is no cassette in the cassette holder, or if a cassette has been incorrectly inserted into the cassette holder.

On head cleaning

The head and tape path should be cleaned after every ten hours of operation. Dirty heads and a dirty tape path may cause:

- loss of high-frequency response
- loss of sound volume
- sound drop-out

If you have any questions or problems concerning your unit, please contact your nearest Sony dealer.

For the customers in the U. S. A.

For detailed safety precautions, see the leaflet "IMPORTANT SAFEGUARDS".

Unpacking

Checking the Supplied Accessories

Make sure that the following supplied accessories are included with your unit.

- Audio connecting cords (2)

Notes on Installation

- Place the unit with the front panel facing you in a location with adequate air circulation to prevent overheating of the unit.
- Do not place the unit:
 - near heat sources such as radiators or air ducts.
 - in places subject to direct sunlight, excessive dust, mechanical vibration or shock.
 - in an inclined position.
 - on a rug or other soft surfaces that would block the ventilation holes on the bottom of the unit.

Do not throw away the carton and the packing material They will come in handy when transporting the unit or shipping it for servicing.

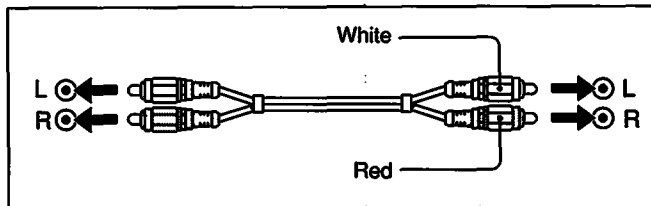
Checking the Operating Voltage

- Operate the unit only on 120 V AC, 60 Hz (U.S.A. and Canada model) or 240 V AC, 50 Hz (U.K. model).
- Before operating the unit, be sure that the operating voltage of your unit is identical with that of your local power supply.

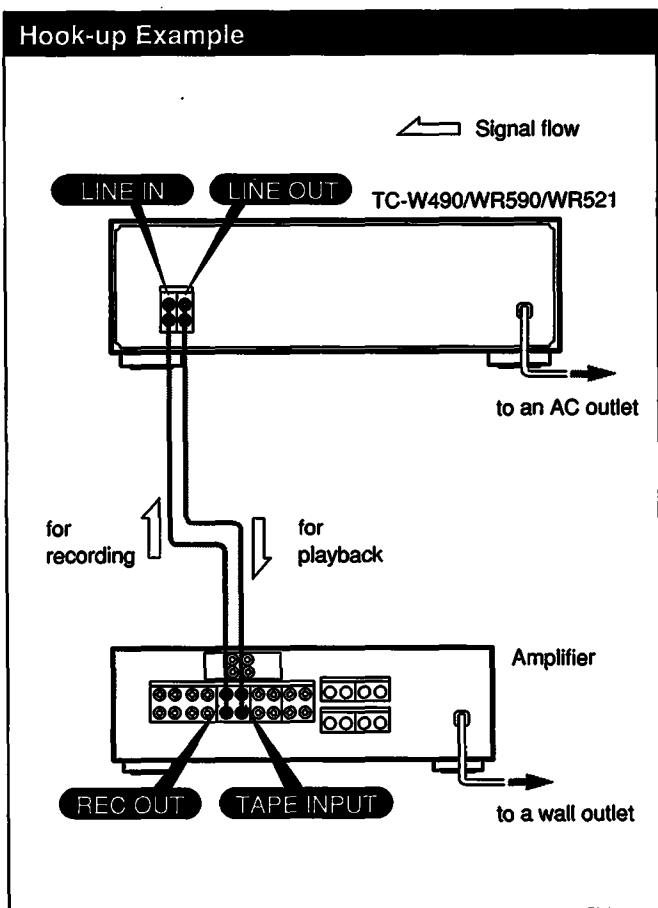
Hooking Up the System

Before You Begin

- Turn off the power to all equipment to be connected before making any connection.
- Note that the red plug of the supplied connecting cord is for right-channel (R) connection and the white plug for left-channel (L) connection.
- The connecting cords should be fully inserted into the jacks. A loose connection may cause hum pickup.

