ESOTERIC

# GRANDIOSO E1 Phono Preamplifier

254601

Following in the footsteps of the T1 turntable, which revolutionized the history of vinyl playback with its Esoteric MagneDrive system, the E1 phono stage preamplifier reveals the true sound of the MC cartridge with its unique balanced current input.
Vinyl is the most classic way of reproducing music, but the E1 is the next step in the quest for ever more exquisite realism, with bold infusion of new technology and creativity. Our aim is to move the souls of hi-fi enthusiasts with a sound that no one has ever heard from a vinyl playback system before.
This is the spirit of the ‘Vinyl Renaissance’ that we seek.

PRODUCT DETAILS

**Unique MC Balanced Current Inputs Reveal True MC Cartridge Sonic Signature**
The Grandioso E1 is equipped with three Esoteric original MC balanced current inputs (XLR), which accept the “current” generated by the MC cartridge as a balanced signal. It is not widely known that the output current of MC cartridges is significantly higher than that of MM cartridges. The MC balanced current input is the most efficient and lossless way to extract the full energy generated by the MC cartridge, compared to the conventional “voltage input,” which converts the output current to a “significantly low” micro-voltage via a load resistor. This approach allows the sound inherent in the MC cartridge to be reproduced with all the performance’s reality intact. Additionally, there is no need to worry about impedance matching between the MC cartridge and the phono stage, ensuring that the best sound can always be extracted from the MC cartridge.

**MC Balanced Current Input – Technology**
MC cartridges use smaller coils than MM cartridges to keep vibrating systems lighter and capable of picking up finer musical details. As a result, the output “voltage” is generally about 1/20th of that of MM cartridges. However, the MC cartridge, with its low-impedance coil and powerful magnet outside the vibrating system, can output a much higher “current” than the MM cartridge. In other words, the MC cartridge is a power generator that excels at delivering power in the form of “current” rather than “voltage.”

In the case of a conventional “voltage input,” the original rich current is converted by the load resistance into a tiny voltage signal of about 1/20th of that of an MM cartridge, resulting in various issues, such as S/N degradation due to the need for large amplification in the following stage, losses due to resistance, and unwanted changes in sonic characteristics due to impedance mismatch. On the

© 2026 All rights reserved. Note: Specifications and design are subject to change without notice.

other hand, the MC balanced current input allows the high power (high current) of the MC cartridge to be fed directly into the discrete amplifier, enabling the most efficient signal extraction without loss. Additionally, by feeding both ends (+/–) of the MC cartridge's coil into a balanced amplifier, a signal can be extracted without noise. By using transistors originally designed for current amplification in the gain element, the E1 further enhances design rationality.

**Optical Cartridge Input**
Optical pickup cartridges use an internal LED and a light receiver (PD: photodiode) to optically detect the movement of the cantilever and output it as an analog music signal. The E1 is equipped with a pair of RCA input sockets dedicated to optical cartridges. Since optical cartridges require completely different amplification and equalization methods compared to MM/MC cartridges, the E1 includes an independent, dedicated, fully balanced/dual mono phono stage preamplifier. This unique balanced/dual mono phono stage preamp circuit with an external power supply, discrete low-feedback power regulator, allows you to enjoy the crisp sound of an optical cartridge at the highest possible quality.

**Voltage Input for MM / High-Output MC Cartridge**
The E1 has a pair of RCA input sockets for high-output voltage cartridges, such as MM, MC with an integral transformer, and high-impedance/high-output MC cartridges. The input signal is instantly balanced and amplified by a fully discrete main phono stage preamplifier circuit, which is shared with the balanced current input, ensuring the same uncompromising, superior sound quality as with the balanced current input. The load impedance and capacitance can be adjusted to match the phono cartridge in use.

**Fully Balanced / Dual Mono / Discrete Variable EQ, Gain Amplifier Circuitry**
Signals from the MC balanced current input and the MM/MC voltage input are amplified and EQ'd by a two-stage variable EQ gain amplifier circuit shared by each input. The amplification system uses a CR type for natural sound quality. We have achieved high sound quality through careful component selection and a fully balanced, dual mono, discrete configuration. The amplification gain can be finely adjusted to suit the phono cartridge.

**Variable EQ Curve Selection**
Despite its simple and elegant appearance, the E1 is capable of adjusting various EQ curves at the level of professional studio equipment. Six typical EQ curves (RIAA, Columbia, Decca, NAB, Teldec and AES) can be recalled at the touch of a button on the remote control. Additionally, up to four custom EQ settings can be preset by individually adjusting three EQ parameters (Low Limit, Turnover, and Roll-Off). Reference values for setting the various EQ curves are provided in the owner's manual to help you achieve the best sound quality from any vinyl.

**Useful Features for Vinyl Playback**
The E1 is equipped with a demagnetizing function. By simply playing a vinyl record for about 30 seconds with the "Demag" button on, the magnetized iron core of the MC cartridge or step-up transformer is demagnetized, restoring the original sound quality. Additionally, a subsonic filter is provided to reduce low frequencies caused by vinyl warping, and a "Mono" mode is provided for playback of monaural recordings.

