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MARCH 2000

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features
including Sony's
CRX 120E-RP
CD writer



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MARCH 2000

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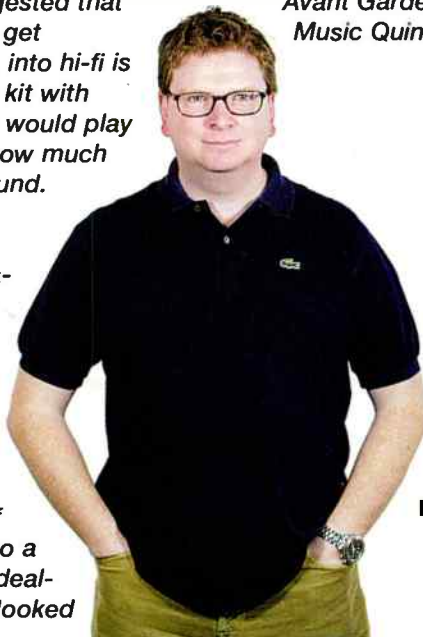
Firstly, let me say that I'm not one to brag. Neither do I regard myself as a prophet, but I have to admit to a little glow of self-satisfaction when I read the Japanese press release from Pioneer regarding DVD-A.

Apparently the code for the protection system had been broken by a third party (unnamed) and plastered over a web page (no address!). The result of this is that US recording companies have temporarily pulled out of production of the DVD-A software. The record companies have always tried to scupper the copyright problem by suggesting that players have no digital output to heavily limit recording possibilities. After commenting a couple of months ago in this very spot that the music business has more control over the hi-fi industry than people think, it seems an example of this has fallen into our laps. Well, sort of,

anyway. As this has not deterred Pioneer from still launching two players in Japan whilst a new copyright protection system is being worked on (the cost of installing the new one will apparently be met by Pioneer).

This subject links in with an important point raised by Marantz's guru Ken Ishiwata in a recent review. He suggested that the only way to get younger people into hi-fi is to demonstrate kit with music that they would play on it, to show how much better it can sound. He has a valid point. The younger generation are, to a certain extent, design-conscious, but they also appreciate something that sounds good. If they wander into a hi-fi show or a dealership and are looked

down at or patronised by dealers and exhibitors (or bored stiff by people with plastic carriers full of vinyl records), another nail is driven into the hi-fi coffin. And, no matter how vigorously the demonstrator nods his head out of time to the beat, they won't be enticed into hi-fi by the latest audiophile jazz release of Peter Piper and his Avant Garde Lift Music Quintet!



Simon Pope

How we test the products

● Hi-Fi World has its own advanced test laboratory and acoustically treated listening room.

● Hi-Fi World has a dedicated team of experienced listeners. We review thoroughly by extensive auditioning, rather than by quick-fire group listening tests.

● Hi-Fi World's engineering team designs a wide range of products in-house. No other hi-fi magazine is so expert and dedicated.



OUTSTANDING -
 Superb sound, something we'd use ourselves.



GOOD -
 Has strong merit. Well worth an audition.



ADEQUATE -
 Mediocre in several areas. May be worth auditioning.



POOR -
 Seriously flawed. Not worth considering.

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P12 ... DVD Group Test

REVIEWS

LOUDSPEAKERS

26 . . . TANNOY R3

One of the most famous names in loudspeakers, Tannoy have maintained a reputation for quality right from the days of Guy Fountain. Their new R3 floorstanding model has the appearance of a space-saving R2. Noel Keywood finds out whether sound principals have been applied.

47 . . . NEAT CRITIQUE PRO

There is a body of opinion which maintains a profound scepticism on 'professional' products in domestic audio. Neat's well-received little Critique 'speakers have had the Pro treatment. Richard White weighs the Pros and constructs a fair critique.

53 . . . ACOUSTIC ENERGY AEGIS TWO

The Aegis Two is the floorstanding brother of the excellent Aegis One. Will this £250 challenger reign supreme? Simon Pope does the honours.

CD PLAYERS

35 . . . ROTEL RCD 991

This is the new flagship player from Rotel. The £800 991 features HDCD and an advanced power supply. Will it turn as many heads as the cheaper RCD951.

39 . . . NAD C 540

NAD have customarily made a strong bid for the mid-price bracket. Having proved what can be done with value-for-money amplifiers, how do they fare with CD players? Richard White considers whether £330 is money well spent.

DVD PLAYERS

12 . . . DVD GROUP TEST

Is DVD Hi-Fi? In the minefield of the new formats, it behoves the explorer to be cautious about where he's putting his feet. To help us decide the issue, we group test five Digital Versatiles from Denon, JVC, Pioneer, Sony and Yamaha, to find out how they perform primarily as CD players.

VINYL

32 . . . MICHELL DELPHINI PHONO STAGE

We have featured a number of very competitively priced phono amplifiers recently, so it is only fair to take a look at the high-end. David Price gives the Michell a chance for a place in the sun.



P35 ... Rotel RCD 991



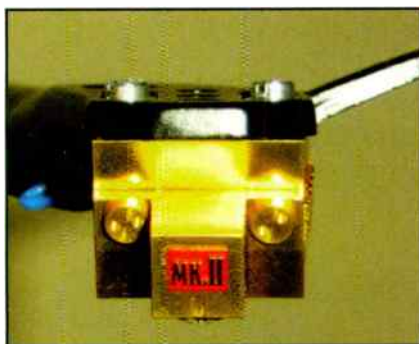
**P53 ... Acoustic Energy
Aegis Two**



P39 ... NAD C540

33 . . . DYNAVECTOR dv17d2 - Mk-II

Not content with doing things by halves, David Price gets thoroughly into the groove with Dynavector's £449 moving coil cartridge. To see if he gets any snap and crackle with his pop, turn to page 33.



P33 ... Dynavector

FEATURES

HDCD

37 . . . KENWOOD HDCD MIDI- SYSTEM

High Definition Compact Disc has been largely overshadowed by the format giants of the past few years. Although not in itself a format, of course, the well thought out encoding system of HDCD permits pleasurable listening over and above CD standards. Simon Pope takes a look at Kenwood's exceedingly affordable midi.

13 . . . THE SOUND OF DVD

Noel Keywood considers the options with DVD technology: where it comes from, what it is, and, most importantly, where it's going. Navigate the storm-tossed acronyms and steer safely for the multi-channel ports.

49 . . . TRICHORD CLOCK

David Price gives some timely first aid to his Ye Olde 78 rpm CD player, with the help of improved clock circuitry from Trichord. Was it all worth it? Let your ears decide.

50 . . . COMPUTER AUDIO WORLD

We keep ourselves up-to-date with some of the latest in this ever-expanding field. This month we look at a budget sound-card from Yamaha, and Sony's CRX120E-RP. More than just a CD writer, but how much more?



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Follow signs for City Centre.



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- Accompanied children under 16 free

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WHAT HI-FI?

PIONEER LEAD THE WAY IN RECORDABLE DVD

Since the launch of DVD players back in 1996, the world has been awaiting the arrival of the first recordable version. Now that DVD players are virtually a household requirement (with sales speculated at 5million units worldwide) Japan has seen the launch of the world's first recordable unit from Pioneer, and to match it, the first DVD-RW disc is also available. The DVR-1000 recorder, the first of a generation sure to replace VHS, will record two hours in standard mode (highest quality) and up to six full hours in manual mode (varying picture quality) on one disc. Like DVD-V there is 24/96 sound quality, DTS output and a Dolby Digital Consumer Encoder for audio compression.

The DVS-RW47 disc is single-sided with a 4.7Gbyte storage capacity (the same as a standard DVD-V disc) that can store up to six hours of information and apparently be recorded on approx. 1000 times. The UK press presentation of the DVR-1000 takes place later this month, so watch this space for news of its UK launch.

And on the subject of DVD, more news arrives from Pioneer of the launch of DVD-A/DVD-V compatible players. A press release from Tokyo states that the code in the proposed copyright protection (a consistently grey area) system, in which Matsushita have been heavily involved, has been "broken by a third party" and displayed for all on a web site. This got bigwigs in the US recording industry all a-twitter and they have postponed all production of software titles. However, this has not actually delayed the launch of the two Pioneer DVD-A/V players in Japan. Although a new copyright protection system will take at least six months to achieve, Pioneer felt that due to "customer anticipation" withholding the launch "is not beneficial to the DVD-Audio industry".

ONE THING AFTER ANOTHER

Having set the world ablaze with their FM stereo decoder last year, One Thing have been busy improving the device.

Apparently, to make doubly sure to the billionth degree that the decoder will suit any tuner, the manufacturers have decided to offer an improved model with amplification.

How this works is that if the multiplex output of your tuner is a little on the low side, an integral amplifier beefs up the signal so that full stereo separation is achieved without strain.



One Thing, Classique House
61 Aylestone Drive,
Aylestone
Leicester, LE2 8QE
Tel: 0116 2835821

THE CRESTA OF A WAVE

The latest budget model in the Cresta Range has been launched by KEF. The Cresta 1 - a two-way, rear-ported bass reflex design - is the smaller brother of the award-winning Cresta 1 and features a 4in long-throw bass/mid driver and a 1in silk dome tweeter housed in the 295x170x188mm cabinet. The Cresta 1 is competitively priced at £99.99 and is available now.