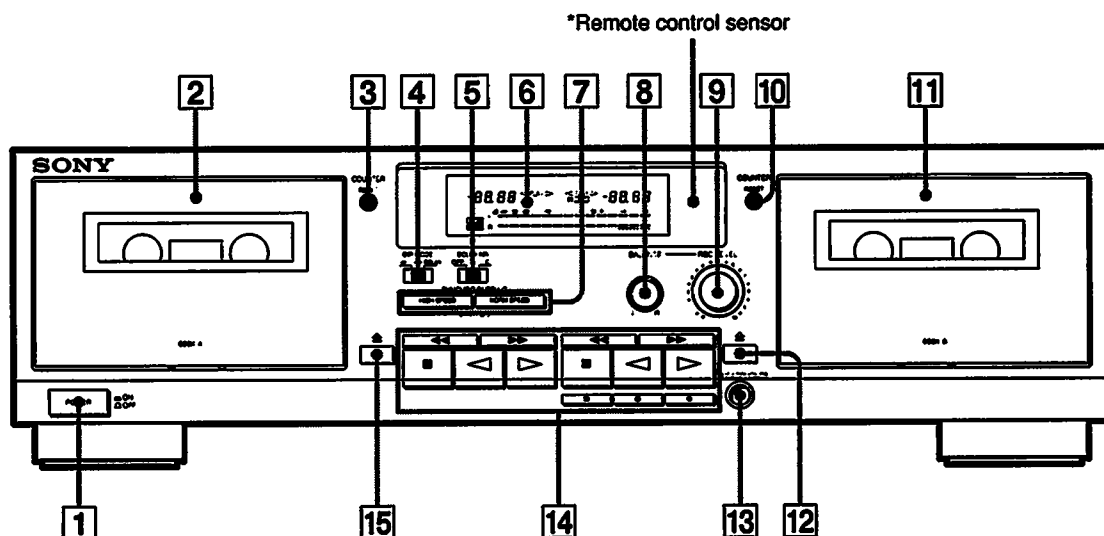


Hook-up Example



Identifying the Parts

Front Panel



(The illustration shows the TC-WR590.)



For details, refer to the page number indicated in parenthesis.

- 1** POWER switch
- 2** Deck A
- 3** COUNTER RESET button (deck A)
- 4** DIR (direction) MODE switch (TC-WR590/WR521 only) (pages 7, 8, 10 and 14)
- 5** DOLBY NR (Dolby noise reduction) switch (pages 7 and 10)
- 6** Display panel
- 7** SYNCHRO DUBBING buttons (page 14)
HIGH SPEED button
NORM (normal) SPEED button
- 8** BALANCE control (page 10)
- 9** REC (recording) LEVEL control (pages 10 and 11)
- 10** COUNTER RESET button (deck B)
- 11** Deck B
- 12** ▲ (eject) button (deck B)
- 13** HEADPHONES (headphones) jack (stereo phone jack) (TC-W490/WR590 only)

- 14** Tape operation buttons
◀◀ (leftward fast winding) button
▶▶ (rightward fast winding) button
■ (stop) button
◀ (reverse play) button (TC-WR590/WR521 only)
▶ (forward play) button
|| PAUSE button (deck B only)
○ REC MUTE (record muting) button (deck B only) (page 13)
● REC (recording) button (deck B only)
- 15** ▲ (eject) button (deck A)

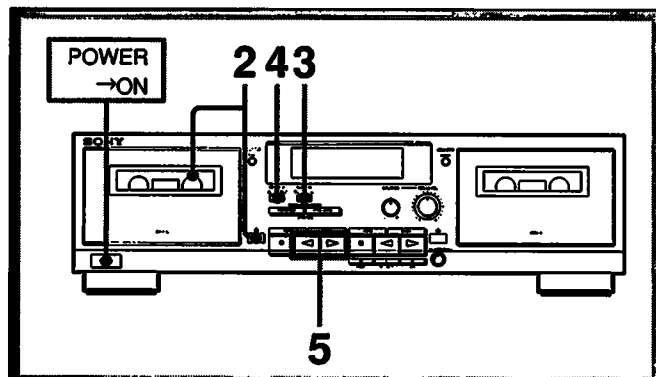
*Remote control sensor

You can remotely control this cassette deck with:

- A remote commander that came with a Sony amplifier or receiver if it has the  mark and cassette deck control capability.
- Any optional Sony remote commander with the  mark and cassette deck control capability.