**Esoteric-HCLD (High Current Line Driver)**
Following in the footsteps of the flagship Grandioso C1X preamplifier, the E1 is equipped with the Esoteric HCLD (High Current Line Driver), which has an amazingly fast slew rate of 2,000V/s, mounted in parallel on a signal line. The signal is sent to the preamplifier with high speed and power, resulting in a dynamic sound.

**ES-Link Analog**
The Grandioso E1 is equipped with a pair of RCA/XLR outputs for connection to a preamplifier, and the XLR output can be switched to "ES-Link Analog" output. ES-Link Analog is Esoteric's proprietary current transmission method. By connecting devices that support this method, it is possible to reproduce sound as if it were being played directly from an analog console in a recording studio. Compared to conventional voltage transmission, this method transmits approximately 100 times more current, allowing it to convey the full energy of the music. The sonic signature of ES-Link Analog is powerful, live and dimensional. In principle, the impedance of the connecting cable has no effect, allowing the input

© 2026 All rights reserved. Note: Specifications and design are subject to change without notice.

and output signals to remain extremely identical.

**Two Chassis Configuration**
The E1 features a two-chassis configuration that separates the power supply and control section from the main phono stage preamplifier unit. By isolating the power, control, and display circuits—which are sources of vibration and noise—the audio signal can be amplified with exceptional purity.

**Four Independent Power Supplies**
The power/control unit is separated from the main unit to form an extremely large 4-system independent power supply and is connected to the main unit via three dedicated DC cables. The power supply for the MC/MM phono stage uses a complete dual-mono configuration with independent power transformers and rectifiers on the left and right sides. The phono stage for optical cartridges and the control circuits also have their own dedicated power supply sections. These four independent power supply systems prevent mutual interference between circuits, enhancing the E1's pure and powerful reproduction capabilities.

**Ultra-Low Noise Logic Control**
The logic-based control unit, which manages operation and display, is integrated into the power supply and physically isolated from the main unit. Additionally, all control signals connecting the power/control unit to the main unit are electrically isolated from the audio circuitry by a large isolator circuit, ensuring pure sound reproduction.

**Centralized Remote Control**
By integrating and centralizing the logic control in the power supply, almost all functions, such as the equalizer curve and various settings, can be controlled from the listening position using the supplied remote control. In addition, the number of buttons on the front panel has been reduced to a minimum, further enhancing the Grandioso's elegant appearance. The result of advanced metal fabrication, the high-quality aluminum remote control is smartphone-sized and comfortable to hold, with a functional design that includes buttons on both sides for every operating scenario.

**Chassis Construction**
To achieve the singular design goal of "reproducing the master sound" the E1 chassis optimally controls all vibrations that affect sound quality. The mechanical engineering of the chassis is comparable to that of a Formula 1 car, with the balance between rigidity and flexibility pushed to the limit. The sleek and clean shape of the chassis is a testament to its high level of perfection. The cabinet, which requires rigidity, extensively utilizes heavyweight aluminum blocks to ensure no resonance, while the top panel features a semi-floating structure for a more open sound.

**Multi-Layer Chassis**
The chassis, which secures each circuit component, is a multi-layer construction using multiple steel plates. Each circuit component is mounted on a separate layer and arranged in a three-dimensional layout to minimize physical and electrical interference. In the power supply section, the circuit board and power transformer are also placed on different layers to suppress the transmission of transformer vibrations to the circuit board. The bottom chassis, on which the transformer is mounted, is laser-cut with precision slits, and Esoteric's unique pinpoint isolation feet effectively dissipate vibrations to the ground.

**Unique Pinpoint Isolation Foot (Patent No. JP 4075477, 3778108, and 7413773)**
Esoteric's unique patented isolation foot, which integrates a spike and spike pad, has been further refined and developed. Suspended from the lower chassis, the top of the foot connects to the lower chassis under the weight of the unit when placed. The top of the foot has been tapered to a conical shape to minimize the contact area between the chassis and the foot. The bottom of the foot (integral spike pad) is also concave in a ring shape so that it touches the floor only at the edges, with added slots to disperse resonant modes. By minimizing the contact area between the chassis and the foot, as well as between the spike pad and the floor, vibration control has been optimized, resulting in sharper focus and a more open sound.

**Included accessories**

© 2026 All rights reserved. Note: Specifications and design are subject to change without notice.

- AC power cord × 1
- DC power cord (male)× 2
- DC power cord (female)× 1
- Remote control (RC-1343)× 1
- Batteries for remote control × 2
- Owner’s manual × 1
- Warranty card × 1

## Specs

### Product Attributes

| | |
|---|---|
| EAN: | 4907034225521 |
| Manufacturer number: | GRANDIOSO E1 |
| Product weight: | 20.0 kilograms |

© 2026 All rights reserved. Note: Specifications and design are subject to change without notice.