A Guide to

German Odeon Beatles Albums

Updated: 24 Fe 24



Typical Odeon green label (mono) and "white/gold/red label" (stereo)



1960's mono and stereo Hör Zu labels

First Style White Odeon (and Red Hör Zu)



Original Odeon mono LP's appear on a green label with Odeon logo. Since stereo was the norm in Germany by 1964, all mono LP's can be considered difficult to find.

The Odeon white label (stereo) LP's appear in two slightly different styles. The first of these styles, shown above, features the following print around the rim of the label:

> ALLE RECHTE DES PLATTENHERSTELLERS **UND EIGENTUEMERS DES AUFGENNOMMENEN**

WERKES VORBEHALTEN. VERVIELFÄLTIGUNG, ÖFFENTLICHE AUFFÜHRUNG. RUNDFUNKSENDUNG UNTERSAGT

This expression roughly translates to:

"All rights of the disk manufacturer and the owner of the recorded work [are] reserved. Copying, public performance, and radio broadcasting [are] prohibited."

For the benefit of non-German-speaking people, I refer to this issue as the "Alle" issue. Records with "Alle" as the first word of the rim print were issued by German Odeon until 1966. Some LP's were issued with as many as three catalog numbers, in the Odeon Series, the Hör Zu series, and the ZTOX series.



All Odeon series albums on the "Alle" label were numbered from 83000 to 85000. When these were reissued in 1966-7, these catalog numbers were changed to the 73000's, which numbers Odeon was using beginning in 1966. The change from the "Alle" label to the "Urheber" label came with *Revolver* immediately before the change to the 73000 series numbering, as "Urheber" copies exist of the more common LP's in the 83000 series. There is also a late (1968-9?) label variation present at least on some LP's that shows the catalog prefix in the same size font as the number. The ZTOX number is also missing from these labels.

Original Hör Zu labels were red with a white rectangular logo. Similar to the Odeon series, they experienced a copyright statement change in 1966, continuing until 1970.

The Odeon Series numbers as (S*)O 83000's.

The Hör Zu Series numbers as (S)HZE ###.

The foreign series numbers as ZTOX 5000's.

Those albums which were originally issued on the "Alle" label are as follows:

Catalog Number	Title
O 83-568 (mono)	With the Beatles
STO 83-568 (stereo)	With the Beatles
HZE 117 (mono, with BIEM and GEMA on label)	Please Please Me (Die Beatles)
HZE 117 (mono, with GEMA on label alone)	Please Please Me (Die Beatles)
SHZE 117 (stereo)	Please Please Me (Die Beatles)
O 83-692 (mono)	Beatles Beat
ZTOX 5550 (stereo only)	Please Please Me (UK cover)
ZTOX 5558 (stereo only)	Beatles Second Album

O 83-739 (mono)	Hard Day's Night
STO 83-739 (stereo)	A Hard Day's Night
O 83-756 (mono)	Something New
STO 83-756 (stereo)	Something New
SMO 83-790 (stereo only from here on)	Beatles For Sale
SMO 83-917	Beatles '65
SMO 83-991	Beatles Greatest
SMO 84-008	Help! cover says from Hör Zu Series
SMO 84-008	Help! no mention of Hör Zu Series
SHZE 162	Help!
SMO 84-066	Rubber Soul

NOTE 1: Since the German Beatles albums are scarce in mono, I expect the values of the mono albums to rise well beyond their stereo counterparts.

NOTE 2: The German *With the Beatles* album contains a version of "All My Loving" with the so-called "hi-hat intro."

NOTE 3: The German *Something New* album contains a version of "And I Love Her" with an extended ending. That LP also features "Komm, Gib Mir Deine Hand" in rechanneled stereo. Given that, and the distinctions in cover graphics, the German LP was prepared separately from the American LP, with Odeon only receiving certain Graphics from the USA. Others have claimed that HDN also has the extended ending; my copy does not have it.

NOTE 4: The first several albums, at least through ZTOX 5550 were packaged originally in cardboard covers with paper slicks. *Help!* is found also in this packaging.