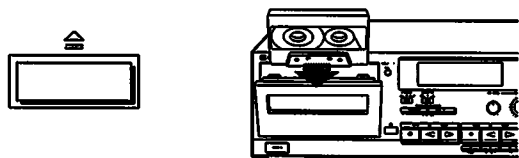
Playing Back

Follow the procedure below to play back a cassette on deck A or B.



1 Turn on the amplifier and select the tape function.

2 Insert a cassette.



3 Set DOLBY NR to the same position that was used when the cassette was recorded.



4 Set DIR MODE (TC-WR590/WR521 only).

To play back to the end of one side only	
To play back both sides continuously*	

* After playing back five times, the deck automatically stops.

5 Press ◀ or ▶ to start playback.

To play back from the front side, press ▶.

To play back from the reverse side, press ◀ (TC-WR590/WR521 only).

The tape direction lights up to show the side you are listening.

To stop playback, press the ■ button.

To stop playback momentarily, press the || button (only on deck B).

To restart play, press the ||, ◀ or ▶ button.

To fastwind a tape rightward, press the ►► button.

To fastwind a tape leftward, press the ◀◀ button.

Is it necessary to set the tape type being used?

No. The deck has an automatic tape type detection system.

To change to recording mode during playback

Keeping the ◀ or ▶ button pressed, press the ● button. The unit immediately switches from playback to recording without stopping the tape. This is useful when editing previously recorded material.

When decks A and B are in playback mode

Only playback from deck A will be audible.

What is the Dolby NR system?

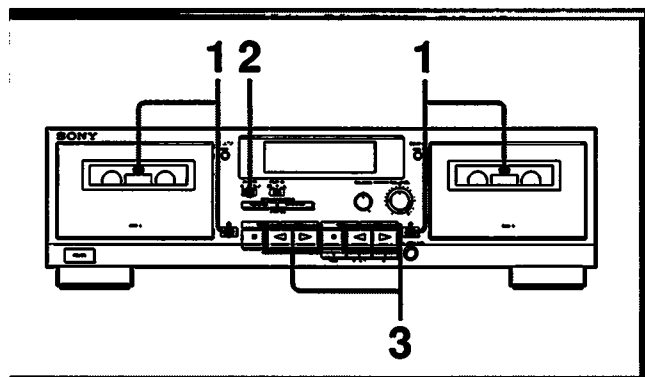
The Dolby NR (noise reduction) system reduces tape hiss noise in low-level, high-frequency signals by boosting the signals during recording and lowering them during playback.

Note

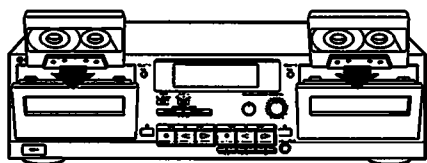
The Dolby HX PRO system is effective only during recording, not during playback (TC-W490/WR590 only).

Playing Back Both Decks in Succession — Relay Play

The Relay Play function plays back cassettes in deck A and deck B continuously and in consecutive order.



1 Insert cassettes into both decks.



2 Set DIR MODE to RELAY (TC-WR590/WR521 only).



3 Press ◀ or ▶ to start playback of the cassette to be listened to first.

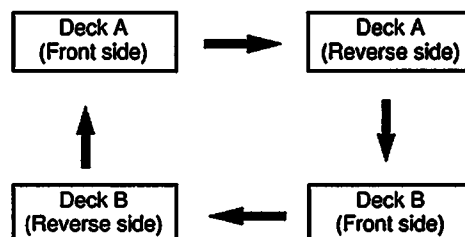
To play back from the front side, press ▶.

To play back from the reverse side, press ◀ (TC-WR590/WR521 only).

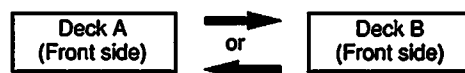
Playback sequence of Relay Play

Relay Play always follows the sequence below regardless of where playback starts. After playing back five times, Relay Play automatically stops.

