

ATI ATP8500.1

Owner's Manual Addendum

For those who have purchased an ATP8500.1 preamp/processor, or who have upgraded their ATP8500 to ".1" status.

All of the inputs, outputs, and controls found on the ATP8500 remain unchanged on the ATP8500.1. The main difference between the two versions is the addition of many useful new surround-sound modes in the ATP8500.1, and a few minor changes to the onscreen menu system.

ATP8500.1 Surround Modes

The original ATP8500 offers a selection of four sound modes (besides Dolby Digital and DTS): stereo, mono, Pro Logic, and music. The ATP8500.1 offers far more, giving you many additional options for surround-sound processing. The stereo and mono modes remain unchanged. The ATP8500.1's new modes include:

Dolby Digital EX®

Dolby Digital EX is the "6.1-channel" version of Dolby Digital 5.1. It decodes an additional surround channel, which feeds one or two speakers positioned in the back of your room. (Your existing surround speakers should be placed to the sides of your favorite listening position.) This mode gives you more realistic "fly-over" effects, such as when spaceships in sci-fi movies appear to pass overhead as the sound moves from the back of your room to the front. It also creates a more realistic sense of ambience, in scenes featuring wind noise, rain sounds, etc.

When you activate the right back and left back channels through the ATP8500.1's speaker size menu, the ATP8500.1 automatically processes all Dolby Digital 5.1 signals in Dolby Digital EX. Dolby Digital EX works best with movies specifically encoded for EX; a list of these movies can be found at www.dolby.com. However, Dolby Digital EX processing is designed to work well with almost any material encoded in standard Dolby Digital 5.1.

DTS-ES Matrix®

DTS-ES Matrix works almost exactly like Dolby Digital EX, with one important difference: The processing is activated automatically by a digital "flag" encoded on DTS-ES Matrix soundtracks. Non-ES-encoded DTS material will be reproduced in 5.1 channels.

For information on ES Matrix-encoded movies, visit www.dtsonline.com.

DTS ES-Discrete®

Like DTS-ES Matrix, ES Discrete adds a sixth, back-surround channel that can be reproduced using one or two additional surround speakers. However, unlike ES Matrix and Dolby Digital EX, the extra channel in ES Discrete is not derived using matrix decoding. Instead, it is a fully discrete channel, and therefore offers the potential for more dramatic effects than either ES Matrix or Dolby Digital EX can produce. As with ES Matrix, the ATP8500.1 automatically activates the ES Discrete mode when it encounters the digital "flag" included in all ES Discrete soundtracks.

ES Discrete is currently available only on DVD. For information on ES Discrete DVDs, visit www.dtsonline.com.

Dolby Pro Logic II®

Pro Logic II derives 5.1-channel surround sound from any stereo material, including stereo CDs, FM broadcasts, satellite and cable TV, VHS stereo VCRs, and DVDs encoded in two-channel Dolby Digital or PCM digital. It works with ordinary stereo material, and material encoded in Dolby Surround (such as VHS tapes).

The ATP8500.1 offers three different modes of Pro Logic II: Movie, Music, and DPL (original Pro Logic).

Movie: This mode is intended mainly for use with Dolby Surround-encoded material. Use it when you're watching TV shows, VHS tapes, DVDs with Dolby Digital 2.0 or PCM soundtracks, and non-Dolby Digital laserdiscs. It incorporates auto-balancing, which keeps dialogue locked to the center of the screen even if left-to-right channel balance errors exist in the program material or in the source device (DVD player, VHS deck, etc.). Movie mode requires no adjustments.

This mode is also appropriate for material specifically encoded for Pro Logic II, such as many games for the Nintendo GameCube.

Music: Use this mode for CDs, FM stereo, satellite music channels, or other high-quality stereo music sources. Music mode varies from Movie mode in that it does not use auto-balancing (because many music recordings have vocals mixed to one side or the other), and it also incorporates a slight treble reduction in the surround channels to keep the sound from becoming too "bright."

