

DIGITAL AUDIO TAPES

About DAT

Digital Audio Tape (DAT) was the accepted professional mastering format during the 1990's. The digital signal is recorded onto a tiny cassette tape which moves very slowly over a fast revolving head in a similar fashion to a VHS video recorder. Various lengths of digital tape were produced, typically from 15 to 120 minutes. The 16 bit system uses sample rates of 48.0 kHz (for best quality), with an option of 44.1 kHz to match that of the Compact Disc and Minidisc without using further digital conversion. 32 kHz sampling and 'long play' options are provided on some machines.

Sound quality can be excellent, but transport and alignment issues made the format somewhat unreliable and very expensive to repair. This probably hastened the demise of the format and it has now been largely replaced by hard disc and solid state recording.

Transfer of audio

Your digital tape is played on a pro-quality deck and recorded into a computer programme. Next the file is processed, including optimising the levels to provide the best playback volume and (where appropriate) inserting markers to allow searching for specific tracks. When this is complete, the programme is 'burnt' to a disc and a simple text label printed and fitted. Finally, the CD is tested for correct operation and supplied with a library case.

It should be noted that a recordable CD can hold an absolute maximum of 80 minutes, so longer running times will require more than one CD.

Please ring us on **01329 238522** for further details.