TC-WR590/WR521



TC-W490



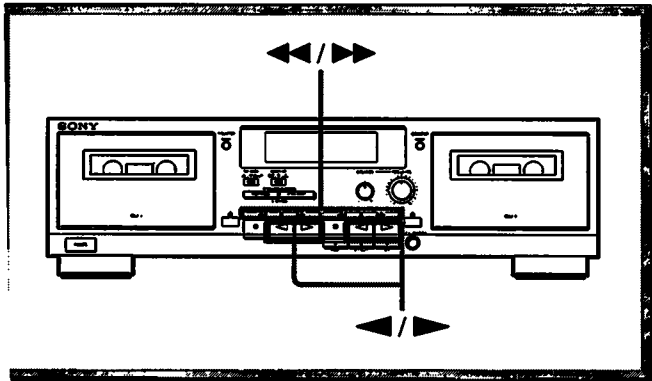
Playing back more than two cassettes in succession
Replacing cassettes that have finished playing with new ones allows you to play back two or more cassettes alternately on each deck.

To stop relay play

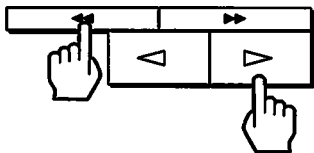
Press the ■ button of the deck playing.

Playing Back Automatically After Rewinding — Auto Play

The Auto Play function automatically starts playing back a cassette after fast winding it to the beginning.



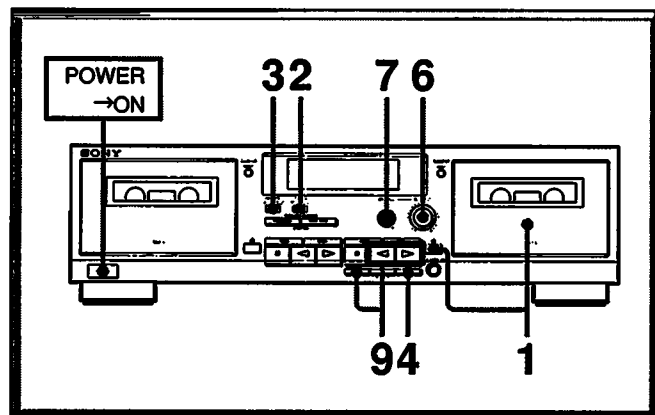
While pressing ► or ◀, press ◀◀ or ►►.



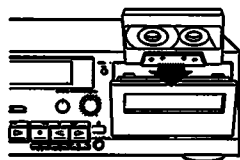
From the beginning of...	While pressing...
front side	►, press ◀◀.
reverse side (TC-WR590/ WR521 only)	◀, press ►►.

Recording (Only on Deck B)

Follow this procedure to record a source on a cassette (deck B only).



1 Insert a cassette into deck B.



2 Set DOLBY NR.



3 Select the side(s) to be recorded (TC-WR590/WR521 only).

To record on one side	
To record on both sides	

Note

Even at the position, recording automatically stops when the tape reaches the end of reverse side.

4 Press to enter the recording pause mode.

Note

The direction indicator for the side opposite the specified one will flash for three seconds to indicate that recording is possible on that side also. If, however, the tab for that side has been removed to prevent recording, the indicator will not flash (TC-WR590/WR521 only). If the tab has been removed from either side A or B, recording is impossible on the side(s). To record a cassette for recording, cover the respective slot with tape. See "To Protect a Recording" on page 12.



5 Play the program source to be recorded.

6 Turn REC LEVEL to adjust the recording level.

See "Adjusting the Recording Level" on page 11.



7 Turn BALANCE to adjust the balance.



8 Restart the program source, if required.

(Continued on next page.)

(Continued from previous page.)

9 Start recording.

• TC-WR590/WR521

To record on the front side of the cassette	
When ▷ is on	Press ► once or .
When ◁ is on	Press ► twice.

To record on the reverse side of the cassette	
When ◁ is on	Press ◁ once or .
When ▷ is on	Press ◁ twice.

• TC-W490

Press ► or ||.

Note

Pressing ◁ or ► twice will cause the unit first to change tape direction and then start recording in that direction.

To stop recording
Press the ■ button.

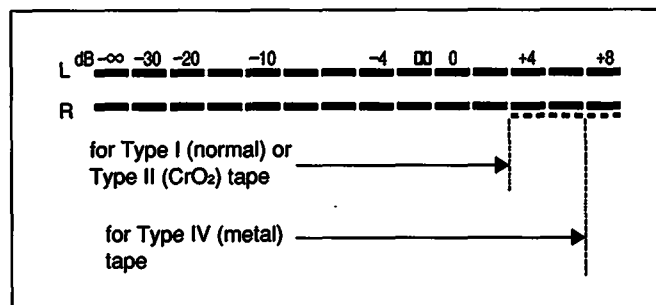
Adjusting the Recording Level

The optimum recording level, which differs according to the tape type, is indicated on the PEAK LEVEL METER for each tape type.