Music mode includes three special controls that let you tailor the sound to suit the recording, your speaker system, or your personal taste. We'll discuss these modes later in this addendum. The ATP8500.1 comes with these controls factory preset to sound good with most stereo material, so user adjustment is optional, not mandatory.

DPL (Pro Logic): Similar to the original Pro Logic decoding introduced in the '80s, this mode remains useful for low-quality stereo sources, such as audio cassettes, beat-up VHS tapes, or poorly received FM or TV broadcasts. It combines Pro Logic II's stereo surround channels into a single mono surround channel (as in original Pro Logic), and filters out frequencies above 7 kilohertz in the surround channel. These alterations make the effects of noise, scratches, pops, etc., less noticeable.

DTS Neo: 6®

Neo: 6 produces surround sound from any stereo source: VHS tapes, TV broadcasts, DVDs with stereo soundtracks, etc. It differs in one important way from Pro Logic II in that it produces up to 6.1 channels of sound instead of 5.1, making use of the back surround speakers. Thus, it has the potential to produce more dramatic surround effects. Although Neo: 6 and Pro Logic II perform the same basic function, they can produce very different results. Using the surround mode selection buttons on the ATP8500.1's remote, you can easily switch between Neo: 6 and Pro Logic II, and choose the one you like best.

The ATP8500.1 offers two Neo: 6 modes: Cinema and Music.

Cinema: This mode is intended mostly for surround-encoded material, such as most VHS tapes, many TV shows, and most stereo DVDs. Cinema mode offers no adjustments.

Music: Use this mode with stereo CDs, FM stereo broadcasts, satellite music channels, and other stereo music sources. Music mode differs substantially from Cinema mode in that it leaves the sound in the front left and right channels unchanged, and adds extra ambience using the center and surround channels. As with the Cinema mode, it offers adjustment of Center Image, which we will discuss shortly.

Concert

Concert is one of three new modes that expands on the original Music mode found in the ATP8500. The Concert mode uses the surround channels to add substantial ambience and reverb to stereo recordings, much like the effect you would hear in a large concert hall. This mode works with any stereo music, from sources such as CD, FM stereo, and satellite music channels. It is most appropriate for music that is typically heard in a large auditorium, such as orchestral recordings and rock music. A reverb control in the ATP8500.1's Audio Setup menu lets you adjust the reverberance to your liking.

Club

Club mode is essentially a more restrained version of Concert mode, with less reverb added and the surround channels toned down substantially. Use this mode for music that might be heard in a smaller

venue, such as jazz, acoustic rock, and country music. As with the Concert mode, the reverb in Club mode is adjustable through the ATP8500.1's Audio Setup menu.

Natural

This is the most subtle of the ATP8500.1's proprietary music modes, with a very subdued surround effect and almost no reverb. It works best with music commonly heard in very small, intimate settings: chamber music, solo instrumental performances, and folk music. The reverb control in the ATP8500.1's Audio Setup menu lets you adjust the effect to your liking.

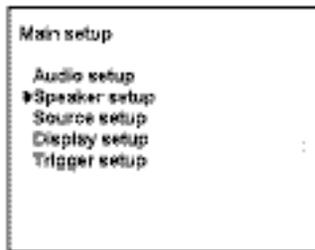
Stereo 96

This mode adds no surround-sound processing. It differs from ordinary stereo only in that it allows playback of stereo material recorded in 24-bit/96-kilohertz sound, which is found on some "audiophile" DVDs from companies including Chesky Records and Classic Records.

To use this mode, you must connect a DVD player using a digital connection, and the DVD player must be capable of outputting a 24/96 digital signal. The DVD player must also be set for "24/96 output" or "downconversion off," depending on how its onscreen menus are labeled.

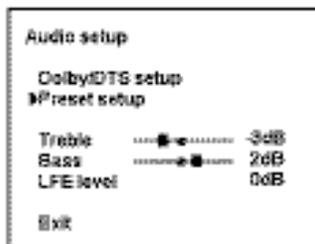
Changes in ATP8500.1 onscreen menus

The ATP8500.1 works almost exactly like the ATP8500, even though there have been several changes to the onscreen menu system. Below, we'll show you the new menus, and highlight any changes in operation.



