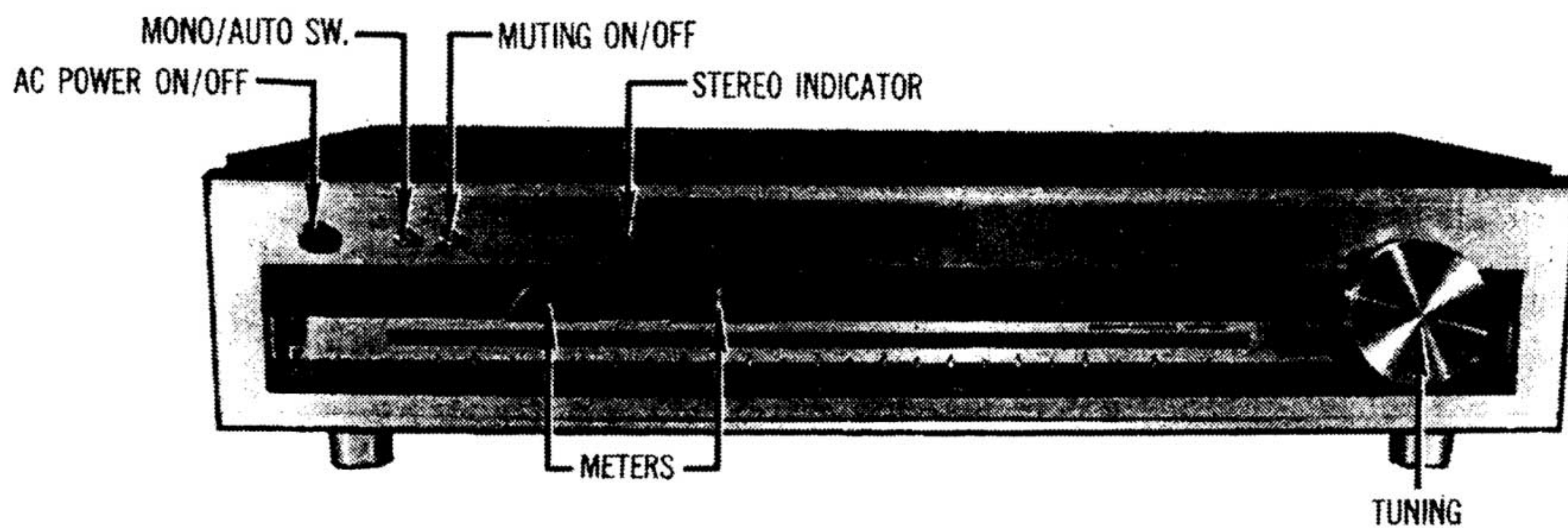


New A CONSUMER'S GUIDE Equipment Reports



Luxman T-110, a Tuner with a Mission

The Equipment: Luxman T-110, an FM tuner in rosewood case. Dimensions: 19 by 4½ inches (front panel); 10 inches deep plus clearance for controls and connections. Price: \$525. Warranty: "full," three years parts and labor. Manufacturer: Lux Audio, Japan; U.S. distributor: Lux Audio of America, Ltd., 200 Aerial Way, Syosset, N.Y. 11791.

Comment: Lux Audio is a specialist in sophisticated separate components, and the T-110 impresses immediately as a sophisticated separate. Its sleek styling, its unconventional dial grille through which the pointer's illumination shows (and flashes a warning when you're not tuned to a station), the two tiny buttons and one huge tuning knob that are its only front-panel controls beside the on/off button, its rich rosewood case—all proclaim this to be an extraordinary tuner. And it is.