Adjust the REC LEVEL control as high as possible without exceeding the recommended range for the tape type being used.

PEAK LEVEL METER readings by tape type

Recommended maximum PEAK LEVEL METER readings.



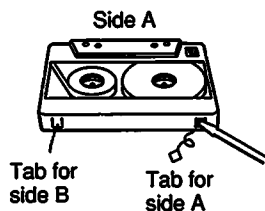
Tips on recording level adjustment

- If the recording level setting is too high, the recording will be distorted; if it is too low, the tape will produce a hissing sound. Therefore, the recording level should be set as high as possible without causing distortion.
- If the program source to be recorded has many high frequency signals, set the level to a relatively low position.

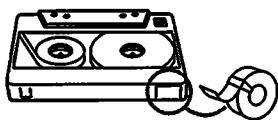
Recording (Only on Deck B)

To Protect a Recording

To protect a recording on side A or B
Break out the respective tab.

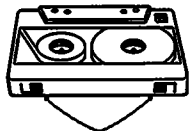


To recover a cassette for recording
Cover the respective slot with tape.

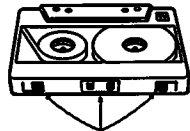


When using Type II (CrO₂) or Type IV (metal) cassettes
Be careful not to cover the detector slots which are necessary for automatic tape type detection.

Type II (CrO₂) cassette
and its detector slots



Type IV (metal) cassette
and its detector slots



Cassette Care

- Avoid touching the tape surface of a cassette to prevent contamination of the heads by dirt, dust, or oil on the skin.
- Keep cassettes away from equipment with magnets, such as speakers and amplifiers, as erasure or distortion of the recorded tape could occur.
- Do not expose cassettes to direct sunlight, extremely cold temperatures, or moisture.

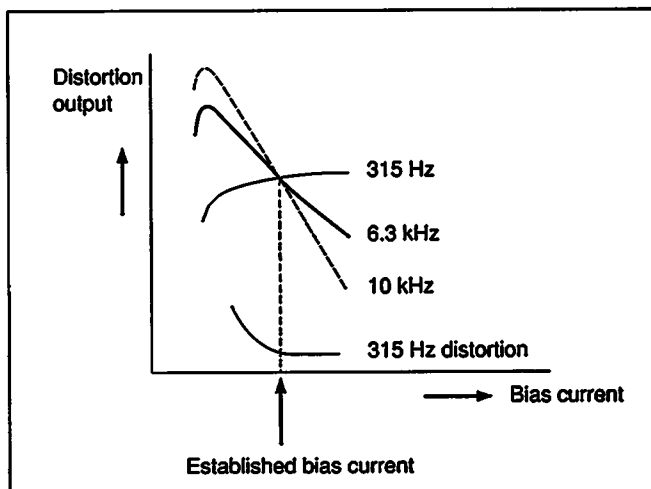
Note on cassettes longer than 90 minutes

The use of cassettes longer than 90 minutes is not recommended except for long continuous playback.

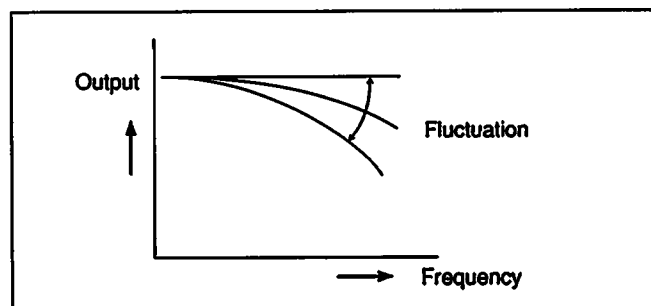
What is the Dolby HX PRO system? (TC-W490/WR590 only)

The Dolby HX PRO system provides linearity in high-range frequency response during recording. Tapes recorded with this system retain the same high quality even when played back on other tape decks.

As shown below, characteristics such as output level and distortion differ widely according to the bias (high-frequency) current.