NOTE 5: The first pressings of SHZE-117 had print on the **back cover** which indicated that the stereo album should be played only with a stereo stylus:

Sonderanfertigung der ELECTROLA GESELLSCHAFT M.B.H. KÖLN. Platte nur mit sorgfältig gereinigter Abtastspitze spielen. Für Monoplatten Mikro- oder Stereoabtastspitze, für Stereoplatten nur Stereoabtastspitze verwenden. Einstellung M, 33 Upm. Falsche Einstellung beschädigt die Langspielplatte.

Translation:

Special production of ELECTROLA COMPANY MBH COLOGNE. Only play the disc with (a) carefully cleaned stylus. For mono discs, micro- or stereo- stylus, for stereo discs, use only (a) stereo stylus. Setting M, 33 rpm. Wrong setting will damage the long-playing record.

By the middle of 1964, Odeon changed this information on all of its records to indicate that stereo and mono are compatible under the right conditions:

ELECTROLA GESELLSCHAFT M.B.H. KÖLN. Diese Schallplatte kann mit jedem modernen Leichtgewicht-Tonabnehmer abgespielt werden. Tonabnehmer behutsam aufsetzen und abheben. Abtastspitze und Platten sorgfältig staubfrei halten. Platten senkrecht oder in geringer Stückzahl waagerecht auf glatter Fläche lagern. Einwirkung von Wärme vermeiden. Technischer Hinweis: Je kleiner die Abtastspitze, um so reiner der Klang. Verwenden Sie vorzugsweise Diamenten mit einer Spitzenverrundung big herab zu 13 μ (μ = micron = tausendstel mm). Translation:

ELECTROLA COMPANY M.B.H. COLOGNE. This record can be played on any modern lightweight tonearm. Carefully lower and raise the tonearm. Carefully keep stylus and discs free of dust. Store discs horizontally or vertically in small numbers on a smooth surface. Avoid exposure to heat. Technical Note: The smaller the probe tip, the purer the sound. Preferably use diamonds with a big tip tapering down to 13 μ (μ = micron = one thousandth mm).

Look for the expression " 13μ " in the information at the bottom of the back cover, which is notable because it uses Greek.

After mono was phased out in November of 1964, all printings and later albums (including those that still have the "Alle" label) say instead that with a modern turntable a stereo record can be played on a mono turntable and do not list the "technical direction":

Diese Schallplatte kann mit jedem modernen Leichtgewicht-Tonabnehmer abgespielt werden. Bei Mono-Abspielgeräten wird zur besseren Wiedergabe der Einbau eines Stereo-Abtastkopfes empfohlen.

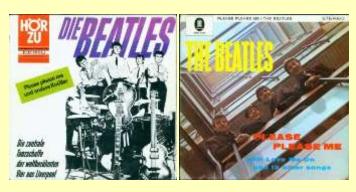
Translation:

This record can be played on any modern lightweight pickup. For mono players to play better, it is recommended to install a stereo stylus.

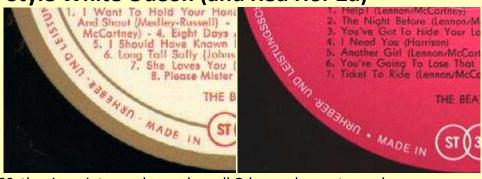
NOTE 6: The "STO" prefix was replaced by "SMO" after the elimination of mono, but not all older albums were reissued with the new SMO- prefix. *With the Beatles* retained its STO- prefix when it was reissued in the late sixties with the newer 73-568 catalog number.

NOTE 7: Stereo copies pressed prior to the elimination of mono are found with a large, round, gold stereo sticker. Stereo copies of those same LP's and of the next few (stereo-only) LP's are normally found with a smaller, rectangular stereo sticker. Later stereo LP's are found either with the contents of the stereo sticker printed on the cover itself or without any stereo sticker whatsoever (since the buyer would naturally assume the record to be stereo).





Second Style White Odeon (and Red Hör Zu)



In early 1966, the rim print was changed on all Odeon releases to read:

URHEBER- UND LEISTUNGSSCHUTZRECHTE, BESONDERS VERVIELFÄLTIGUNG (AUSSER ZUM PERSÖNLICHEN GEBRAUCH), VERMIETUNG, AUFFÜHRUNG, SENDUNG, VORBEHALTEN

Roughly speaking, this translates to:

"Copyright and property rights, especially reproduction (except for personal use), rental, performance, and broadcasting, [are] reserved."

