

# AUDIO TEST

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# TEST PDF

DUAL CS 618Q

TRANSPORTE



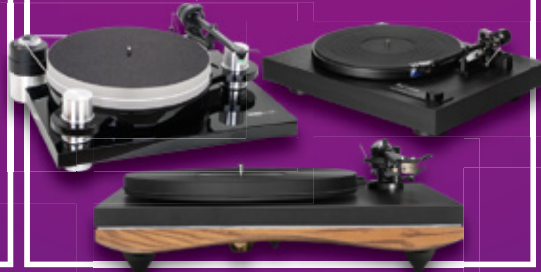
### HEIMKINO-KRACHER

Neue Subwoofer-Flaggschiffe von SVS bringen das Kino zum Beben



### PLATTENSPIELER TRIO

3 x Plattenspieler Spitzenklasse von Block, Dual und Gold Note



### SUPERBER KLASSIKER

Wharfedales Retro-Lautsprecher Linton in der Super Edition





<b>AUDIO TEST</b>	2.2025
<b>Excellent</b>	
(92,5%)	
Dual CS 618Q	
<a href="http://www.likehifi.de">www.likehifi.de</a>	

Dual CS 618Q

# Sound Guarantee with Tradition

**Dual is one of the most traditional players in the local analogue audio scene. Our expectations of a record player from this company are accordingly high. Can the CS 618Q live up to them?**

Artur Evers

Pictures: Dual

The first product from Dual that we received for a test was the CS 600 record player in AUDIO TEST issue no. 04/2016. With an excellent test score of 87%, this turntable marked a convincing start to our testing series. In total, we have been able to test nine turntables from Dual over the past nine years. With an average score of an excellent 87 percent and an average price of 895 euros, Dual has proven to be the ideal choice for a successful entry into the world of vinyl. Overall, the company follows a business model that is geared towards economically attractive access to high-quality audio technology. Most recently, editorial colleague Simon Mendel even awarded the CS 529 an excellent test logo of 92 percent, which means the manufacturer achieved a new high score in our test history.

### Dual CS 618Q

Our current test product from the range of the traditional manufacturer is one of the more expensive representatives of Dual with a recommended retail price of 1299 euros. And that, despite the fact that it is neither a fully automatic machine nor equipped with an integrated Bluetooth module, like the fully automatic CS 529 (test report in AUDIO TEST 4/24), for which the manufacturer only asks for 999 euros (for the black color variant).

The Dual CS 618Q is essentially a semi-automatic record player with direct drive. A design principle for which Dual is also well known internationally. Its vibration-free, ironless DC direct drive with quartz-stabilized speed control enables precise speeds of 33, 45 and even 78 rpm with minimal speed fluctuations of less than  $\pm 0.07\%$  (DIN-rated). This value also passed our test. As did the excellent start-up speed. The turntable reaches the desired rotation speed in less than two seconds.

The robust platter is made of heavy die-cast aluminum with a resonance-damping rubber mat and measures 305 millimeters in diameter with a total weight of 1450 grams. The platter bearing is made of hardened steel in a brass bushing, which ensures smooth running. The assembly is extremely simple. A few drops of oil on the ball and spindle,

the platter is put on and secured via the second part of the spindle thanks to the screw thread.

### Timeless design

The fully gimbal tonearm with four pivot ball bearings and an effective length of 221.5 millimeters is equipped with the Ortofon 2M Blue cartridge. The CS 618Q has, as is typical for Dual, an automatic lift and end stop that increase ease of use. The tracking force can be statically adjusted using a counterweight and the stepless anti-skating can be easily adjusted using a rotary knob with a scale. Both controls are of excellent craftsmanship and promise long-lasting playing pleasure.

The cartridge has a stylus alignment angle of 25 degrees and an overhang of 19 millimeters. In addition to the platter and the dust cover, the headshell is the only component that needs to be mounted by the customer. However, this is easy thanks to the four-pin plug.

The chassis of the Dual record player is made of MDF with various surface options, including foil, high-gloss varnish and walnut veneer. The plain housing is

entirely in keeping with the manufacturer's typical design. On the back, in addition to the mains power and cinch connections, there are two toggle switches. On the one hand, the implemented phono preamplifier can be bypassed here. On the other hand, the turntable's automatic stop function can be suspended. Elastomer resonance absorbers with a diameter of 62 millimeters integrated into the feet minimize unwanted vibrations caused by high-frequency shocks. The Dual CS 618Q does not have a multi-stage decoupling of the drive frame to protect against larger shocks, but this is reflected in its affordability.

The turntable has RCA jacks and can be connected to both phono and high-level inputs. An external plug-in power supply supplies the device with power. Overall, the CS 618Q, like other Dual models, is timelessly chic. Clear edges and a straightforward appearance speak the unmistakable design language of the traditional German company. The turntable's appearance is rounded off by the stylish acrylic glass lid. It can be mounted without much effort using the usual plug-in hinges. However, we will not be



*The tonearm suspension is fully gimbal-mounted and features four pivot ball bearings, allowing the tonearm maximum freedom of movement*

*On the rear panel, the integrated pre-amp can be bypassed, and the automatic switchoff function can be deactivated using two toggle switches*



using them for our test. The dimensions of the CS 618Q with the lid closed are 435 x 367 x 145 millimeters, and with the lid open the height is 400 millimeters. It weighs 7.5 kilograms. Overall, Dual's new record player makes a very high-quality impression. The controls, such as the tonearm lift or the cumbersome rotary selector switch for

setting the rotation speed, are pleasant to the touch and demonstrate a quality of workmanship designed for durability. This is impressive!