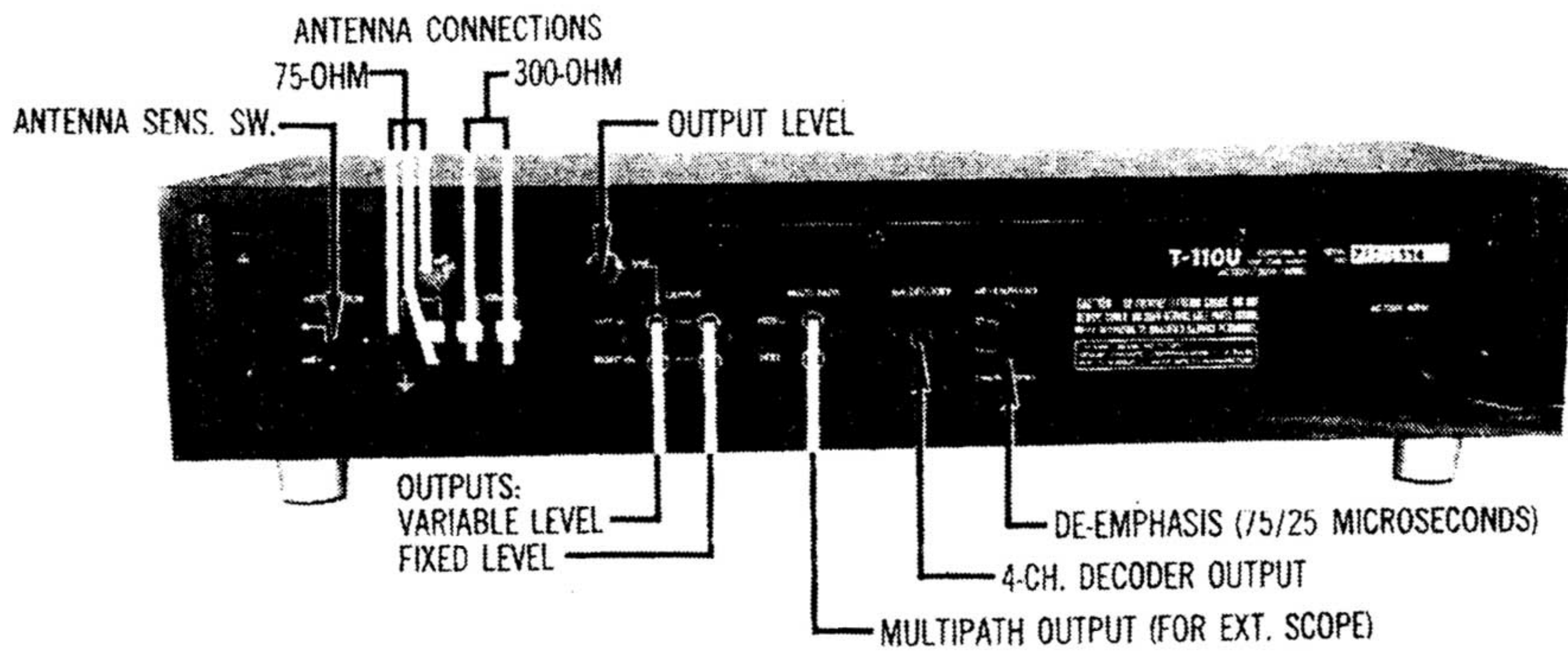
There are some other controls, of course—on the back panel, since all apparently are conceived of as esoteric functions that you won't need to alter in normal use. One is only arguably of that type: the antenna attenuator. Since the manual suggests that it be switched in only by listeners who are close to transmitters—and who still might want to switch it out to "reach for" a weak station (hence the arguableness of its placement)—the tuner was tested with the attenuator switched out. The de-emphasis switch (with one position for Dolby, one for non-Dolby broadcasts) seems even more arguable, since more stations all the time seem to be offering Dolby transmissions,

while no broadcast community we know of has gone all-Dolby.

Considering both the nature of the remaining controls and the performance characteristics of the T-110, it strikes us as a tuner that, above all, is exceptionally well adapted to listening in the suburban and exurban areas—neither next door to transmitters nor really remote from them—where the vast majority of the FM listening is done today. The ubiquitous high-frequency blend used to de-noise weak stereo signals is conspicuously absent. And the muting (which cuts in at 16 dBf, just about 2 dB below the point at which the tuner's attempts at stereo reception cease) rejects mono signals while they still boast signal-to-noise ratios in excess of 50 dB. (The muting can be disabled, of course, and the tuner can be manually switched to mono.)

The usable sensitivity ("usable" defines a quieting point at which any unit sounds about as good as a CB radio)

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measured at CBS labs is competitive with that of other fine tuners, but more germane to ordinary listening levels are the superlative harmonic distortion, IM distortion, and signal-to-noise ratio figures. Capture ratio is 1 dB, so multipath interference is held well in check. (Note that there are outputs on the back panel for oscilloscope analysis of multipath, should it still prove a problem.) Similarly, the alternate-channel selectivity (72 dB) effectively suppresses strong stations that happen to be near the tuned frequency. Stereo separation is extraordinary and remains well in excess of that required of broadcasters all across the audio band.

The only mole we could find on the cheek of the Luxman T-110 is the slight rolloff in audio-frequency response from about 100 Hz down. While not unusual in FM equipment, and just detectable audibly in A/B tests with a tuner that some consider the finest on the market, it is one point on which we must stop short of complete enthusiasm.

For the listener who is seeking to wring the last bit of quieting out of the tuner with signals of only marginal strength, the T-110 also was audibly a notch below its more expensive stalking horse in the A/B tests, though it is better than most in this respect as well. All this means is that, though it is not the ultimate tuner for hayseeds, it is among the ultimate tuners for the in-town sophisticates with whom its over-all personality would seem most at home.

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Luxman T-110 Tuner Additional Data

Capture ratio	1 dB		
Alternate-channel selectivity	72 dB		
S/N ratio (mono)	77 dB		
THD	Mono	L ch	R ch
80 Hz	0.057%	0.073%	0.073%
1 kHz	0.052%	0.079%	0.079%
10 kHz	0.160%	0.28%	0.28%
IM distortion	0.07%		
19-kHz pilot	-66 dB		
38-kHz subcarrier	-68½ dB		

