

## Cleaning Rubber Rollers

*www.vintage-electronics.net*

This solution can be used on all rubber parts such as idlers, pinch rollers, and belts. It is easiest to clean the rubber parts if you can set the unit into play mode without a tape in or on the unit. On reel to reels you can do this by holding up the end of tape arm and pushing Play. For most cassette decks, you can leave the door open and put the unit into play. On some units you can take off the door bezel, close the door and clean the pinch roller through the opening. Some units have sensing switch at the top of the tape compartment that needs to be held to get the unit running without a tape in it.

With the unit in play mode, apply a soaked cotton cleaning swab onto the surface you wish to clean. You will normally see a lot of dirt coming off the rollers. Pinch rollers should be cleaned until you can no longer see the ring of residue around the roller where the tape comes into contact with the roller. It will usually take quite a few swabs depending on how dirty the unit is. To clean belts you can hold the swab against the belt lightly as it moves. Too much pressure and you may dislodge the belt. Belts are better replaced than cleaned when possible.

Small idlers in cassette decks can also be cleaned by setting them in motion and holding the swab against them as they turn. Large idlers in the older one motor reel to reel decks can also be cleaned. You will find with those, that they normally have a very hard and shiny surface on them. I normally take a very fine piece of sand paper and hold against the idler while it is turning to gently remove the slick surface. Then, proceed with cleaning the rollers just like with the pinch rollers. If cleaning of the large idler wheels does not give you the results you need, I highly recommend you get the rollers rebuilt by Terry at [WWW.terryrubberrollers.com](http://WWW.terryrubberrollers.com) The rollers come back like new.

This solution is also great for cleaning out old hard grease from the mechanism of reel to reel decks. It can be used for cleaning about anything metal in a unit. Just be careful around plastic case parts as it will leave a mark on them.