Main Setup Menu

This menu has been simplified—the Tone Controls option has been moved into a new Audio Setup menu (which also contains the controls for the new surround modes found in the ATP8500.1). Level Setup and Delay Setup have been moved into the Speaker Setup menu.



Audio Setup Menu

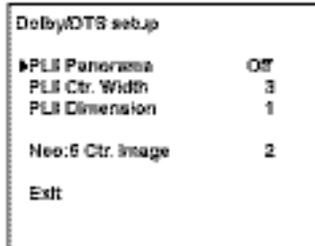
This new menu contains options for Dolby/DTS Setup, Preset Setup, Treble, Bass, LFE level, and Reverb. The first two access separate menus we will discuss below. The others can be adjusted directly from this menu as follows:

Treble, Bass: These controls can be adjusted to +/-12 dB, as in the ATP8500.

LFE Level: This control lets you attenuate the LFE (low-frequency effects) channel by as much as -10 dB in 5.1-channel Dolby Digital or DTS soundtracks. You may choose this option if you find the bass in movie soundtracks a bit overwhelming for your taste. Use the up/down buttons on the front panel or the remote to

move the cursor to this line, and then use the large wheel or the left/right buttons on the remote to adjust the level of attenuation.

Reverb: This control adjusts the level of ambience in the ATP8500.1's proprietary music modes (Concert, Club, and Natural). Use the up/down buttons on the front panel or the remote to move the cursor to this line, then use the large wheel or the left/right buttons on the remote to adjust the reverb from Dry (no reverb) to Wet (heavy reverb), with three steps in between.



Dolby/DTS Setup

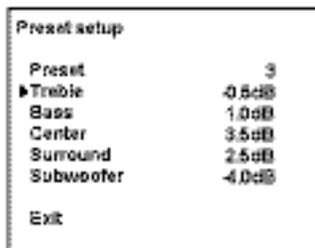
This menu lets you adjust the effects of the DTS Neo: 6 Cinema and Music modes, and the Pro Logic II Music mode. The control options are:

PLII Panorama: The Panorama control lets you create a greater “wraparound” effect in the Pro Logic II Music mode. It blends the sound of the front speakers more with the surround speakers, to create the effect of more sound coming from the sides of the room. Panorama options are limited to on/off; we recommend the off setting for most music listening.

PLII Center Width: This is the most useful of Pro Logic II Music’s three controls. It lets you blend some of the sound from the center channel into the right and left front speakers, creating less of a “hard center” effect. It’s adjustable in 8 steps from Min (no blend/full center channel) to Max (all sound from center blended into left and right; center speaker deactivated). Factory preset is 3, which works well for most music and most speaker systems, but you may wish to experiment—especially if your left and right front speakers are widely spaced, in which case a setting of 1 or 2 may be more pleasing.

PLII Dimension: This control functions somewhat like the fader in a car audio system; it adjusts the front/back “tilt” of the system, from -3 (minimum surround effect) to +3 (maximum surround effect). Factory preset is 0, which works well for most music, but music recordings that lack natural ambience may sound better at a setting of +1 or +2. Likewise, highly ambient recordings, such as those from audiophile record labels, may sound better at a setting of -1 or -2.

Neo: 6 Center Image: This control functions in the Neo: 6 Music mode. It creates a stronger or weaker center image by adjusting the level of the left and right front speakers. The control settings vary from 0 (minimum center image) to 5 (maximum center image). Factory preset is 2, which works well for most music and most speaker systems, but if you like a stronger center vocal sound, you might experiment with a setting of 3 or 4.



Preset Setup

This menu introduces a new feature: five preset tone/channel balance memories. (The ATP8500 presets were limited to treble and bass controls only.) Any of these memories can be stored as a preset for any source device connected to the ATP8500.1. For example, you could have preset 2 come up automatically whenever you switch to the DVD player input. You can also select any preset at any time through the ATP8500.1's onscreen menu system.

The presets offer +/-12 dB adjustment of treble and bass, and for the levels of the center channel, surround channels, and subwoofer.

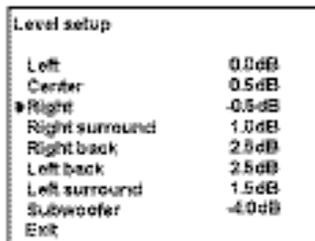
The possibilities are endless, but one to start with would be a "Night" preset, for listening late at night when others are sleeping. To create this preset, increase the levels of the center and surround channels by 3 dB or so, to make the dialogue and surround effects clearer when the system is turned down. Now decrease the subwoofer level by 6 dB or so, to minimize the possibility that loud bass in a movie soundtrack will disturb others.

To create a preset, first select the preset number by using the up/down buttons on the front panel or the remote to move the cursor to this line, then use the large wheel or the left/right buttons on the remote to select the preset number. Now adjust the various parameters in the same fashion. Be sure to select Exit at the bottom of the menu so that your settings are saved.



Speaker Setup

This menu now incorporates three submenus: Level Setup, Distance, and Size.



Level Setup

Only minor changes have been made to this menu. Right back and left back speaker level adjustment have been added, and LFE level adjustment has been moved to the Audio Setup menu. Also, you need not activate the channel level test tone through the Test Signal on/off menu item found in the ATP8500; with the ATP8500.1, the test tone is activated whenever you move the cursor to a particular channel.

Distance setup	
Left	12ft
Center	11ft
Right	12ft
Right surround	8ft
▶Right back	10ft
Left back	10ft
Left surround	7ft
Subwoofer	14ft
Exit	

Distance

This menu was called Delay on the ATP8500; some changes have been made to make the ATP8500.1 easier to set up. First, the adjustments are now made in feet, not milliseconds, so no arithmetic is required to figure out the proper settings—just measure the distances to your speakers and enter them using the menu. Separate adjustments have been added for left and right front channels, so they can be adjusted exactly the same way as the other channels in the system. Also, delay adjustments have been added for right back and left back channels, and for the subwoofer.

Size setup	
Main speakers	Large
Center speaker	Small
Surround speakers	Small
▶Back speakers	2 Small
Subwoofer	Yes
Subwoofer filter	On
Subwoofer frequency	80 Hz
Enhanced bass	Off
Exit	

Size

The speaker size menu works the same way as on the ATP8500, but two extra options have been added.

You can now deactivate the subwoofer filter, an option that may come in handy if you're using a powered subwoofer that has its own filter. In most cases, you will get best results by leaving the ATP8500.1's subwoofer filter on, but if your powered subwoofer offers a limited filter frequency adjustment range (up to, say, 120 Hz instead of the more common 180 or 200 Hz), you may get a better blend between your subwoofer and your main speakers by deactivating the ATP8500.1's subwoofer filter.

Also, this menu now offers an Enhanced Bass function, which slightly boosts the low and mid-bass regions to add a greater sense of "weight" and impact to movies and music. Try using this control if you feel the sound is insufficiently full for your taste. Its effects are subtle, so you stand no chance of "messing up" the sound if you use the Enhanced Bass function.

Source

This menu has been rearranged a bit, but it operates exactly the same way as the ATP8500's Source menu.

Display setup	
▶TV system	NTSC
Superimpose	On
Temporary disp.	Full
Video format	Auto
Distance units	Feet
OSD style	5
Exit	

Display

This menu has only one change: It now offers a selection of distance units for the Distance menu. You can choose from feet or meters.

Trigger

This menu works exactly the same way as the Trigger menu on the ATP8500, although a couple of new triggering options have been added. In addition to activating the triggers when the ATP-8500.1 is powered up or when a certain source is selected, you can now set the triggers to activate whenever a video signal appears at the ATP8500.1's inputs (you can choose composite, S-video, or component video signals to activate the trigger). You can also set any trigger to activate whenever any audio source or any video source is selected.