**In action**

As already mentioned, assembling the CS 618Q is effortless. After just a few minutes, the turntable is completely as-

sembled and ready for use. For our test, we paired the Dual turntable with the amplifier combination of Vincent's SA-T7 tube preamplifier and SP-T700 tube monoblocks. These, in turn, drive two retro-style Super Linton floorstanding speakers from Wharfedale. A detailed review of the Super Linton awaits you in this issue of AUDIO TEST, starting on page 76!

We begin the sound test of the Dual CS 618Q with an extraordinary piece: „Ghost Riders In The Sky“, performed by The Space Lady. This iconic song was originally released in 1979 by country legend Johnny Cash. However, it was first released on tape in 1990 as a cover on the album „Amazing Thingz“, and the title is also available as a cover on The Space Lady's „Greatest Hits“ collection. The Dual turntable immediately impresses with a sound performance that is characterized by its depth and, above all, by a remarkably stylish bass performance. The rhythmic machine pulsates powerfully and supports the walking bass, which unfolds from the speakers in a rich and assertive manner. The CS 618Q is connected directly to the AUX input of the Vincent tube preamp and delivers an impressive sound with notable sound pressure.

**Typically Dual**

We continue our test with another cover version to further examine the playfulness of the Dual turntable: „My Kind Of



*The CS 618Q comes equipped with the Ortofon 2M Blue cartridge as standard. A well-matched partner for the turntable*

*Pictures: Dual*



The ease of use is excellent. We can adjust the speed in three steps using the rotary switch

Town”, originally sung by the legendary Frank Sinatra, is performed in our test in a version by Al Saxon. This homage to Chicago sounds lively, colorful and full of energy. The pronounced spatiality with which the song is reproduced is particularly remarkable.

The same impression carries over to „Homogenic“, the 1997 album by Björk. The second track, „Jóga“, for example, initially sounds with wonderfully naturalistic timbres of strings and vocals before wafting filtered drums join in. A rich low-end reproduces the impression that we have had in the past with other turntables from this manufacturer. Only in the spectrally complex bridge does the level of differentiation slightly diminish. However, given the turntable’s entry-level price, we are happy to overlook this. Because with “All Neon Like” our test sample is much more emancipated. The bass-heavy mix of Björk’s song sounds exceptionally clean here.

As soon as we bypass the built-in preamp with an external one, we can even coax a bit more fine-tuning and dynamics out of the Dual CS 618Q. „All Is Full of Love (Howie’s Version)“ for example now has even more brilliance. The finely detailed textures from sound effects and

string samples are even more precisely rendered, and the pleasantly soft sub-bass effortlessly integrates into the mix – as smoothly as butter.

**High quality yet beginner-friendly**

The Dual CS 618Q semi-automatic turntable impressively confirms the excellent reputation of its manufacturer. Above all, the uncomplicated operation, the well thought-out design and the flexibility provided by the integrated phono preamp make it an excellent choice for

**SUMMARY**

**Focused on the essentials and equipped with all the necessary sovereignty, the Dual CS 618Q exceeds all expectations for a turntable from this manufacturer. Robust and high-quality in craftsmanship, lively and clearly differentiated in performance. With its new semi-automatic model, Dual presents a worthy representative of the upper entry-level class - bravo!**

**FEATURES**

- internal preamplifier
- plays at 78 RPM

<b>Advantages</b>	+ very good build quality + great sound quality
<b>Disadvantages</b>	- none

beginners and anyone looking for a high-quality, easy-to-use record player. Additionally, the CS 618Q stands out with its high-quality craftsmanship and a design that easily blends into any living room.

Another highlight of the device is the way in which it reproduces even the finest details in the music without overshadowing the overall impression. The Dual CS 618Q shows its strengths especially in acoustically demanding passages, be it the dynamics of a live recording or the precision of an orchestral piece.

For anyone looking to get started in the world of analog music playback, this record player offers an ideal combination of sound quality, simplicity and style. The Dual CS 618Q brilliantly meets all the requirements of a competent turntable. Anything else would have truly surprised us from Dual. ■

**FEATURES**

General	
<b>Device class</b>	<b>Turntables</b>
<b>Price band</b>	<b>Mid range</b>
<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>Dual</b>
<b>Modell</b>	<b>CS 618Q</b>
Price (EIA)	1 199 euro
Dimensions (H/W/D)	43,5 x 14,5 x 36,7 cm
Weight	7,5 kg
Information	www.dual.de

**Technische Daten** (lt. Hersteller)

Cartridge (mounted)	Ortofon 2M Blue
Motor	DC-Motor
Type of drive	Direct-drive
Control type	Semi-automatic
Inputs	RCA
Phono-preamp included	Yes
DAC included	No
Bluetooth	No

**EVALUATION**

Reproduction quality	<div style="width: 83.3%;"></div>	55/60
Equipment/workmanship	<div style="width: 93.3%;"></div>	14/15
User-friendliness	<div style="width: 96.7%;"></div>	14,5/15
Appreciation/Depreciation		None
Interim result		83,5 von 90 Points
Price-performance	Very Good	9/10
<b>Result</b>	<div style="width: 92.5%; background-color: #008000;"></div>	<b>Excellent 92,5%</b>