Again for the benefit of those who do not read German, I will call this the "Urheber" issue. LP's made from 1966 to 1969 are of the "Urheber" variety. Although there were no new red label Hör Zu releases by the Beatles during this period, their earlier Hör Zu records were reissued onto the "Urheber" label. A list of all Beatles albums which were originally issued on the "Urheber" label follows:

Catalog Number	Title
SMO 74-161	Revolver
SHZE 186	Revolver (one black HZ logo)
SHZE 186	Revolver (two red HZ logos)
SMO 81-045	Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band
SHZE 401	Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band

NOTE 1: Beatles Beat had been issued in mono only in 1964. After November of that year, German Odeon had switched to all-stereo. The album has been rumored to exist in stereo with an STO- prefix, but no copies have surfaced.

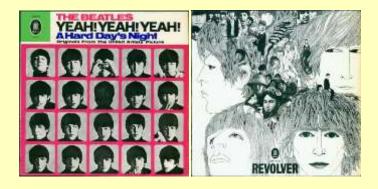
NOTE 2: From this point on, the Hör Zu configuration of Beatles albums has a standard Odeon (or Apple) label underneath, with the Hör Zu logo stamped onto it. First issues of the Hör Zu Revolver have the Hör Zu logo stamped in black on top of the Odeon stereo logo. Second issues of Revolver and all copies of the Hör Zu Sgt. Pepper have two Hör Zu logos in red, positioned to the sides of the Odeon stereo logo.

NOTE 3: Sgt. Pepper was available on Hör Zu SHZE 401, but the Odeon export issue is much harder to find. Unlike the other Beatles albums, it was numbered in Odeon's 80000 series instead of the 83000 series. That series cost more and normally featured classical records, such

as *Intermezzo*, by Giuseppe Patané (Electrola SME-81-028) and *Eine Nacht in Venedig*, by the Weltstar Operette (Electrola SME-81-051/2).

NOTE 4: Earlier (more common) copies of *Beatles' Greatest* (SMO-73-991) have the older Odeon and EMI logos surrounded by a green border. Newer copies (from 1968) have the newer logo with "EMI" in a box on top of the Odeon logo, and there is no green border.

NOTE 5: Albums from Odeon, Columbia, Electrola (, Capitol, and Liberty) from early 1966 have the SMO 84- prefix and Urheber rim print. The number changed to 74- later in spring (around 74-130). A few Beatles reissues, notably *Beatles Greatest*, appear on the Urheber label with 84-number.



Apple Albums



In early 1969, all new Beatles releases switched to the Apple label. By April, however, Germany had become part of the European Economic Community (EEC). From that point on, all records, new and rerelease, would be issued with the new EEC numbering system. Most albums from *Abbey Road* on feature the new numbering. Here is a list of German Beatles albums on the Apple label.

Catalog Number	Title		
SMO 2051/2	The Beatles		
SMO 74-585	Yellow Submarine		
1C062-04002	Yellow Submarine		
1C062-04243	Abbey Road		

1C062-04348	Hey Jude!
1C062-04433	Let It Be (boxed)
1C062-04433Y	Let It Be (regular)
SHZE 327 (rectangular logo)	Magical Mystery Tour
SHZE 327 (TV logo)	Magical Mystery Tour
1C062-04449	Magical Mystery Tour

NOTE 1: The White Album was originally issued, as in England, with a top-loading cover, numbered, and with 4 pictures and a poster.

NOTE 2: *Magical Mystery Tour* was originally released, as in England, in EP form in 1967. Following the success of the US album, Apple/Hör Zu released MMT as an album in early 1972. This album contains the first stereo appearance anywhere of "Baby, You're a Rich Man" and the second stereo appearance of "Penny Lane." This original issue has the rectangular Hör Zu logo on the cover and label. Second pressings from 1973 feature the newer "record player" Hör Zu logo. In 1978, *Magical Mystery Tour* was reissued with the EEC numbering and a large apple on the front cover; the price code changed from 062/064 to 072 in 1981. This last issue is the most common.