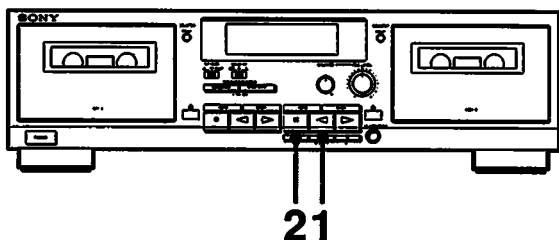
In conventional systems (see diagram below), the bias current is susceptible to variations in certain recording signals which may cause fluctuations in frequency response, distortion, or other unwanted characteristics.



With the Dolby HX PRO system, the effective bias amount added to the bias current is controlled in millisecond units to greatly reduce distortion, improving linearity in high-range response and ensuring high-intensity recording with minimal distortion and noise.


Inserting a Blank Space during Recording — Record Muting

The Record Muting function allows you to insert a four-second blank to replace unwanted input with a blank of any desired length.



- 1 While recording, press  and release it immediately.**

The REC indicator starts to flash. During this time, no incoming signals are recorded on the tape.


After four seconds, the  indicator lights up and the unit enters recording pause mode.






- 2 Press  to resume recording.**



To create a blank longer than four seconds

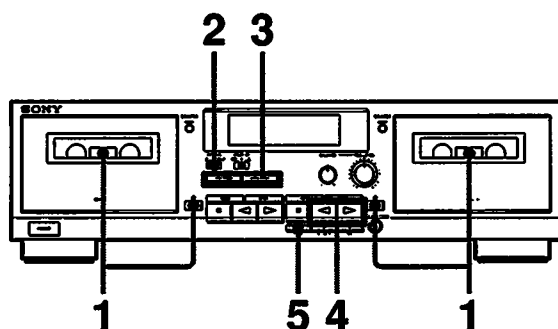
Press the  button for the desired length of time. After four seconds, the REC indicator flashes with greater rapidity.

When you release the  button, the  indicator lights up and the unit goes into recording pause mode.

Press the  button to resume recording.

Dubbing a Tape

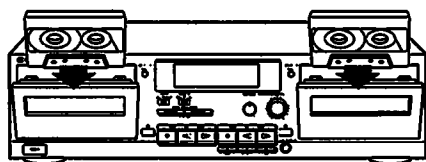
Use the dubbing function to copy a tape in deck A to a tape in deck B. High speed dubbing is convenient for dubbing entire tapes while normal-speed dubbing is handy for tape editing.



1 Insert cassettes into both tape decks.

Recorded tape
into deck A

Blank tape
into deck B



2 Select the direction mode (TC-WR590/WR521 only).

One side	
Both sides	<p>Dubbing of the reverse side starts independently of deck A.</p>
	<p>Dubbing of the reverse side starts simultaneously with deck A.</p>

3 Press HIGH SPEED or NORM SPEED to select the dubbing speed.

SYNCHRO DUBBING
HIGH SPEED NORM SPEED



4 Select the side on which to start dubbing.

To dub from the front side, press ►.

To dub from the reverse side, press ◀ (TC-WR590/WR521 only).

5 Press II on deck B to start dubbing.



To stop dubbing

During normal-speed dubbing, press the ■ button on deck B. During high-speed dubbing, press the ■ button on either deck A or B.

During high-speed dubbing

Only the ■ button is operative.

If the NORM or HIGH SPEED indicator flashes three times

Either one or both tabs of the cassette inserted into deck B have been removed, making dubbing impossible for that side. Cover the slot(s) with tape (see page 12).

Is it necessary to adjust the recording level and select the Dolby NR system?

It is unnecessary since the tape in deck B is automatically recorded with the same recording level and Dolby noise reduction system as the original in deck A.

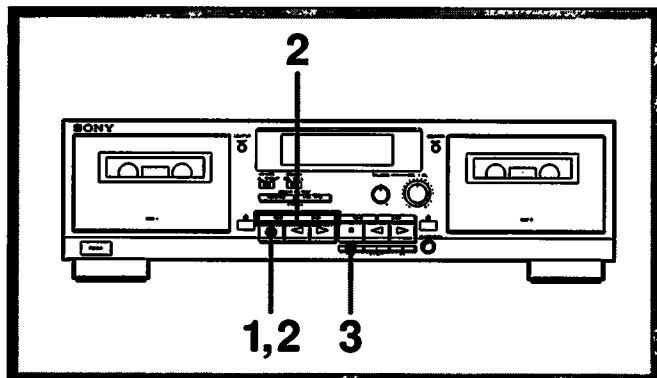
The Dolby system must, however, be set to match the tape in deck A when the sound is monitored during normal-speed dubbing.

