



Shown are all the splicers available today. These range from simple splicing blocks to automatic and heat sealing devices. In addition to splicing regular $\frac{1}{4}$ inch tape, some splicers are also available in sizes to accommodate up to one inch tape used in computers, etc.

TAPE SPLICING AND SPLICERS

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Photos by the author

. . . here's how to make a good splice—by hand or automatically

TODAY'S magnetic tapes aren't prone to break but there's still a goodly amount of splicing to be done in any well-run recording operation.

A poor splice can cause all kinds of troubles. Here are some of the woes that confront those who slip up on their splicing technique.

1—Loss of recording. A pair of heavily magnetized scissors will cause a partial, and noticeable loss if used to trim tape or if laid on a reel.

2—Loss of high frequencies. Splicing tape adhesive deposited on the playback head (especially from cellophane tape which should *not* be used) will cause the loss of highs by preventing good contact between head and tape. If you have any doubts on this point, try flopping a recorded tape and running it through shiny side against the head.

3—Break in continuity. A poorly aligned splice will cause the tape to momentarily travel at different angles as it passes the head. This may cause a noticeable and unwanted change in the sound character.

4—Wow. A bulky splice, or one that has pulled apart



Leader and timing tape is available from all major manufacturers and can be obtained at most dealers. This is either tough paper or plastic material and will protect the magnetic tape on the reel.



Making splices with the scissors is the most primitive method. The tape is held in alignment and a straight angled cut made through both pieces. The tape is then placed glossy side up with the cut edges butted together. Make sure tape is in line. Here printed line on box is used as guide. Apply splicing tape and press firmly. Lift splice and trim with scissors, cutting slightly into tape.



The Cousino splicer. Press tape in groove which will hold it in place. Draw sharp razor blade across tape using guide to get proper angle of cut. Apply splicing tape—tweezers or the edge of the blade make it easy. The splicing tape is 7/32 inch in width and enough for 24 splices is provided with the splicer. The splicer has an adhesive pad on the back which holds the splicer to the recorder or other surface.



The Jiffy Splicer. The tape is placed in the grooved aluminum bar and the swinging arms are positioned to hold the tape. The razor blade is used to make the cut and the splicing tape is applied. With the tape still in the groove, the blade can be used to trim the splice before it is removed from the unit. The splicing block is mounted on wood with a felt padded base.

can cause the tape to bind or hang up on the tape guides, reels or pressure pads producing a jerky motion which causes wow in the reproduction.

Fortunately most of the evils just listed can be banished with a bit of care. Further, splicing becomes fun instead of a chore with one of the modern splicers.

A major point to consider before purchasing a splicer is how much splicing you expect to do, and how much patience you have.

The home-grown scissor method is not recommended for the nervous, the impatient or the father of a child that has just finished tying the cat to the bed.

You may not encounter many tape breaks but there's wise forethought in splicing leader material on both ends of recorded tape. Any material will break after repeated bending and creasing, such as is applied in starting the tape on

the reel. This breaking can be confined to expendable leader tape—which is made to take it.

There's also the desire to eliminate the commercials after a recording session with the FM tuner. You might also want to put in strips of leader material between selections on a reel, or to create definite intervals of silence. Good splicing technique, with or without assisting devices is a primary requirement for any owner of magnetic tape equipment.

For those who do extensive editing, or who really ride the hobby, consideration should be given to the time savings provided by the more refined splicers.

What constitutes a good splice? 1—the spliced tape will lie unassisted in a straight line. 2—Any extra bulk (splicing tape tab) should be on the side *away* from the heads, i.e., on the glossy side of the tape. 3—Joints should be butt



The Robins "Gibson Girl" splicer is available in several sizes and models. The tape is placed in the channels and the arms positioned to hold it. The knob is pushed back to "miter" position and pushed down. This cuts tape at 45° angle. The chip is blown away and the splicing tape applied. The knob is moved forward to trimming position and pressed down completing splice which has "Gibson Girl" shape. The unit at lower right is heavy duty model which comes in various sizes and will handle from 1/4 to 1 inch tape depending on model.



The Reiter Skila splicer automatically applies splicing tape and trims splice. The tape is positioned in the guides and rubber rollers hold it in place. The cutter bar assembly is raised and the handle pushed away or pulled toward the operator to cut tape. A carboloy wheel makes the cut. Chip is removed and the knob on top pressed. This ejects tape, applies it and trims splice all in one operation.

joints and be angled to provide best sound continuity as the splice passes over the head. 4—The splice should be no wider than the tape. 5—The splicing tape should be flush or very slightly within the recording tape edges. 6—Only splicing tape or heat splicing should be used.

The use of commonly available cellophane household tape is definitely out. These tapes have a gummy adhesive which, in time, will ooze from the edges of the splice, depositing on the guides and heads. It will also permit the splice to pull apart and the adhesive will adhere to adjacent layers causing sticking and wow.

If the recording is single track you may cut and clip with impunity but if you have a dual track recording remember that anything you cut out of one track also removes material from the second track. The best practice is to remove

the minimum of material, especially if you are faced with a break in a recorded tape.

The smaller splicers may be mounted on the recorder in a convenient position which makes splicing both easy and quick.

Most of the major tape manufacturers make either leader tape, splicing tape, or both. The leader material, also called "timing tape" is printed with indicators at specific distances so that it is easy to measure off time intervals. Two firms use tough, tear resistant paper for their leader material and two provide plastic leaders. These, and the splicing tape, should be obtainable anywhere recorders are sold.

The splicers range from the simple to the complex but all are easy to use. Simplest is the Cousino which is a plas-



The Alonge splicer has an adjustable cutting bar. The tape is positioned in the long grooves and held with the arms. The cut may be made at either 45, 67½ or 90° by changing the position of the blade. To cut tape, the knob is pressed to make the cut. Roll splicing tape over float springs and snap down end of cutting control arm. Two side cutting blades trim the splicing tape to the exact width of the recording tape. The unit has an engraved center line and index marker to aid in positioning the tape.

tic block with a groove to hold the tape and a guide for the razor blade that is used to cut the tape.

The Jiffy splicer is a bar of aluminum with a cutting guide for the razor blade and two arms to hold the tape. The "Gibson Girl" splicers have arms to hold the tape, cutting, and trimming blades. The Alonge has hold down arms, an adjustable cutter and trims the completed splice.

The Skila splicer uses a carboloy wheel to cut the tape and it automatically feeds the correct amount of splicing tape and trims the splice. The Presto-Splicer does not use splicing tape but makes the splice by heat and pressure, even on dissimilar materials.

With the proper materials, good splices are easy to make and good splices mean trouble-free performance.



The Presto splicer is the only one using heat and pressure to effect the splice. The tape is trimmed as shown. It is then aligned on the bed, overlapping about 1/64 inch across the centerline. The bar is locked in place and the button pressed. The timing is automatic and when the bar is lifted the two pieces will be welded together. Butt joints can also be made. The unit at lower right is the professional model which will splice movie film, magnetic film, tape, roll film, etc. Splices on this unit take only ten seconds to make.