NOTE 3: The change to the blue label came during the second half of 1968, some months BEFORE the change to the EEC catalog numbers. Several LP's are known with blue labels and the old "SMO" number." The change from the old logo to the new logo happened around catalog number 74-411. The labels remained white, red, and gold until about catalog number 74-486, at which point all of the labels (Columbia, Odeon, Electrola) switched to blue. The EEC numbering began just after 74-490 (right after the release of *Yellow Submarine*).



"Listen" to Hör Zu

Hör Zu was the largest magazine in Europe devoted to radio and television, being the equivalent of TV Guide in the United States; it still exists in that capacity. Its name ("Listen") pays tribute to the fact that it began in 1946 to support radio. By 1963-1964 its readership had expanded to over 13 million German readers. In August, 1963, the magazine set up an agreement with EMI (Electrola) in Germany to release (at least) three albums per month on a

label bearing the name of the magazine. According to *Billboard*, the release of records within the magazine's two series had to be cleared, one by one, with the artists. Based on the release rate, it appears to be true that the contract they reached with the Beatles allowed them to release one album per year. The first three albums in the *Hör Zu* series were two Electrola records and one from Teldec:

Hör Zu (S)HZE-101 Maria Callas Die Schönsten Arien Hör Zu (S)HZE-102 various artists Hör Zu Tanz Mit! Hör Zu (S)HZT-501 Herbert von Karajan Vienna Philharmonic ries

Maria Callas

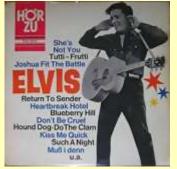
All the *Hör Zu* records were promoted in the magazine and were available through the mail, but about 90% of them wound up being sold in record shops. In 1965, some EMI artists began

asserting their dominance over the arrangement with *Hör Zu*. Thus, new albums featured an Odeon label with a *Hör Zu* overprint – instead of the previous red label. They were still making *Hör Zu* red-label albums, but new EMI records from some artists (the Beatles, Nat King Cole, the Beach Boys) started having the artist's usual label as a backdrop. This is why the Beatles albums from *Revolver* on have overprinted Odeon (and Apple) labels instead of red Hör Zu labels. *Die Beatles* and *Help!* continued to retain the Hör Zu label styles into the 1970's until the label itself ended.



By 1971, radio was becoming less important than television, and *Hör Zu* had switched to being mainly associated with television.

The two standard series supported by the label were prefixed SHZE- (Hör Zu Electrola) and



SHZT- (Hör Zu Teldec). The Electrola series began with SHZE-101 in 1963. The numbering reserved for the series went to 499, but the series terminated in 1974 with the Four Tops *Live & in Concert* LP (SHZE-427). The 500 series was assigned to – and pressed by – Teldec. The Teldec series is most famous for having pressed records by the Rolling Stones, and for one legendary album by Elvis Presley: *Golden Boy Elvis* (SHZT-521), which probably came out in June or July, 1965. Although the Presley album does not appear to be extremely rare, according to Presley collectors it obtained particular notoriety when Col. Tom Parker – Elvis' business manager – disapproved of

the compilation album and ordered it to be withdrawn from both the German and Swiss markets.

The magazine's arrangement with Telefunken-Decca did not last as long as the one with EMI-Electrola. The last known album in the Teldec series was SHZT-564, released in 1968: an album by the Original Oberkrainer Quintett.

In 1967, the standard Hör Zu Electrola (SHZE) series was issuing numbers around 200. However, the label chose to market the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper* differently – probably charging more for it. It was first labeled as part of a

separate series — being given the catalog number of SHZE-401. However, there were no other records in the series. In 1973, the label's numbering reached 400; they simply skipped over 401 and assigned 402 to a record by Wolfgang Anheisser. SHZE 327 is the correct catalog number for an LP (Magical Mystery Tour) that was issued in early 1972, as other catalog numbers from the series show.

Then in 1967, Hör Zu numbering took a step backward. Beginning with an album devoted to Capitol's 25th anniversary, Hör Zu began a "discotheque" series with HZEL-50. When the numbering reached 99 (in 1972), they jumped up to HZEL-700. In 1974, the series terminated with SHZEL-724.

The final piece of the Hör Zu puzzle – the 800 and 900 series – were "experimental" records, most of which were given the moniker "Black Label." The first of these, pressed by Wergo, was the various-artists LP called *Primadonnen der Moderne* (SHZW-800). The 900 series contained a few rock albums, such as Steve Miller's *PROgressive Pop* (SHZE-901). The progressive approach faded in 1972, and both series vanished.







The special numbering discontinued in 1974, but Hör Zu kept going into 1978. At that point, all of the Beatles albums that had been on the Hör Zu label reverted to German Odeon. *Magical Mystery Tour* was quickly re-released with a standard Apple label.

Swiss Ex-Libris Exports







Certain "export" copies made in the Odeon series had different labels (normally orange/yellow) and a "9" at the beginning of the catalog number. These were released through the Swiss publication *Ex Libris*. These are all scarce since they were only available through the club. The club records sometimes featured alternate or "Special" covers, as we see on the Beatles' *Help!* album.

Ex-Libris is the music division of the Swiss supermarket chain, Migros. Beginning in 1952, their book club expanded into a record club that released special editions of records which could be purchased with club coupons. In the public shops non-members could buy their records with cash. Reportedly, their records sold well – at lower prices than regular editions.

Catalog Number	Title
SMO 983-790 (white/gold label)	Beatles For Sale
SMO 983-790 (orange label)	Beatles For Sale
SMO 984-008	Help! (beach cover)
SMO 984-066	Rubber Soul







Stateside 917-001 Ray Charles Baby Please (mono) yellow "alle" label Columbia C 983-340 Edith Piaf Les plus grands succès (mono) yellow "alle" label Later released as 973-340

Columbia STC 983-720 Hazy Osterwald Sextett Sudamerika Tanzreise yellow "alle" label Columbia SMC 980-661 Karajan & London Philharmonic Der Rosenkavalier

Columbia SMC 980-762 Orchestre De La Société des Concerts du Conservatoire Paris Ravel: Bolero

Columbia SMC 983-867 Golden Gate Quartet Glory Hallelujah yellow "alle" label

Columbia SMC 983-890 Cliff Richard Our Friends Imprint Columbia SMC 983-899 Various Schlager von Heute Imprint

One Beatles track. This record was in the HZ series in Germany.

Columbia SMC 980-961 London Philharmonic Mozart: Die Entfuhrung Aus Dem Serail

Highlights yellow "alle" label

Columbia SMC 980-985 Elisabeth Schwarzkopf Die Lustige Witwe yellow "alle" label

Columbia SMC 984-092 Various Hits a Gogo yellow label

Some copies have a sticker with the wrong number, 984-082.

Columbia 937-001 Adamo Tour d'Adamo yellow "urheber" label

Columbia 997-005 Heino Wir lagen vor Madagaskar Imprint

Columbia 997-008 Christian Anders Es fährt ein Zug nach Nirgendwo yellow "urheber" label

from HZ SHZE-358, 1972.

Columbia 997-009 Heino 28 seiner grossen Erfolge Imprint

Columbia 998-001 Hermann Prey singt Baladen von Carl Loeweyellow "urheber" label

Electrola 979-011 Mahler: Das Lied von der Erde yellow "urheber" label

What is the ZTOX- Series?

The ZTOX- series albums are hard to find. For Odeon albums, OPX- (mono) and ZTOX- (stereo) indicated a foreign distribution number. In other words, records with either of these prefixes were marked for (possible) distribution outside of Germany. The other EMI albums also had foreign distribution numbers. Electrola typically used WALP- and WCLP- for mono albums; they used ADSW- and CDSW- series for stereo albums. Columbia employed the prefix WSX- for mono albums and SCXW- for stereo records to label them for foreign distribution.



Until 1968, every Beatles album that was labeled for foreign distribution had an OPX- number if it was released in mono and a ZTOX- number if it was released in stereo.

MONO LP's					
Title	OPX number	HZE number	O- number	Other Number	Proper Matrix
With the Beatles	OPX-82		O-83-568	XEX-447/8	XEX-447/8
Die Beatles (PPM)	None	HZE-117	None	XEX-421/2	HZE-117
Beatles Beat	OPX-94		O-83-692	XBEX-50047/8	XBEX-50047/8
Yeah Yeah Yeah (HDN)	OPX-99		O-83-739	XEX-481/2	XEX-481/2
Something New	OPX-107		O-83-756	XBEX-50059/60	XBEX-50059/60

STEREO LP's					
Title ZTOX number SHZE number S*O- number Other Number Proper Matrix					Proper Matrix
With the Beatles	ZTOX-5545		STO-83-568	YEX 110/1	YEX 110/1
Die Beatles (PPM)	None	SHZE-117	None	YEX 94/5	SHZE-117
Please Please Me	ZTOX-5550	SHZE-117	None	YEX 94/5	SHZE-117
Beatles Second Album	ZTOX-5558			YBEX-50-053/4	YBEX-50-053/4
Yeah Yeah Yeah (HDN)	ZTOX-5564		STO-83-739	YEX-126/7	YEX-126/7
Something New	ZTOX-5572		STO-83-756	YBEX-50059/60	YBEX-50059/60

Beatles for Sale	ZTOX-5581		SMO-83-790	YEX-142/3	YEX-142/3
Beatles Beat (1965)	None		6086	12PAL-3152/3	12PAL-3152/3
Beatles '65	ZTOX-5598		SMO-83-917	YBEX-50067/8	YBEX-50067/8
The Beatles' Greatest	ZTOX-5600		SMO-83-991	YBEX-50069/70	YBEX-50069/70
Help!	ZTOX-5604	SHZE-162	SMO-84-008	YEX-168/9	SHZE-162
Rubber Soul	ZTOX-5613		SMO-84-066	YEX-178/9	YEX-178/9
Revolver	ZTOX-5623	None	SMO-74-161	YEX-605/6	YEX-605/6
Revolver	None	SHZE-186	None	None	SHZE-186
Sgt. Pepper's LHCB	ZTOX-5636	SHZE-401	SMO-81-045		SHZE-401
The Beatles			SMO-2051/2	YEX-709//12	YEX-708//12
Yellow Submarine			SMO-74-585	YEX-715/6	YEX-715/6

The ZTOX- number only appears on the labels of those records that could be distributed outside of Germany. Since albums in the Hör Zu series were *only* designated for distribution in Germany, no record in those series (whether by the Beatles or any other artist) has a foreign distribution number on the label. The first use of the ZTOX- number to indicate foreign distribution was ZTOX-5501, released in 1960. For example, OPX-2 = O-83-023 and ZTOX-5506 = STO-80-593 -- both in 1960.

Unlike the 83000 series, which stretched across the Columbia, Odeon, and Electrola labels, the OPX- and ZTOX- numbering referred exclusively to Odeon records. Yes, that's what the "O" stands for. So, since many Odeon records have a foreign distribution number, what about the records that have no Odeon series number – having only the ZTOX number?

These were released through the European Exchange Service. The EES began as the Army Exchange Service in 1943. Its purpose was to operate post exchanges for allied troops. It appears to be the case that when the Air Force Exchange Service was merged into the EES in 1964, they made an agreement to distribute records. Some of these records were in demand in allied countries but had not been released commercially in Germany. Electrola's Department for Special Production, which also handled German book-club releases, oversaw the inventory of the special releases ... the ones that were not available in Germany. Non-Beatles releases having only the ZTOX number include the following:

Mariachi Mexico	Mariachi Mexico	ZTOX-5554	Capitol ST-10269
La Banda de Genaro Nuñez	Toros and Toreros	ZTOX-5556	Capitol ST-10350
Tino Contreras	Percusiones Mexicanas	ZTOX-5557	Capitol ST-10310
Florindo Sassone	A Night in Buenos Aires	ZTOX-5561	Capitol ST-10345
Horst Kudritzki	Berlin bei Nacht	ZTOX-5562	Capitol ST-10228

The first of the ZTOX-only series appears to have been issued in mid-1964, not in March as reported in some literature. All of the ZTOX-only records that are known to exist come from 1964. As you see above, every known non-Beatles album fitting that description is associated with an LP imported from Capitol Records in the USA.

The prefixes commonly associated with popular records on the other EMI affiliates in Germany were:

Electrola – WCLP (mono) and CSDW (stereo); Columbia – 33-WSX (mono) and SCXW (stereo).



Some classical records having export-only designations are known to exist from 1960 on the Electrola label, where the first stereo export-only record was numbered ASDW-9001. The record was popular enough that Electrola later issued it domestically with the number STE 80-025. That said, the only known Columbia popular records having SCXW-only numbers were released in 1964.

© 2000, 2024 Frank Daniels