Notes on tape dubbing

- Do not change the dubbing speed setting during tape dubbing.
- If the sound is affected by the proximity of a television set during high-speed dubbing, turn the television set off or move it away from the deck.

Dubbing Only Desired Portions

Follow this procedure to dub only desired portions of selections. Note that this is only possible in the normal-speed dubbing mode.



- 1** Press ■ on deck A at the start of a selection to be skipped:

Deck A enters the stop mode and deck B enters the recording pause mode.



- 2** Locate the desired portion on deck A.



or



- 3** Press || on deck B to resume dubbing.



PAUSE

Maintenance

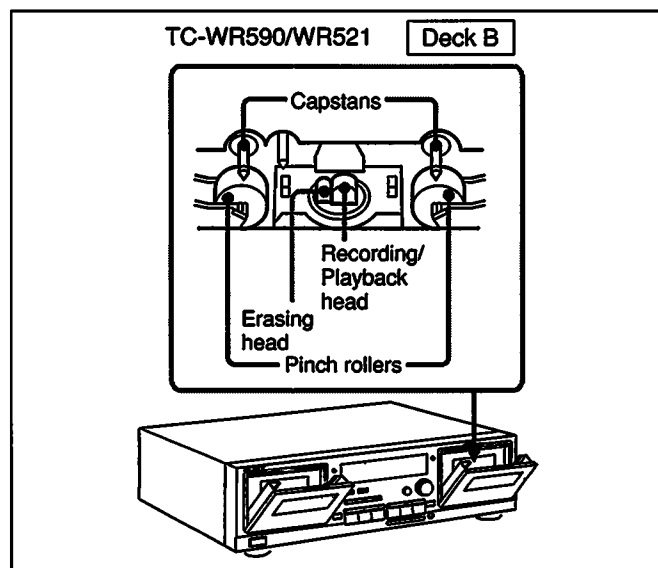
Cleaning the Heads and Tape Path

Clean all surfaces over which the tape travels after every ten hours of operation to guard against:

- low-quality sound
- a decrease in sound level
- excessive wow, flutter or drop-out
- incomplete erasure
- impairment of recording function

To obtain high-quality recorded sound, cleaning before every recording is recommended.

- 1 Press \triangle to open the cassette holder. Grasp the front holder on both sides and gently lift to remove it.**
- 2 With the unit turned off, wipe the heads, the pinch rollers and the capstans with a cotton swab slightly moistened with alcohol or a commercially available cleaning fluid for tape decks.**
- 3 Replace the cassette holder.**



Do not insert a cassette until the cleaned areas are completely dry.

Demagnetizing the Heads

After 20 to 30 hours of use, or when you notice hiss and/or loss of high frequencies, the residual magnetism built up on the heads should be removed.

- 1 Turn off the power.**
- 2 Demagnetize the heads with any commercially available demagnetizer. Refer to the instruction manual of the demagnetizer for detailed instructions.**

Cleaning the Cabinet

Clean the cabinet, panel and controls with a soft cloth slightly moistened with a mild detergent solution. Do not use any type of abrasive pad, scouring powder or solvents such as alcohol or benzene.

Specifications

Recording system 4-track 2-channel stereo
 Fast winding time Approx. 90 sec. (with Sony C-60 cassette)
 Bias AC bias
 Signal-to-noise ratio (at peak level)

Cassette (Dolby NR OFF)	Type IV (Sony Metal-Select/S)	Type II (Sony UX-S)	Type I (Sony HF-S)
	58 dB	57 dB	55 dB

Measured at peak level weighted without NR. The S/N is improved by about 15 dB at 500 Hz and by about 20 dB about 1 kHz with Dolby-C NR on, and by 5 dB at 1 kHz and by 10 dB about 5 kHz with Dolby-B NR on.

Harmonic distortion

0.4% (with Sony Type I, 160 nWb/m, 315 Hz, 3rd H.D.)
 1.8% (with Sony Type IV, 250 nWb/m, 315 Hz, 3rd H.D.)

Frequency response (Dolby NR OFF)

Cassette Model	Type IV cassette (Sony Metal-Select/S)	Type II cassette (Sony UX-S)	Type I cassette (Sony HF-S)
TC-W490/WR590	30 - 18,000 Hz (±3 dB, IEC) 30 - 13,000 Hz [±3 dB (-4 dB) recording]	30 - 17,000 Hz (±3 dB, IEC)	30 - 15,000 Hz (±3 dB, IEC)
TC-WR 521	30 - 15,000 Hz (±3 dB, IEC) 30 - 13,000 Hz [±3 dB (-4dB) recording]	30 - 15,000 Hz (±3 dB, IEC)	30 - 14,000 Hz (±3 dB, IEC)

Wow and flutter ±0.14% W.Peak (IEC)
 0.08% W.RMS (NAB)
 ±0.19% W.Peak (DIN)

Inputs

Line inputs (phono jacks)	Sensitivity	0.16 V
	Input impedance	47 kilohms

Outputs

Line outputs (phono jacks)	Rated output level	0.5 V at a load impedance of 47 kilohms
	Load impedance	Over 10 kilohms
Headphones (stereo phone jack)	Output level	1 mW at a load impedance of 32 ohms (except TC-WR521)

General

Power requirements Model for U.S.A. and Canada:
 120 V AC, 60 Hz
 Model for the United Kingdom:
 240 V AC (or 220 V AC adjustable by Sony personnel), 50/60 Hz

Power consumption 23 W

Dimensions

TC-W490/WR590

Approx. 430 × 123 × 285 mm (w/h/d)
 (17 × 4 ⁷/₈ × 11 ¹/₄ inches) including projecting parts and controls

TC-WR521

Approx. 430 × 118 × 285 mm (w/h/d)
 (17 × 4 ³/₄ × 11 ¹/₄ inches) including projecting parts and controls
 Approx. 4.5 kg (9 lbs 15 oz)

Weight

Supplied accessories

Audio connecting cords (2)

Design and specifications are subject to change without notice.

Note

This appliance conforms with EEC Directive 87/308/EEC regarding interference suppression.

Troubleshooting Guide

The following trouble checks will help you correct the most common problems encountered with your tape deck. Should any problems persist after you have made these checks, consult your nearest Sony dealer.

Before proceeding with these trouble checks, verify that:

- The power cord is firmly connected.
- Amplifier connections are firmly made.
- Heads, capstans and pinch rollers are clean.
- The amplifier controls and switches are set correctly.

Function Buttons and Tape Transport Problems

Symptom	Cause	Remedy
The function buttons do not activate.	The cassette holder is not fully closed.	Close the holder completely.
	The cassette is not properly inserted.	Insert cassette correctly.
	Button was pressed immediately after power was turned on.	Wait until the ■ indicator stops flashing.
The ● button does not activate.	There is no cassette in the holder.	Insert a cassette.
	A tab has been removed from the cassette.	Cover the slot with tape (page 12).
Automatic shut-off mechanism activates before the tape comes to its end.	The tape is slack.	Take up the tape slack.
	The cassette shell is deformed.	Use another cassette.
Excessively loud tape transport noise during fast winding.	This noise is caused by the cassette and does not signify a mechanical problem.	—
The ▲ button does not function.	This occurs when the unit is playing back or recording.	Press the ■ or ■■ button to stop playing back or recording first.

Recording and Playback Problems

Symptom	Cause	Remedy
Recording or playback cannot be made or there is a decrease in sound level.	The recording/playback and erasing heads are either dirty or magnetized.	Clean or demagnetize the heads.
	Improper connection.	Make connections properly (page 5).
	Improper setting of the amplifier controls.	Set the amplifier controls to the appropriate positions
Excessive wow, flutter or dropout.	The head, capstan or pinch roller is dirty.	Clean in accordance with instructions (page 16).
Incomplete erasure.	The erasing head is dirty.	Clean the erasing head.
Increased noise or poor reproduction in high frequencies.	The head is magnetized.	Demagnetize the head.
Unbalanced tone in high frequencies.	Improper setting of the DOLBY NR switch.	During playing back, set the switch to the same position used in recording.
	The unit is placed near a television set.	Move the deck away from the television set.

Noise

Symptom	Cause	Remedy
Hum noise.	The unit is stacked on or under the amplifier.	Separate the unit.
Noise is recorded.	The recording was made near equipment such as a television set or a color monitor, and interference has affected the recording on the tape and the Dolby NR system.	Move the unit away from the television set or color monitor.