KEF Audio UK Ltd.,
Eccleston Rd.,
Tovil,
Maidstone,
Kent ME15 6QP
Tel: 01622 672261

MONSTER REFERENCE

This audiophile beast is the flagship turntable and linear tracking arm from Clearaudio. The Master Reference turntable is the destination of the upgrade path that can be achieved all the way from the humble Solution. The Master reference features three synchronized motor units and if you have an unhealthy obsession with tonearms, up to three are catered for!

The Master TQ-1 is the top of the range linear tracking arm constructed from acrylic, brass and lead antimony alloy and is intended for use with the Master Reference turntable. Not surprisingly this vinyl-lovers delight doesn't come cheap. The turntable in either stainless steel or brass finish is £8510 and the Master TQ-1 arm is £3620. However, a ten year guarantee is supplied!

Audio Reference,
Unit 8&9 Enterprise Park,
Slyfield Industrial Estate,
Guildford,
Surrey GU1 1RB
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The Kingdom 12

KINGDOM COME!

The high-end Kingdom range from Tannoy has a new arrival. The Kingdom 12 is the 'baby' of the range and features three drive units. Most of the music is delivered via the 10in Dual Concentric and is joined by a 12in low frequency unit and a SuperTweeter. As you would expect from such lofty 'speakers, the cabinet is apparently thick paneled to reduce coloration, and there is extensive bracing used. According to Tannoy's MD, Alex Munro, the Kingdom 12 is aimed at the serious hi-fi enthusiast, with a "more affordable" price to attract "a wider group of people". The more affordable price is £6000 for the pair.

More news reaches us from Tannoy of their new Mercury mX range. The successful Mercury range is to be replaced by three new mX models, the 1, 2 and 3. The obvious aim of the new range is to improve on the performance of the existing Mercury range by reviewing

each component and its interaction within the design. Emphasis has been put upon the cabinet design and includes tongue and groove joints and a "glued and screwed" front baffle. Finished in light maple or (very) dark oak, an alternative to traditional black ash, with silver grey grilles, the mX1, 2 and 3s are priced at £119.90, £149.90 and £229.90 respectively.



The New mX range

**Tannoy Ltd.,
Rosehall Industrial Estate,
Coatbridge,
Strathclyde ML5 4TF
Tel: 01236 420199**

A3 OK!

Not a company associated with shyness, Musical Fidelity claim their new A3 pre and power amplifiers were "conceived to be the best in the world regardless of price". Some claim indeed! The new pre and power, as always with Musical Fidelity, were designed on their performance potential. They are considered by the company a bid to bring true high-end performance to a wider public.

Both the pre and power were designed to be SACD compatible and therefore should handle the bandwidth that stretches up to 100kHz. Both are also choke regulated and particular emphasis has been paid to lack of distortion: Musical Fidelity claim that the power amplifier has lower distortions at 100kHz than most amplifiers have at 8kHz!

The development of the amplifiers ran parallel with the NuVista 300 power amp,



so the result is apparently a product which has true high-end audiophile merit matched with a price that is affordable for many, as both amplifiers are priced at £999, keeping them below the all-important £1000 watershed!

**Musical Fidelity Ltd.,
15/16 Olympic Trading Estate,
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Amplifiers: SPECTRAL – reviewed consistently as one of the very best, **GAMUT** – bred from professional studio use, and the gorgeous, stunning **NAGRA** valve amps.

Speakers: VERITY AUDIO – natural, fatigue-free sound from compact floor-standers, **AUDIO PHYSIC** – legendary imaging, neutral balance and **BKS** – high end from a ribbon hybrid which integrates properly.

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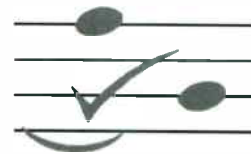
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LAS VEGAS!

Cerwin Vega have a new range of available through UK distributors, Lamba plc. The LS series has three floorstanding models, three standmount/bookshelf models and two centre channel 'speakers. The top of the range LS-15 uses a whopping 15in bass driver, the LS-12 a 12in and so on down to the home cinema LS-5 model. The floorstanders have new low-mass woofer cones and all models use a 30mm balanced dome tweeter, with the three-ways using a 5in midrange unit. Prices range from £699.95 for a pair of LS-15s to £129.95 for the LS-5C centre 'speaker.

Lamba Plc,
Albion Mills,
Albion Rd.,
St Albans,
Herts AL1 5EB
Tel: 01727 840527



NEW BOSTON DUO

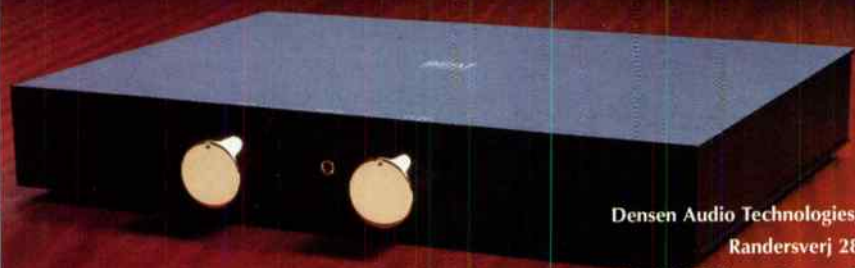
Boston Acoustics have two new pairs of floorstanding 'speakers available in the UK. The VR975 and 965 both feature Deep Channel design active bass units incorporating their own BassTrac circuitry. The 975 uses a 125W amplifier which powers a 10in DCD bass driver with a 12in tuned radiator with four midrange drivers. The 965 uses an 80W amplifier with matched with an 8in bass driver and a single midrange unit. Both 'speakers employ a Boston Lynnfield VR 1in tweeter. Prices are £849.99 for the VR965 and £1249.99 for the VR975.

Portfolio Marketing,
PO Box 88,
Hedge End,
Hants SO23 2XN
Tel: 01489 795519



BEAT THAT!

It would appear that Densen's Beat B-100 integrated amplifier has maybe found a wider audience. Andy Gill - the rock reviewer of the Independent chose the B-100 as one of his favourite things of the last one thousand years. He described it as creating a sound that is a "completely transparent transfer of the sound from source to 'speakers". We wonder whether this satisfied customer needs a job!



Densen Audio Technologies,
Randersvej 28
DK-6700 Esbjerg - Denmark
Tel: 0045 75 18 12 14

NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

A selection of some of the goodies we hope to bring you next month:

Roksan Kandy CD player

This is the CD department of the new midrange-priced Kandy series from Roksan. Based on the style of their successful Caspian range, will the Kandy deliver as sweet a sound as its name implies?

Budget amplifier group test

We take a selection of amplifiers with phono inputs all priced below £200. Of the many models available, there are a dwindling number with the once so-important phono stage. We survey this hotly contended field.

Puccini Special Edition

Can you improve on an outstanding success, or does the well-known phrase about painting the lily apply? We give a critical ear to the latest Audio Analogue amplifier offering.

THE SOUND OF DVD

Noel Keywood & Richard White look at what a DVD video player offers the audiophile. They group test five of the latest players.



With record sales reported over Christmas, it looks like Britain is at last taking to DVD. It's meant to be a replacement for the VHS video tape and - if you ignore the fact that it cannot record (cough!) - it's way better in every area. From a disc that's physically identical to a CD you get superb picture quality, good durability, a massive range of special abilities and, at worst, CD sound quality.

At worst? Yes. Sound wise, DVD has some big surprises in store. The DVD video standard accommodates no fewer than four different movie sound track audio formats, all of high quality. Three of them arguably offer a better audio experience than ordinary stereo; two have a higher technical specification than CD. And all DVD video players will play audio CDs as well.

Just how good will your audio CDs sound on a DVD video player? That was our main concern in this group report. Is audio CD replay just a secondary issue in a video player? We tested the conven-

tional audio performance of all five and listened to them to see how they compare with hi-fi players.

The consortium of manufacturers that developed DVD chose CD audio as a minimum quality standard. DVD video players are fitted with high performance (24-bit/96kHz) digital-to-analogue converters that should deliver top notch results from audio CDs - and play higher specification 24/96 CDs as well. However, few music-only discs meeting this higher specification exist, most coming from small, specialist U.S. labels. Needless to say, they are expensive, at around £25. Playing sound track "super discs" is only going to appeal to a few well heeled audiophiles, and the curious. All the same, we checked all five players to ensure they could handle such discs.

Hooking a DVD player up to the stereo is necessary if it is to be used as an audio CD player. It's a simple way to enjoy good sound quality from DVD movies too. For those who don't mind getting into a little more cost and com-

plexity, surround sound is available in addition to stereo, as standard nowadays. Four of our five players had Dolby surround sound; only the Denon lacked it.

Most people find the idea of a full blown surround sound system, comprising six loudspeakers plus a giant A/V amp., all a bit too much. Home Cinema, as it is called, hasn't taken off in Britain like it has in America. It is possible to compromise though, using your stereo to handle the front channels, plus an additional small amplifier and loudspeakers to handle the rear. Because most of today's DVD players have Dolby surround sound decoders built in, a dedicated A/V amp with decoder is unnecessary.

DVD movie players offer a lot of technology for the price. It's a good time to buy, because rental stores like Blockbuster now have a good range of titles on DVD, and the machines themselves are well developed. For the audio buff, DVD has a lot to offer. This is a video medium where sound quality has not been an afterthought.

UNDERSTANDING DVD VIDEO

Noel Keyword guides you through the minefield of technology that is DVD

DVD video is called DVD-V and DVD audio DVD-A. The two should not be confused. In this issue we are looking at the audio capabilities of DVD video players (i.e. DVD-V).

It is part of the specification that DVD video players can play ordinary CDs, which undermines CD. After all, why should people buy a CD player when a DVD player will do the same job and play movies too? The future does not look good for CD. And you might have noticed that DVD players are now the same price as CD players, Wharfedale recently announcing a player built at their factory in China priced at £179.99. For what you get, it's an amazing price. The man that brought the world the Cambridge CD-1 CD player, Stan Curtis, now runs Wharfedale and was excited about their new DVD player when I spoke to him. The point being that the market is changing rapidly - even great British hi-fi companies realise it.

Playing audio CDs, an inexpensive DVD player may not give quite the same clarity as a hi-fi CD player, but our tests show they lack nothing in measured performance.

Movies have sound tracks of course. Part of the DVD specification is that they can handle four different audio formats for sound tracks, two of which actually offer a higher audio spec. than CD.

DIGITAL THEATRE SOUND

Digital Theatre Sound, or dts, has a specification higher than audio CD, offering 24bit/96kHz quality, in surround sound too, albeit with some compression to reduce data rate. Discs with dts sound are available from Vivante - see www.dtsdigitalsound.com for a list of titles.

You need to route the digital audio output of a DVD player to an external video amplifier or decoder to extract dts since most DVD players, including all those we tested except the Pioneer, lack an internal decoder.

LINEAR PCM (24/96)

Linear PCM (Pulse Code Modulation) is the data coding scheme used by audio CD. DVD offers an upgraded specification of the same scheme with 24-bit quantisation at 96kHz sampling rate. Audio CD uses 16 bits to describe the amplitude of a signal, at 44.1kHz sampling rate. It's an old specification, born out of late-1970s technology.

DVD movie audio with 24-bit quantisation has a theoretical dynamic range of 144dB, compared to 96dB for audio CD. This reduces digital distortions significantly, giving a smoother sound. The higher sampling rate of 96kHz extends analogue bandwidth out to 48kHz, adding a greater sense of air and space around the sound. Digital "brick wall" filters at 22kHz have a flattening, confining effect upon CD sound that DVD can remove.

Quite a few manufacturers are installing 24bit/96kHz audio converters into their DVD players but at present it isn't easy to enjoy their benefits, because discs with audio recorded to this high specification are rare.



DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND SOUND

An increasing number of DVD players have on-board Dolby surround-sound decoders. This is a movie audio format that gives left and right front channels, left and right rear channels, a centre front channel for speech and a subwoofer channel for low frequency sound effects

such as explosions. That's six physical channels, which puts a lot of loudspeakers into the room and needs a mountain of amplification.

Dolby movie sound encodes to the CD standard of 16-bit at 44.1 Hz, but it uses data 'compression' to reduce data rate, compromising sound quality. Digital Theatre Sound offers higher quality, but Dolby is far and away the most popular surround system. Some music-only discs are being issued in Dolby surround sound in order to convey the ambience of a live recording.

MPEG AUDIO

The least common audio format, MPEG audio is a 5.1 or even 7.1 channel surround-sound system championed by European giant Philips. Most movies come from America, where they prefer Dolby, so MPEG surround audio is a rarity.

THE FUTURE OF DVD

Just around the corner are two dynamite audio formats: DVD Audio (DVD-A) and Super Audio CD (SACD). DVD Audio uses the whole DVD disc to store super high quality audio. It uses a 24bit level description at 192kHz sampling rate for stereo, but 24 bit at 96kHz for 5.1 channel sound. Both these audio formats can be encoded with lossless compression, an issue for the music business who want a format where data is not removed.

Today's DVD video players, including those tested here, will not replay DVD Audio when it arrives. They will, however, play the low resolution layer of hybrid SACDs to give CD standard sound quality (16bit at 44.1kHz) from an SACD, although future DVD players will likely play the HD layer to give full SACD quality. Philips and Sony, developers of rival SACD, are part of the DVD group, by the way.

On the video side DVD offers superior picture quality to VHS, jitter free still

frame and fast motion, compact size, light weight and good durability, plus cinema surround sound if you want a surround sound setup in your home. Pity it cannot record tv yet, it's great weakness on the video side, but DVD-RW will sort that out when it arrives in a year or two. Pioneer

have just announced the first DVD-RW, but it is expensive and for Japan only at present. Standards have yet to be agreed.

On the audio side today's DVD players offer respectable CD sound quality. Technically, there are no weaknesses in their performance, although sonically

they do not match dedicated audio players. They have the potential to offer higher quality, but suitable discs are rare at present. They can also provide surround sound, if that's what you prefer. It's a lot of audio for the money, making DVD a strong bet for the future.

THE SOUND OF 24bit/96kHz



The John Basile Quartet The Desmond Project CHESKY: CHDVD178 96/24 SUPERAUDIODISC

We used this disc to see how good the DVD videos could sound playing a 24bit/96kHz disc. There was a more air and space around the delicate brush of snare against cymbal, instruments had a richer texture and a greater range of textural shading through a performance. Whilst transients were no faster, decays were smooth and silky, down to an easy

silence. With CD a subliminal shakiness and edginess accompanies music that uprated 24bit/96kHz digital recording gently eases away.

The down side is that only a few specialist labels are releasing music on DVD video discs and the discs are inevitably costly at £24.95.

Contact Vivante for DVD video discs carrying 24/96 linear PCM, Dolby surround sound and dts home theatre if you would like to hear what's possible.

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UNDERSTANDING YOUR DVD PLAYER

DVD VIDEO

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S-VIDEO

From the S-VHS system, separate chrominance and luminance channels for better quality. Connects to S-Video input of a tv.

VIDEO

Basic television video (baseband) signal. Connects to tvs and video monitors with video input. No audio, so AUDIO outputs are used in conjunction.

COMPONENT VIDEO

A broadcast standard that is the basic system used by DVD. Offers least internal video processing. Connects to video projectors and such like.

AUDIO - 2ch.

Normal stereo output for a conventional stereo amplifier. Delivers 16-bit/44.1kHz quality or 24-bit/96kHz quality from suitably encoded discs.

AUDIO - 6 ch.

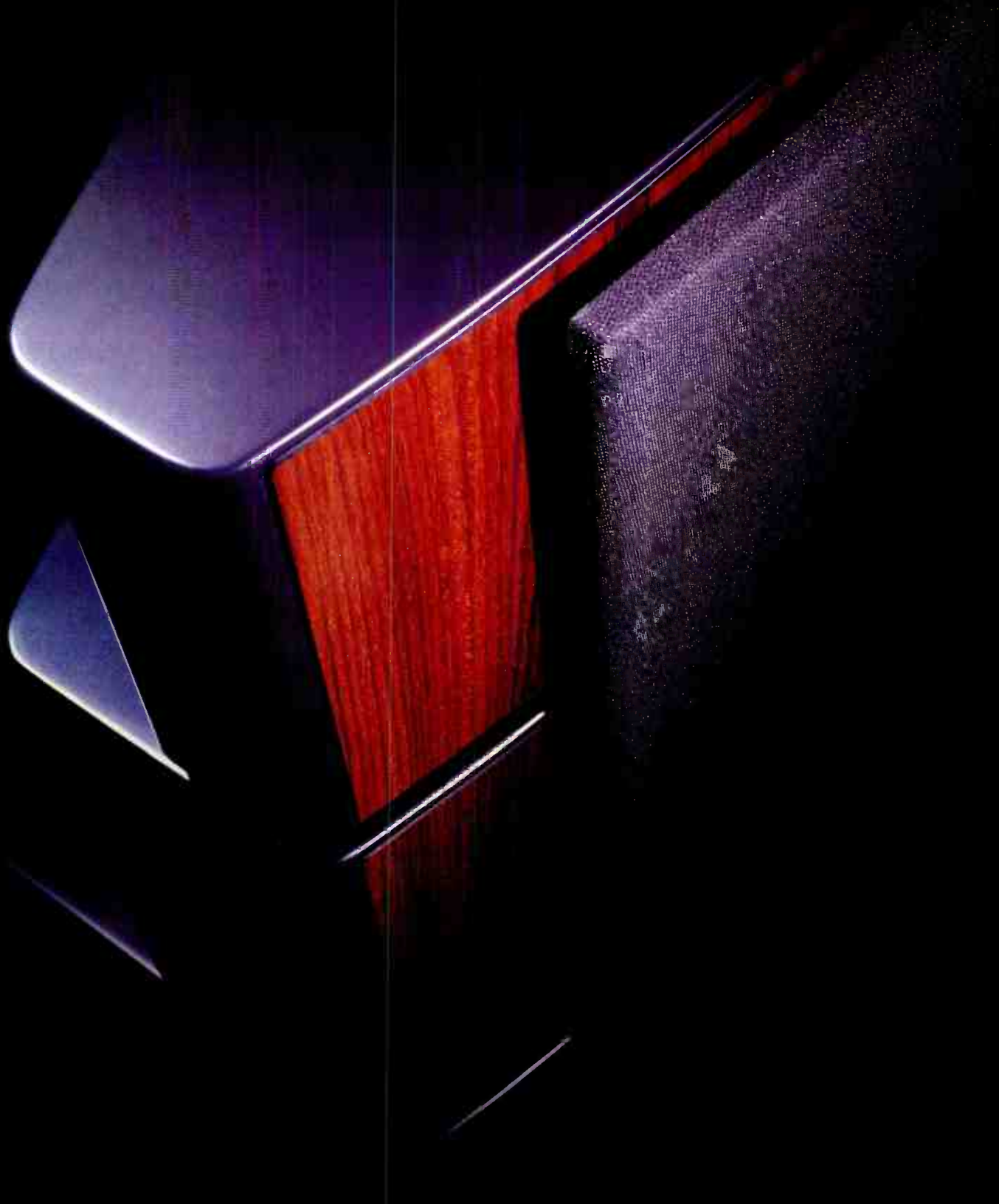
Surround sound output comprising front left, right and centre channels, as well as rear left and right channels, plus a subwoofer channel. Commonly Dolby surround sound, or artificial surround sound synthesised from stereo.

DIGITAL AUDIO OUT

For connection to a surround-sound amplifier with on-board decoder, or a separate decoder. Because the digital standard supports 48kHz sampling rate maximum this output does not convey 96kHz sampling rate audio and will not provide digital DVD Audio when it arrives.



ultimate



SONY DVP S725D £550

Sony's offering for our group is something of a staggerer in that it is Not Black. Nor yet is it brushed aluminium - not even champagne gold. Sony's DVP-S726D is white. I draw attention to this at length in case anyone thinks we've printed the negative by mistake.

In common with most DVD machines to be encountered, the Sony is able to play DVD Video, Compact Disc Video and plain ordinary CD.

On the back panel, the audio out sockets are reserved an area to themselves, away from the 5.1 multi-channel arrangements. This makes setting up for audio use practically foolproof. As is usual, there are optical and co-axial sockets for sundry bolt-ons, the most relevant of which might be an external DAC.

On the off-white front panel, there is a rather piercing blue light which gleams all the while the drawer is empty but goes out if the disc inserted is not multi-channel - stereo doesn't count, it would seem. The drawer itself is solidly trimmed with alloy, with the DVD trademark in relief. In addition to the now-familiar jog dial for

selecting the start to the nearest second (and I dare say rather more exciting applications for video), there is a handy 'jog knob' does duty for those irksome last and next buttons. It sounds trivial, but it's a lot easier twisting your preferred track than all of that press-press-press lark.

Unlike others in our group, Sony have chosen a 'plain English' display, without any of the intriguing graphics (spinning discs, 'speaker arrangements) favoured in other quarters.

On first spinning a CD disc, I was pleasantly surprised by the Sony's clarity when compared with the rest of the group. My well-worn Chandos recording of Haydn's Prussian quartets can occasionally suffer from dullness if there is any of that sort of thing sloshing around the reproducing chain. Instead of the 'here it is - take it or leave it' which I had been steeling myself for, the DVP-S726D gave the old master a generous slice of attack which was welcome, if unexpected. Although I can't promise that you'd always want this sort of forwardness, it is one answer to the rather lack-lustre effects which seem to be inherent in penny-plain

CD players. Let's face it, that's what DVD is at the moment, as far as the listener is concerned. It matters very little whether pictures and o-so-informative channels can be added to one's listening pleasure; when your preferred set-up comprises only two - count 'em, two - loudspeakers, you are within your rights to want the most from these! Sony's overall bright balance seemed to be penetrating this mine-field of compromise quite well.

A chirpy balance can be appealing to begin with but it can, of course, become tiring after a while. To check this out, I tried out one of my spikier discs, Rameau ballet suites on Conifer. Since the artists concerned have gone rather overboard for bite in this recording, it's not entirely surprising that the output from the Sony had me wincing once or twice, although in fairness far less than I was mentally prepared for. Even though the aggressive string playing could not be counted as something I'd want hour after hour, I nevertheless felt that I was getting a better feel of the musical content than with the warmer balance favoured by others in the group.



TECH BOX

Sony have shoehorned the technological kitchen sink into this player. It has Dolby surround sound and MPEG surround sound decoders on board, only lacking a dts

decoder. The two channel audio outputs give CD quality sound and full performance from a 24bit/96kHz disc, with audio reaching 48kHz our tests showed. There is a digital audio output too.

On the video side, there are video baseband, two

SCARTs (Euro AV1 & 2), one S-VIDEO and Component Video outputs - a full house. Technically, the Sony was the best of the group. Its only weakness was absence of a 24/96 indicator, to confirm the presence of high quality digital.

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YAMAHA DVDS795 £530

On viewing the Yamaha DVD-S795, the watchwords are plain and simple. Not only is the unit slim and unassuming, but the buttons have been kept to a minimum too. Not that this is necessarily a bad thing. For a start, there is very little thought required to operate it: all the controls carry familiar symbols, so there's little to get wrong.

Connections on the back allow for all the standard hook-ups. Ordinary audio is in this case identified as MIXED 2CH which is a near as makes no difference. Digital outputs for off-board DACs are provided; as usual, with all the potential sampling boosts. Mains is supplied via a figure-of-eight (remember cassette?) plug, rather than the captive leads apparently more favoured for DVD.

As remarked above, the Yamaha more nearly resembles a CD player than any other in this group, play, pause, stop, skip and search covering all playing functions. Again, a headphone socket is provided with a volume control.

In the event of a disc being played, one of those circling segments is displayed with the disc type below. In addition, a graphic showing what is being outputted (stereo, video, multi, subs) lights on

the right hand side. This prevents some confusion: I tried listening to the sound track of a DVD movie and was, to say the least, less than inspired by what I assumed to be 'theatre playback'. A quick look at the graphic showed that after the all-singing, all-dancing multi-channel copyright announcement, the film itself settled down to just stereo with pictures!.

Having wired the unit for just listening to CDs, I turned my attention to Diana Krall's easy-listening/jazz quartet, primarily in order to test for clarity. The perfectly horrid philosophy expounded in Peel Me A Grape gave good evidence of the double bass player's sense of irony, as his glorified tea-chest plumbed to depths of the inanities of the lyric. The Yamaha certainly gave some speed to the bass-line here which more than compensated for the slightly 'electric' sound of the piano. This is admittedly a peculiarity of this recording - it sounds a little as if the piano was EQd to blend with the electric guitar. Some players I have tried, admittedly rather more expensive than this versatile beast, have nonetheless managed to reinstate the true felt-hammer sound despite the engineer's best endeavour, a little bit of reclamation work which was beyond

the modestly specified Yamaha.

The vocals - the mainstay of this disc - were clear enough but without the ultimate clarity which is necessary to Miss Krall's approach. With this song in particular, which is essentially a sort of list of homages to be done before one can hope to escort the (presumably) sexy chanteuse, some of the full piquancy is lost and it is possible to wonder whether all the sacrifices would be worthwhile!

Another of my most telling test discs, The Musical Heritage of Western Sweden (yes, I know - I'm supposed to have a life as well?) suffered from this lack of edge in a similar way. I was beginning to wish that the machine was a smidge less versatile and a little more audio-specific.

Generally more pleasing results were obtained with the Russian National Orchestra's Glazunov symphony album. These recordings have a pleasing weight and depth and, especially in the 4th Symphony, the Yamaha contrived to make the most of the dynamics offered on this Chandos disc. The Russians apparently go for a very massy string sound, perhaps a little too heavy in the tenor range, and the way that the woodwind chattered in and out of this was distinctly appealing.



TECH BOX

Yamaha fit this player with a 24bit/96kHz convertor and a front panel indicator that lights when such a disc is used. Tests showed the audio outputs gave full bandwidth

to 48kHz with such discs. Additionally, a Dolby surround sound decoder has been included, so surround sound is available. There is a digital audio output too.

Euro AV1 & 2 SCART sockets are fitted, two video

baseband outputs and one S-VIDEO output. Component video is not available.

Technically, the Yamaha worked well, offering a full range of facilities on the audio and video side.

JVC XV-D701 £500

JVC have something of a name for mid-to-budget value and the XV-D701BK extends this reputation into the field of DVD. Like all the other machines in this test, the JVC cannot play DVD-Audio, but final specs have not been finalised in any case: little point having DVD-Audio when there isn't anything to play!

Provision is made for use of headphones, presumably to avoid disturbing members of the family who aren't listening to the film, although none of the outfits we've tested have included blindfolds for those who don't want to watch either.

The XV-D701BK will handle 5.1 channel surround sound: discs 'cut' for this system will light an indicator on the front panel. Speaking of displays, the JVC has an interesting pictorial display which shows what looks like an old-fashioned reel-to-reel tape when a disc is in the machine, along with a block diagram showing how many of the six (or is that 5.1?) possible loudspeakers are being catered for.

A confusing note in the instructions says the Linear PCM indicator lights only when a disc contains linear PCM data, then says it also lights up when an audio disc is inserted, as if the two are different.

Turning to the back panel, the usual

six audio outputs jostle for space with the video DIN and AV SCART connexions. The power lead is captive.

Kicking off in a mellow mood with Benny Waters live In Stockholm, I was struck by the musical lilt of the JVC's performance. Let me clarify that: despite the fact that I knew for certain that I wasn't getting anything like the full story, I was nonetheless beguiled by the well-integrated sound the JVC managed to produce. A good many deft and very live touches which litter this recording were conspicuous only by their absence: the buzz of the breath over the saxophone's reed, the clinking of glasses and the low murmur of appreciative voices; all these had taken a very back seat, but the output still managed to sound musical.

Diana Krall's somewhat aggressive sexuality doesn't usually take kindly to rolled-off reproduction. I've found with this disc that the best way of achieving smooth results is to get as much detail as possible through. Sounds paradoxical but it's true. Playing the vocal and guitar duet version of That Old Feeling showed that the XV-D701BK was prepared to make a sporting stab at things but that it had far too much on its mind (extra channels, pictures etc) to pretend to be the ultimate in CD machines per se. This is not entirely

to be expected at the old standard 44.1kHz sampling rate, but still.

The Hanover Band's refreshingly unpretentious gallop through the complete Beethoven symphonies proved a welcome breather from love-gone-sour. It seems to be an attribute of lower-priced CD players generally that the less promising the material from the dreaded 'audiophile' point of view, the better the job they manage to make of it. This unofficial ruling apparently holds good for DVD players too: however much I might carp at the 'missed out' bits of some of my more testing favourites, bunging on a mid-priced disc of old chestnuts and warhorses did much to redress the balance. Tutti string passages made their way to the loudspeakers with a surprising amount of verve.

Although the Hanover Band apparently eschews bottom-heavy balances, the basses and 'cellos sang away in the nether regions providing a solid base for the occasionally rather unadventurous interpretations on these discs. Woodwind decorations too benefitted from the JVC's workmanlike approach, in particular the frequently dry tones of the oboe, which sounded as human as is possible on a cheap record!



TECH BOX

JVC fit Dolby and MPEG surround sound decoders to this player, and a 24bit/96kHz digital convertor that outputs full

bandwidth audio, our tests showed. There is a digital audio output. The only drawback is that there's no 24/96 light to confirm a disc has been recognised.

On the video side there is Component video (Y/C) and Composite through the single SCART output socket. It also has S-VIDEO and baseband out.

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DENON DVD-2500 £495

Like the Yamaha, Denon's offering in the group is plain and simple to a pleasing degree.

For the private types, there is a headphone socket and level adjustment and, well, that's about it aside from the usual skip, pause, open, play etc which you find on any plain CD player.

On the back panel, an absence which perhaps shows the DVD-2500's age is the lack of provision for direct 5.1 multichannel playing. To use this player for more than two channels, you will need a separate decoding device such as Denon's own AVR-3300 receiver. The DVD-2500 does have the optical and co-axial output for this sort of purpose, or else the opportunity for an outboard DAC might be more appropriate.

First off was the by now well-worn Tony Overwater disc *Up Close on Turtle Records*. Detail was the name of the game, with plucked strings being remarkably natural and fast and the saxophone beautifully breathy and controlled.

Having established that this player is the least tooled-up of the group's contestants, I was particularly interested to hear it tackling the plain CD player role.

Since it was handy, I kicked off with the Russian State Symphony Orchestra thundering through Glazunov's 4th and 5th symphonies on Chandos. As the familiar melodies of the Russia's popular composer swept through my loudspeakers, I felt that the known warmth of this recording was being a little reinforced by the DVD player.

Linn chose to record the Indian Queen with an extraordinarily small ensemble which allows the invariably slightly scraggy sound of the viol and other 'period' instruments their full measure. The Denon sounded pretty comfortable with all this spikiness; whatever rounding off of the corners which was going on was not sufficient to mar the performance. Having said that, there was manifestly some loss of treble detail. This was most noticeable in some of the very sibilant vocal passages such as 'What flattering noise is this, at which my snakes all hiss . . .?', which I believe won the Melody Maker Award for Best Original Lyric in 1695.

Having established that the Denon was prepared to put up a reasonable performance of seventeenth Century stuff, I

tried Madeline Bell's easy-listening interpretation of *She's Leavin' Home* to bring things bang up to date. A very cunning transfer from the 24/96 (recording) standard to CD (playing) standard has left an improbable amount of detail and sparkle still on the disc. This is particularly noticeable with the smooth brushwork applied to the cymbals, which punctuate the whole track.

To my surprise, the DVD-2500 seemed to be managing this all quite well, with a convincing brassy sheen (to the cymbals, not the singer) which augured well for general purpose listening. Somewhat puzzled I A-B'd the record with my reference CD player and soon found the reason: the debit side turned out to be in sound-staging and stereo placement. Compared with what I know this record to be capable of producing, the scenery had become a little cramped and one-dimensional. It goes to show that 'detail' is not all down to the musical sounds themselves - even now-prehistoric stereo reproduction requires every ounce of the recording to give the best result.



TECH BOX

The Denon was alone in lacking an on-board Dolby digital decoder, so it cannot provide surround sound of any sort as it stands. An external decoder must be used. Two pairs of

audio output sockets output the same analogue audio signal. They should give enhanced 48kHz analogue bandwidth with a 24bit/96k disc, but the first sample did not. A second sample did, however. Both machines recognised a 24/96 disc had

been inserted.

The player has a digital audio output for external decoders. It has two SCART video outputs, one S-VIDEO output and two baseband video outputs.

Technically, the Denon lags the other players.

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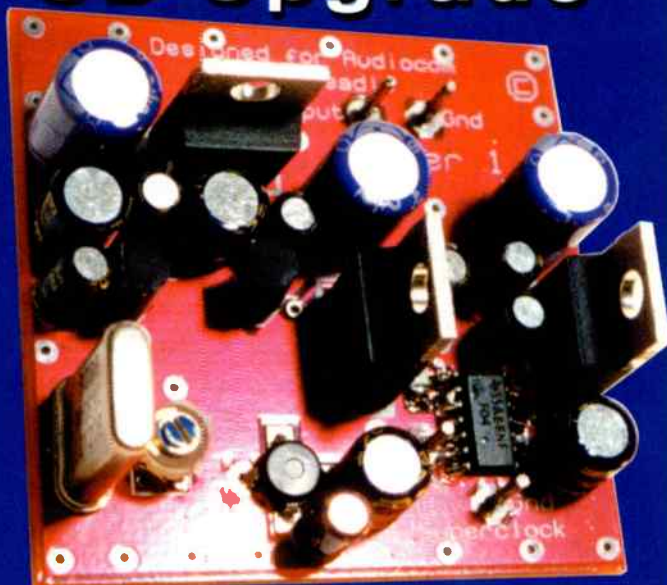
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PIONEER DV-626D £450

Unlike some of our group, Pioneer's DV-626D carries its heart upon its sleeve, or rather it carries its buttons on its front. In addition to the necessary play, skip and pause provisions, on the left hand side of the drawer the user is given a sort of on/off choice for whichever number of loudspeakers he happens to have connected. I mention this in particular because I'm a bit puzzled about its utility: for instance, if you haven't connected a subwoofer, or the disc you are playing isn't cut to handle one, what call have you to switch it on and off? perhaps i'm missing something.

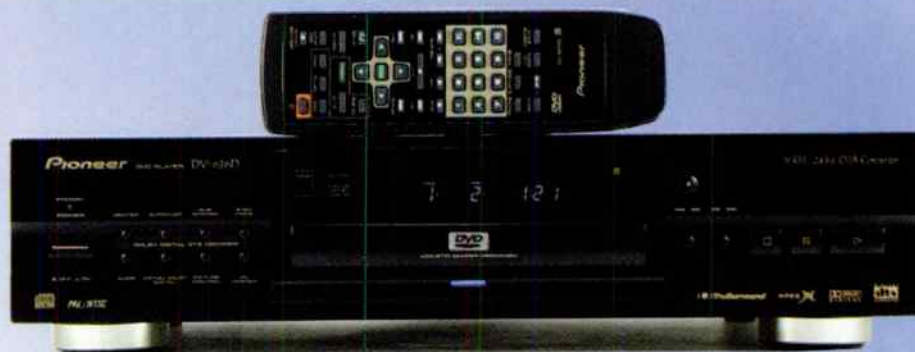
Operating the drawer button gave the opportunity for one of the noisiest and most leisurely bits of audio mechanics I can remember in a long time. Despite this, once the disc had trundled its way into the innards, the Pioneer was quicker on the uptake than many CD players even, and took commendably little time to assess which of the formats it was being fed with. Ordinary CD playing being the basis of our investigations, I kicked off with a dose of seventeenth century courtly love, Linn's *Airs de Cour* disc. The Pioneer took to this like a duck to water. Tonal values throughout the CD audio range were

very well balanced and the duet singing beautifully separated and distinct. The extremely subtle sounds of the lute came through clearly without suffering the pretty-pretty effect which a too-rapid top end roll-off can give. Staying with the unimpeachably well-recorded, I turned next to Louis van Dijk playing *I Could Have Danced All Night*. Although with the very rhapsodic interpretation I defy anyone to have danced at all, let alone all night, the superb van den Hul recording breathed through the 'speakers in a manner which gave further credit to the Pioneer. The bass end of the recording was full, taut and to the point - no wallowing or woolliness to report on. Piano carries a lot of midrange tone values; arguably the DV-626D turned these out a fraction stridently. This may be the cross-bearing on the sibilance which crept into the vocal disc earlier.

Casting delicacy to the four winds, I ploughed into the Russian State Symphony Orchestra giving its all in Glazunov's Fifth. This Chandos record is, let's face it, not the utmost as regards sparkling details, concentrating rather on the full round tones of the symphony orchestra in a way which smooth players can make insufferably dull. Interestingly, although of course

the player ought not to add what isn't there, the Glazunov had sufficient life to warrant extended listening. The massed double basses and bass woodwind benefitted from the DV-626D's generally upbeat approach and managed not to swamp the midrange instruments in a sea of dark brown cocoa. The composer's deft little vignettes for subdivisions of the woodwind caught the Pioneer at its happiest, although once again there was a trade-off to be considered, clarity versus sibilance. Despite this, it managed a lively performance, which isn't always easy with the ponderousness of the record.

According to a recent radio poll, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is one of the most often played pieces of classical music - at least the first movement at any rate. Following this trend, I put on the appropriate disc from the value-for-money Nimbus complete set. With the small-scale Hanover Band, the Pioneer gave a less appealing account of itself. The rather thin tones of the woodwind and strings had a glassy sound which is not all attributable to the disc. Some of the subtlety was getting lost. On the plus side, the tutti sections had exhilarating verve and power.



TECH BOX

The Pioneer player differs in many ways. Its digital output will deliver a 96kHz signal to an external decoder, where the others work up to 48kHz, to stay within the DVD standard. More importantly though, the player has a dts decoder on board, in addition

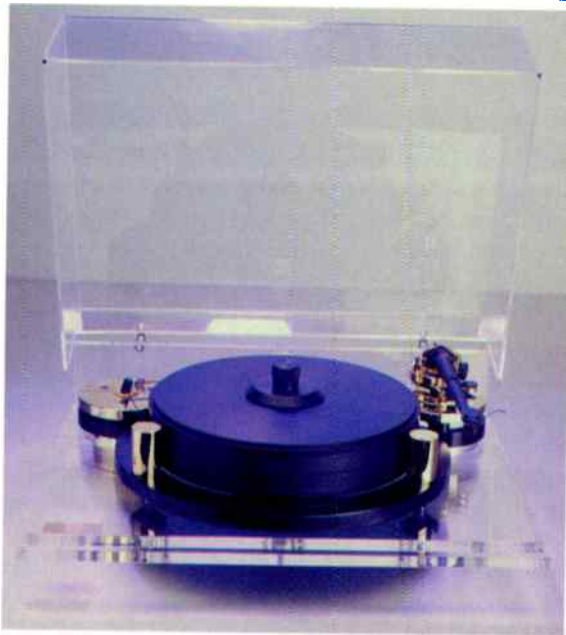
to a Dolby decoder. So it offers very high quality surround sound to two formats. Inserting a 24bit/96kHz disc causes a small red light to come on and tests showed full bandwidth audio to 48kHz is output. There is a single SCART output for connection to a tv, two S-VIDEO outputs, two basebands, and two par-

allel audio outputs, plus a PAL/NTSC switch. The presence of a dts decoder on this machine gives it a bit of an advantage, because a range of dts audio discs are available and dts home theatre sound tracks are reportedly very impressive in sound quality. Together with Dolby the Pioneer has it all.

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CONCLUSION

Putting all our notes in order and drawing a conclusion has not been easy with this group test. Concentrating on the DVD players' abilities as CD players is of course a limited view, but it is after all the most likely audio use for the machines at the present. The supply of 24/96, Dolby and dts surround audio on DVD video discs (i.e. sound track on video discs!) is limited.

Topping our poll came Sony's DVP-S725D, principally because it had a brighter sound than the others. Brightness is not everything, but it certainly seemed to be retrieving a little more detail. If you have a reasonably flat system, the Sony will give a little sparkle. We also took into account the fact that the Sony has surround sound fitted, a 24/96 convertor and a full range of video outputs.

Narrowly pipped to the post was the Pioneer. As we noted, there was a pleasingly musical air to much of what the Pioneer provided. Only a touch of overenthusiasm, which came out as sibilance on certain recordings, gave any real cause for concern. The slightly utilitarian feel of the controls and that quite spectacular cement-mixer disc drawer mechanism, gave the Sony just that fractional edge which, in the end, made all the difference. Unless you want dts surround sound, which only the Pioneer has.

Although it had some dodgy moments with intensely detailed discs, we felt that the Denon offered a good sonic compromise between murderously bright and hopelessly dull. Particularly when playing over-sparkly discs, the DVD-2500 gave a more musical account than some.

The Denon is not the newest of the products in our test, but it is still fighting its corner in a well-balanced manner. This may have something to do with the lack of an on-board multi-channel decoder - extra complexity doesn't always bode well for music. We liked the very simple operation of this machine, but lack of surround sound acted against it, and the uncertainty introduced by absence of 24/96 from one sample.

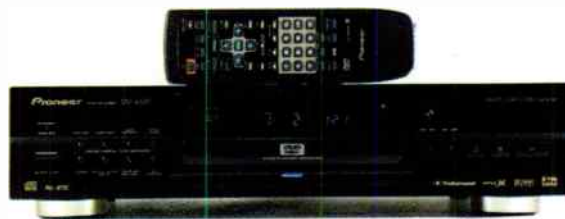
Slightly behind the Denon came the Yamaha and the JVC. Both players exhibit versatility in spades but were more lack-lustre when it comes to playing plain audio CDs. Although for second system use both of these units would give good value, they show unmistakable signs of having been designed with things other than hi-fi primarily in mind.

This has been an interesting and revealing test. On the face of it, DVD video seems to offer a versatile way forward, with the benefit of video and multi-channel sound, plus super-CD sound. Indeed, stereo hi-fi as we've known it for the last thirty years looks a little unambitious, compared with the possibilities on offer from these players.

High quality standard CD sound is not a prime consideration: pictures; interactive information packages; '3D' sound effects; all these contrive to take the spotlight off hi-fi as we know it.. These video players do not offer fantastic results with standard CD, but their on-board 24/96 convertors are high tech. and very respectable all the same, our tests revealed. For sheer entertainment, DVD players have it all.



SONY DVP-S725D



PIONEER DV-6260



DENON DVD-2500



YAMAHA DVD-S795



JVC XV-D701

See measured performance on page 115

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DENON TEL: 01753 888447
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Tannoy The Neighbours

Noel Keywood tries the tremors from the deep, deep Revolution r3 floorstanders from Tannoy.

It's always been difficult to find space for a big loudspeaker. As homes fill up with the gadgets and furniture of modern living it gets no easier. There's a move to tall, slim floorstanding loudspeakers to cope with this, loudspeakers that can slide into the few gaps left on a crowded lounge floorplan. Tannoy have their attractive new Revolution Series to fulfil this need, the r3 tested here being top of the range. Yet they're just 184mm wide and 272mm deep, taking up little more floor space than a paperback. I found them so slim that spikes are best used for physical stability, to keep them anchored down. Otherwise a chance encounter could send one of these slim pillars crashing.

Tannoy get cabinet volume - 24 litres of it - through height. But all the same, standing 1020mm high the r3s look imposing, although not intrusive. It's a lot of loudspeaker as well, for around £550 a pair. Bass handling is split two ways between the lower and middle drivers. One of the disadvantages of slim cabinets is that small diameter drive units must be used. To produce powerful bass a lot of air must be moved, a feat that's beyond the abilities of just one 120mm bass unit. Either one elliptical unit is used, or twin drivers in parallel, as in the r3. It's expensive and the lower one cannot cover the same range as the upper one, or mutual interference will occur at higher frequencies. This complicates the crossover, since each must be fed by its own section. Nevertheless the sound balance holds well as you walk around the room, or just into and out of it. After all, hi-fi loudspeakers might be used for radio during the day. Having to listen at just one spot, as you do with some phase sensitive loudspeakers, isn't so practical.

Even though the cabinets are not massive, not all their internal volume comprises air load behind the drive units. The

bottom part has a chamber, accessed through a small 12mm diameter port with plastic bung, that can be filled with sand or lead shot. This helps stabilize the cabinets. It also helps damp down panel resonances, reducing coloration. At 18kgs (40lbs) the r3s are not particularly heavy and there was a little panel thrum and boxiness on strong vocals. I've heard this on many of the new wave of inexpensive floorstanders, where weight is kept down to control cost. For their size the r3s are hardly expensive and this is one area where there's compromise. Whilst silver sand or lead shot do a great job, the loudspeaker becomes so heavy it is difficult to move.

Tannoy inevitably use reflex loading to get low, low bass. Just bear in mind that not so many recordings actually have bass on them that goes this low. One you can try is the Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon*; the heartbeat is a 25Hz signal that most loudspeakers miss completely. Me? I like the pounding drums, rich percussion and the seismic bass line of Angelique Kidjo's *Fifa*. The recording is a bit pumped up at very low frequencies, just to get some bass out of the average system. Tannoy's r3s quite obviously reached right down to the lowest notes, since they had the room rumbling and shaking at times. Tannoy provide foam bungs to damp bass down if they get out of hand. Just bear in mind that big rooms are better damped, a minimum dimension of 16ft is best for any loudspeaker that goes as low as the r3.

Narrow cabinets with bevelled edges produce fine stereo imaging and the r3s performed well in this area too. They placed singers and instruments solidly in a broad sweep of a soundstage that lay just forward of the cabinets and beyond them at either side. Good drive unit integration brought a sense of almost pin-sharpness to the sound of stick against cymbal, but sibilance pushed forward hard with Sting's



vocals on *A Thousand Years*.

The r3s are almost forcefully clear and hard etched; they'll cut through in a showroom dem. to make rivals sound woolly in comparison I suspect. With seamless reproduction down to the very lowest of lows, held in check by a superb sense of control as reflex loudspeakers go, Tannoy's engineering makes a very strong statement in these floorstanders. At the price they're good value.

Tannoy r3 £550

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Strathclyde
ML5 4TF
Tel: 01236 420199

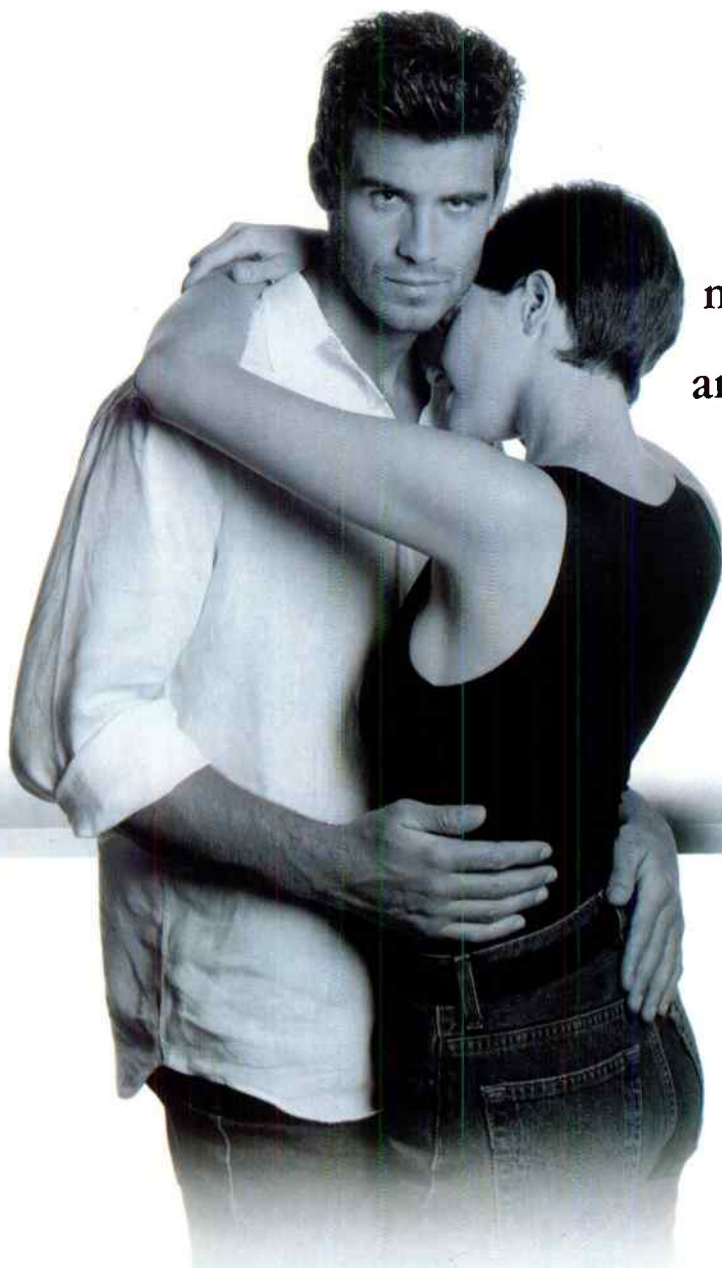
WORLD VERDICT



Impressively full-voiced floorstanders with seismic bass. Treble can suffer some sibilance if pushed too hard.

Measured Performance see page 115

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SERIOUSLY



Groovy

The £750 Rotel RCD 991 is their new HDCD compatible, top of the range “statement” CD player. Simon Pope listens with interest.

This isn't Rotel's first attempt at more expensive equipment. They are often considered the manufacturers of good value for money machinery in the budget/mid price bracket. But as they proved with the Michi range they are no mugs when it comes to the higher echelons of audio either.

The RCD 991 is the biggest brother of the 951, of which we reviewed to great acclaim last year. Both of the players benefit from being both HDCD compatible and being solidly built. As far as looks go, with the top of the range 991, Rotel don't go for the esoteric look but instead plump for their attractive functional look with the striking red trim. In this case though the usually slimline effect has been fattened slightly to accommodate for the extra bits and bobs required for the five-segment power supply and other audiophiles goodies.

Apart from the Pacific Microsonics PMD100 chip inside, the other main features of the 991 are the inclusion of a proprietary low-jitter digital circuit, a “wide read” linear mechanism and a “user selectable” dither aid. This is displayed on the front panel in the form of digits from 0-7. 1-6 are increasingly higher levels of ultrasonic noise-shaped dither, which attempt to “smooth out” non-linear errors in D/A converters. The number 7 setting is designed to correct quantisation errors only.

Rotel obviously designed the 991 to be a serious contender in the CD market, so

is the sound seriously good? Starting off with Paul Weller's brilliantly produced (if slightly dated!) Stanley Road the Rotel responded with a confident and controlled reading. The stereo effects that pepper this CD were supremely executed by the 991, showing that stereo imaging is a definite plus. The bopping voodoo rhythms of Walk On Gilded Splinters bounced through the speakers, with the guitars and drum kit cleanly detailed. However, although the 991 is a highly detailed player the sound was smooth and lyrical with especially warm vocals - as opposed to being merely analytical and sterile.

Feeding the next CD into the mechanism - Stravinsky's Rite Of Spring played by the Minnesota Orchestra on Reference Recordings - saw the HDCD LED illuminate and the player produce a sound of outstanding quality at the price. What the best HDCD players and recordings do is create space and depth in the sound stage, and so it was with the RCD 991. Real space between instruments was present (maybe even too much, thanks to the recording) along with an increased sharpness of detail and good orchestral balance. As with the Paul Weller CD the sharp detail was matched by subtlety and a rich tone, this time from the woodwind and strings which kept that woody tone inherent in their 'natural' sound.

The 951 that impressed us last year really excelled with HDCD, whereas the 991 plays your bog-standard hardware

with as much confidence as with HDCD material. With the RCD 951 we found that it set a new level at the price and whilst the 991 may not be our ultimate choice at the price, it's right up there with the best. The only weaknesses are in build aspects (although it's not wafer light it could be a little more solidly constructed) and the slightly flimsy remote control. There's strong competition from the likes of Audio Analogue's Pagannini, and slightly more expensive the Musical Fidelity X-Ray - but neither of these have the bonus of the HDCD chip.

It's a brilliant all-rounder with a reliable sound that feels like it will never tire you out, however long you play it for. If you're in the hunt for a £700-£800 CD player, you could do a heck of a lot worse than the RCD 991. A serious machine that's an excellent buy.

Rotel RCD991 £750

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WORLD VERDICT



Easily one of the best at the price. A confident and musical player that takes some beating

Measured Performance see page 115



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BOX CLEVER

A stylish one box system with hi-fi credentials and HDCD compatibility. Surely a joke, we hear you cry. Think again says Simon Pope, after encountering the new Avino VH-600 system from Kenwood.



The 'lifestyle' system is now fully incorporated into the world of consumer audio. Walk into any high street retailer and see the shelves buckle under the weight of hundreds of representations of the genre. And make no mistake, people buy them by the dozen. In a recent 'sales' crush I saw a certain actor and TV star (no names, but it is the pantomime season!) gleefully fondling the controls of a few examples in my local electronics retailer. Did he worry about the sound? Obviously not, as he strolled off with one from looks and feel alone - at full RRP too!

What a few manufacturers have tried to do lately is marry the style and convenience of the lifestyle midi system with the attributes of hi-fi. It appears that manufacturers feel that bright young things with money to spend favour a no nonsense, one-box, minimalist design but want good sound too. Consequently the race is on amongst the 'biggies' to produce the first 'audiophile' one-boxer. And Kenwood, it appears, have made the first step forward.

What we have in the RD-VH7 is essentially a small one-piece receiver/CD player described as 'concept' system. In fact with its size and front-loading CD

mechanism it actually looks like one of Kenwood's top of the range in car stereos! However, there are a few features present that raise it above the stereotypical (excuse the pun) shoebox level. Firstly there is the inclusion of a Pacific Microsonics HDCD chip (probably a first in midi systems), CD text 'proper' hi-fi connections with three stereo inputs, real 'speaker terminals and a weight not that far off the tonnage of a good £700 or so CD player - no indoor breeze will blow this off the bookshelf! And talking of bookshelves brings us to another impressive feature. Because of the front loading mechanism the main unit can be turned vertically to fit nicely at the end of or between your collection of Dickens, Scott Fitzgerald or Joanna Trollope. When the unit is turned on its side the quirky little LCD display window also turns ninety degrees in a spirit level-like fashion - very flash. The whole package comes with supplied matching speakers, but no cable, so this is where upgrading the sound starts. A comprehensive and natty little remote finishes off the whole shebang. A cassette deck and MD recorder are available as optional extras.

I started off the listening with Paul Weller's Stanley Road and used Chord

Company's Rumour cable to join box to 'speakers. As Changingman kicked in the 'speakers released a sound that had good depth and balance from the 20W per channel amplifier, with not too much of the boom and tizz emphasis that can be heard from the majority of biscuit box systems. Having said this emphasis on the sound errs towards the bottom end to compensate for the relative lack of power. Vocals were nicely presented with warmth and smoothness; sibilance was suitable lacking. This lack of sibilance, however, hinted that there was also a slight lack of detail. Guitar plucking and certain aspects of the drumming were a bit veiled, but a change of 'speakers to Tannoy's M1s for example will sort this little problem out.

All of the detail, however, was retrieved by using an HDCD disc of The Rite Of Spring. Stravinsky's masterpiece sounded spacious and open, like the Kenwood had received a good dose of Vicks. It's good to hear such a sound from something described as a 'concept' system. The bass drum moved enough air to make the bass convincingly deep, if (small gripe) a tad loose, but the treble was sweet and smooth with not an ounce of tinniness present.

The VH-600 is undoubtedly a marked improvement on the rows upon row of one-box models that we see every time we pop down the high street for our groceries, with an impressive sonic performance - especially with HDCD discs which opened the sound out more. Indeed, the HDCD compatibility is a very nice touch, tempting audiophiles perhaps to have an inconspicuous addition to the bedroom bookshelf. The supplied 'speakers lack a bit of detail and can sound boxy at times, but this can be resolved by good cabling or £100 spent on a good pair of budget bookshelves.

KENWOOD AVINO VH-600 £399.95

**Kenwood Electronics Ltd.,
Kenwood House, Dwight Rd.,
Watford,
Herts WD1 8EB
Tel: 01923 816444**

WORLD VERDICT



Great little system that's both stylish and a good performer.

Measured Performance see page 115

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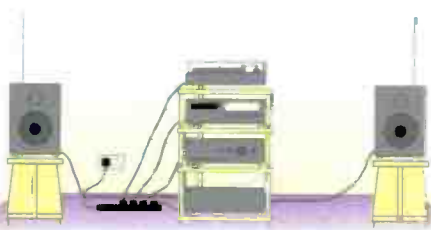
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TECHNOLOGY REFLECTED IN MUSIC

NAD for the



faint-hearted

Richard White spends some time with NAD's mid-priced CD player, the C 540.

Having copped the DVD group test this month, it was with something of a sigh of relief that I turned to NAD's C 540. Finished in what I'd call 'NAD grey', the C 540 is a neat and slim job. Full controls are provided on the front panel, indeed the remote control has fewer functions than the buttons on the machine. A choice of counter systems, random select, and track repeat just about completes the essentially modest equipment. The display is unfussy, with the usual track number and count-up, or count-down according to choice. A square arrangement of numbers one to sixteen serves as a 'where am I on the record' indication.

Starting to listen with the van den Hul recording of vocalist Madeline Bell, it was notable that the C 540 does not push smoothness for its own sake. Extreme 'audiophile' care in the production of this disc has resulted in a very neutral, natural sound. The NAD certainly made the most of the information it was given; in no sense could the sound have been said to be over-smoothed. This level of clarity is a worthwhile attribute for a mid-priced player - many players would elect to brush the intricate brushed cymbal work under the carpet, for example - but I had slight reservations about the NAD's essentially bright approach. It is possible that this very 'presence' could lead to a sense of confusion if carried to excess.

Following this line of enquiry, I chose the classic RCA analogue recording of the

last chunk of *Götterdämmerung*, which catches Christa Ludwig in her astonishing prime, accompanied by the Orchester der Deutschen Oper, Berlin. Here is complexity in trumps with the enormous forces employed in just about every dramatic combination in the space of twenty minutes! Although allowing the very fullest value to the divine voice, I usually regard this transfer as being if anything a bit on the flat side. There were times when the tonal balance seemed a little too keen. This certainly made for a very thrilling portrayal but one which was just a little sharper than life. Having said that, the monstrous ponderings of the massed bass section shot through the loudspeakers in great form - the NAD contrives to sound very fast for a player of this price.

Lora Dimitrov's recording of Schumann's *Symphonic Studies* (despite the title this is a solo piano work!) gave a good opportunity to check the midrange. I was very impressed with the immediacy which the C 540 gave to this performance. No trace of woolliness marred the essential intimacy of the pieces and the forwardness which had concerned me before helped to give just that touch of edge without which the midrange-rich piano can left sounding a bit unexpressive. Incidentally, the unusually high total of thirty-one tracks on this album left the 'where are we on the record?' display way behind at its sixteen track maximum!

Turning to Benny Waters at the Pawnshop, Stockholm proved to be a

happy choice for the NAD. All the immediacy which had shown itself to be one of the marks of the player piled into recreating the live ambience of this excellent recording. Air coursed over the saxophone's reed, the double bass thundered away in the corner, and glasses clinked in the background with deftly-turned realism. In some respects, there was almost too much presence which could be confusing, although generally the stereo effect was well developed.

If your system is on the bright side, the C 540 might prove tiring after a while. Nevertheless, I found the NAD's cheerful approach to be generally refreshing and on the whole preferable to the over-smooth approach favoured by many other players.

NAD C 540 £329.95

NAD Marketing Ltd.
Unit 15
Faraday Road
Aylesbury, Bucks.
HP19 3RY
Tel: 01296 482017

WORLD VERDICT



A very dynamic and forward player. Immediacy and speed are countered by a marginal lack of refinement.

Measured Performance see page 115

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LETTER OF THE MONTH

WHATEVER NEXT .. AND NEXT .. AND NEXT?

Well I suppose it had to happen; your glowing description of a new audio format (SACD) and the industry's attempt (whether it be through SACD or DVD-A) to sell us something we already have or don't really need (how many versions of Kind of Blue do you want to realise it's a masterpiece?! The CD version I have is perfectly fine, and it's how I got to know the album). The real question should be if this new technology tells us anything more about the music. I suspect not, because good music survives whatever 'imperfect' format it happens to be in at any time (ask anyone who treasures old recordings of Schnabel playing Beethoven or Gieseking in Debussy). I'm not against good quality sound but I feel SACD and DVD-A will offer nothing extra over the formats that already exist, for the true music lover, because differences (if any) will be so trivial that the law of diminishing returns will kick in. The only people who will be happy (but that won't last long, from my experience) will be the audiophiles.

Now I have to admit to being an ex-audiophile myself (the 'phile' bit of the word has always worried me, 'philia' in my dictionary is described as an abnormal liking for) but the endless dissatisfaction with equipment and interminable tweaking (especially of cables) finally took their toll not only in financial terms but also with my health. I realize now I lost something else during this period: the ability to enjoy listening to music, and replaced it with the impossible search for perfection in sound.



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I may not have found perfection, but I'm satisfied with just being content (I built a Maplin valve amp, with my Father's help, for £150 and this has remained in place, with the same cabling for four years. I may build another kit but I don't think it's going to be vastly superior to what I've got). I concentrate now more on the music, less on equipment, and I'm happy. Which is more than can be said of some of the people who advertise in your classified ads! I still enjoy your magazine, if only for the DIY supplements (which at least try to encourage people not just to be passive consumers) but I can't agree with you on the need for yet another format. That just plays into the hands of industry.

Yours

Keith Parmenter

Point taken. The term 'audiophile' carries some unhealthy connotations! A good example of exactly how you feel can be found among musicicians. We can tell you from experience that many

musicians don't really give two hoots what they listen to their music on. After all, notes are notes. And I myself still get excited when I hear Mahler's second symphony played on a wind-up tranny!

What we attempt to do when reviewing equipment is to compare it with the competition (ie. what else is available). In this respect SACD genuinely gives one of the best performances of recordings I've heard. Take Kind Of Blue as an example (again). The notes are, of course, the same as found on the vinyl, CD or cassette, but the SACD takes you one step further towards the experience of performance. It's as simple as that. Give it a listen and you may agree. I regard it as a genuine advancement in audio reproduction. The same goes for DVD-A, from the few demonstrations I've heard. Still, if it's purely the notes you require, then even an Edison phonograph can still bring you the joys of music! SP

TOP OF THE CLASSIFIEDS

Having saved my pennies for Christmas I now have about £1000 to spend on some second hand kit, and I feel I need a new amp. My old Audiolab 8000a is not up to driving the KEF Ref105.3s that I have at home. I use a customised TEAC VRDS 9 and an old Heybrook TT2/Tabriz/Ortofon Quatro combo as my front end with Chord solid core linking CD to amp and Monster M1 from amp to speakers. The bass has no drive or control when I turn up the volume, so I know that I need more power. I was thinking about the Rotel Michi power amp that I heard a few years ago, but I have never seen one in any classified ad. What would you suggest from the regular appearances in the classified ads?

Simon Jones

If it's second hand kit and power you're after, plenty of 'regulars' may be ideal for you. For sheer power and bass control you can't beat some of the older Musical Fidelity kit. The 'super' integrated A1001 is a prime example. For around £1000 (new it was £2500) you can get yourself 2x 200W of clean and controlled power. The preamp section, although good, isn't the tip-top best about, but a separate preamp



Hot and heavy stuff: MF's A1001 integrated

connection is possible. Alternatively £1099 will buy you a new Copland CSA-14, a very fine amp. Alternatively, you could do worse than spend £850 on the MVL A2+. **SP**

ENQUIRE WITHIN

During my search for new loudspeakers I've been baffled by some technical aspects. The amp puts out 35W into 8Ω so I need something fairly sensitive, and the speakers have to be relatively slim and pretty (though tall is ok).

I looked at Thiel loudspeakers but their impedance is 4Ω. The dealer says my amp will put more current into a 4 load than 8Ω, and will drive them fine, but Tube Tech say it will only put 17-18W into this load - not enough. Who is right?

I looked at panel loudspeakers (with valves??), in particular Audiostatic full range panels. The specs look unpromising - recommended amp 50-250W, sensitivity 86dB/W. However, the dealer says my amp is a fairly high current device that will drive them ok and that the pressure wave from a line source falls with the distance, not the square of distance as for a cone speaker - surely a sound pressure wave behaves according to standard rules of physics irrespective of its origins? Is he having me on?

Russ Andrews, says that tube life is hugely extended by avoiding the on-off switch. My tubes have a projected life of 6000 hours for "normal" use, less than a year if left on! What do you think?

Best wishes for a prosperous new century

Dr Tim Ward

I spoke to Tube Technology who say that their output transformers are wound with a compromise 6Ω load in mind, so the amp will cope quite comfortably at 4Ω. As the handbook says, the output power will be less into a 'heavier' load, although what this power truly turns out to be will

depend very much on the impedance characteristic of the particular 'speakers. