

Cable Care – Proper Cable Wrapping

Taking proper care of your cables/cable inventory can save you from possible stage failures such as equipment powering “off and on” intermittently, audio cutting out, issues, static noises, hum, and buzzing (to name a few). Here are some tips on proper cable wrapping and care.

Wrapping Audio Cables: There is a right way and a wrong way to wrap an audio cable. The examples below demonstrate the “wrong way” and the “correct way” to wrap your audio cables.

a) Wrong way to wrap a cable!



b) Correct way to wrap a



c) Use a Velcro Cable Tie!



Once you finish with your cable, you need to wrap it correctly. Never wrap audio cables as shown in example a) – this will bend the tiny wire strands inside the cables, and eventually, the cable will fail. The correct way is shown in b), and example c) shows a neatly wrapped cable using a Velcro Cable Tie (the preferred cable tie for audio cables).

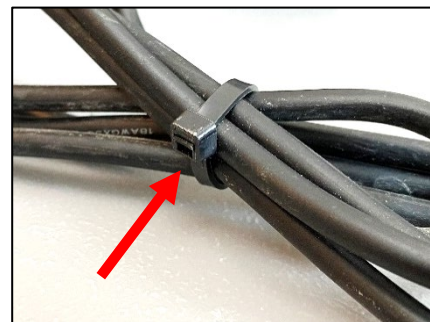
Types of Cable Ties



Velcro Cable Tie



Regular Velcro



Never use Plastic / Nylon Cable Ties

A Velcro Cable Tie or Regular Velcro are common ways to organize cables. These methods provide a quick and easy way to unwrap cables when needed. Once a Velcro Cable Tie is removed, the hardest part is trying not to lose it. You should never use “Plastic or Nylon” Cable Ties or Electrical Tape (any tape) to organize your cables. You will need to cut off this type of Cable Tie each time to unwrap the cable, and Tape leaves a “residue” that builds up on the cable jacket. Having to replace cables can be expensive. Taking proper care of your audio cables will help ensure the cables stay in good working condition.

Real-life Example: My crew and I set up a PA system at a Golf Championship (opening ceremony). The setup and testing of the system went great, and everyone was happy. We had about 3-4 hours until the ceremony, so most of us left the site, except for one of our technicians. He volunteered to hang out and keep an eye on the system. This technician was bored, so he decided to coil up all the AC Power cables and laid them all on each other. When we showed back up, the PA system had a terrible hum. The problem was found quickly, and we un-coiled and spread out the AC Power cables just in time for the ceremony to begin. Never coil up the slack in AC Power cables (Extension Cords), as this can potentially induce “hum” in the PA system.

Wrapping AC / Extension Cables: There is also a right way and wrong way to wrap AC (Electrical) type Cables. It's also recommended to use the methods described above for long AC Cables / Extension Cords. Since these types of cables are thicker, it is suggested to use a piece of braided nylon rope as the Cable Tie. Safety should always be a “priority” when working with AC cables, and using a monthly schedule for “inspections” of all your AC / Extension cables will ensure they stay in good working condition.