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# FAQ

## Gyr Video Head Cleaner Frequently Asked Questions

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**Overview:** The Gyr Video Head Cleaner (VHC) is a high performance cleaning system designed to help keep your VHS Time Lapse VCR running properly. In lieu of a trained technician hand cleaning a disassembled VCR, this tape is the next best thing. By effectively cleaning the video heads and tape path, your TLVCR will operate at peak video performance. Several aspects of the Gyr VHC make for the best cleaning solution available.

### VCR Periodic Maintenance

**Question: Do I really need to have the VCR heads cleaned regularly?**

**Answer:** Yes! The magnetic oxides on the videotape will continuously flake off, leaving a residue along the entire tape path and collect in the tape transport mechanism. Without periodic, effective cleaning, excessive harmful deposits will result. Eventually the residue builds up to the point where the video heads clog, reducing picture quality.

Deposits along the tape path can also impede linear tape movement, making it difficult to produce a stable picture. Excessive deposits could possibly cause the VCR to go into REEL LOCK, whereby the VCR transport shuts down the movement of tape to prevent jamming.

Besides using only recommended tape brands, you should still periodically clean the VCR tape path either by a trained technician or approved cleaning system.

**Question:** Does a Time Lapse VCR require more cleaning than a Consumer VCR?

**Answer:** Yes! The process of time-lapse recording produces much greater stress on the videotape and VCR. This reduces the life of the tape, and the transport accumulates harmful deposits at a faster rate. All the more reason to keep the key component of your security system running in top condition. Typically you don't know there's a problem until it's too late, when you've got a poor or unusable recording.

## Available VCR Cleaning Systems

**Question:** Aren't all VHS cleaning tapes the same?

**Answer:** Absolutely not! In fact, there is marked difference in the way most cleaning tapes operate. The most pertinent elements of a cleaning system can be categorized as follows.

### Cleaning Element Types

#### Brush

The Cleaning Cassette does not use a tape, but a brush element. The brush works with a cleaning solution. The VCR transport ratchets the brush into place, making contact on a small portion of the head drum.

#### Dry Tape

Instead of a magnetic oxide tape, the Cleaning Cassette uses an abrasive tape that wraps around the head drum and tape path. The abrasive qualities of the tape will attempt to remove the oxide deposits based on friction only.

#### Wet Tape

Similar to the Dry tape system, the Cleaning Cassette uses a semi-abrasive tape material designed to work with a cleaning solution. The tape "carries" the cleaning solution over the tape path, removing the oxide deposits.

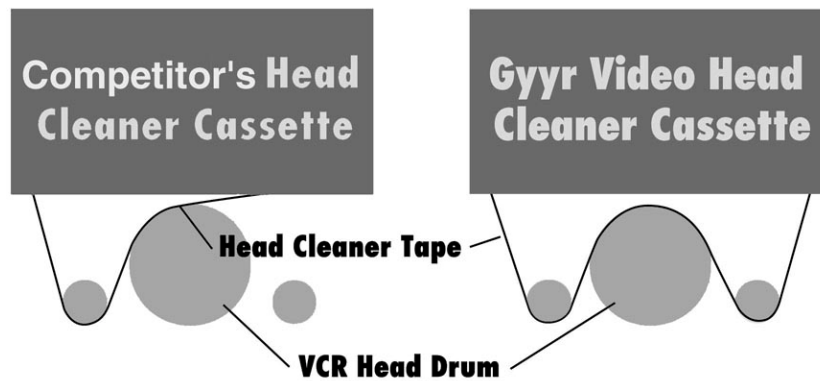
**Question:** What are the shortcomings of the other systems?

**Answer:** The Brush system can clean select areas of the head drum only. This system relies on the rotating video heads to periodically wipe against the fixed brush, and "sweep" the oxides away. The biggest shortcoming of this system is that only 10% of the tape path is cleaned. On some systems, the included cleaning solution only serves to smear a residue on the head drum assembly!

It's difficult to make a Dry tape cleaning system easy to use and effective. Most Dry tape cassettes use a tape that has low abrasive qualities, so as to not damage or prematurely wear the heads or tape path. The typical downside of this is that it may require more "passes" of the tape before the VCR is thoroughly cleaned.

Wet Tape Cassettes rely on a lower abrasion tape moistened with a cleaning solution. In order for this to be effective, the cassette should have several ports to apply the cleaning liquid. The trick is to evenly moisten the tape without saturating it. If the cleaning tape becomes too wet, the transport cannot move the tape without going into reel lock. Most Cleaning Cassettes have only one port, or placed in poor locations. Usually the liquid only gets applied to an incomplete portion of the tape, unless you saturate it.

Some Cleaning Cassettes use non-standard tape threading, skipping one of the two internal Cassette guide rollers. This prevents the cleaning tape from engaging the entire tape path. This is a compromise, done to prevent Reel Lock since the tape friction may be too much to prevent smooth movement throughout a full VHS omega wrap. See the following diagram.



## The Gyr Solution

**Question: So what makes Gyr's Video Head Cleaner so special? Why should I buy it instead of the alternatives?**

**Answer:** The VHC is manufactured to Gyr's specifications by the leaders in this technology. Gyr's Engineering and Service departments analyzed at least a half dozen cleaning systems and felt they all had one or more major shortcomings. Based on this research, we designed a system that cleans the entire tape path easily and reliably.

The Gyr VHC uses a long length, low abrasion cleaning tape coupled with a liquid cleaning solvent. The cleaning solvent helps loosen and dislodge the magnetic residue, and the abraded tape carries the oxides off the tape path. Unlike some other wet tape systems, we allow the cleaning tape to do a full VHS omega wrap of the head drum; this cleans all parts of the VHS transport that come in contact with the recording tape.

Furthermore, Gyr's VHC has two optimally placed solvent ports above AND below the tape reel. This allows the solvent to flow into several layers of the tape wrap, along the top and bottom edge. This to allows the minimum amount of cleaning solution to cover the maximum amount of tape. This maximizes the coverage of the solvent, yet prevents over saturation and excessive drag.

With over 25 years experience providing reliable analog tape recorders, we know what's best for a VCR. The Gyr Video Head Cleaner is the best VCR cleaning system for any Time Lapse Recorder.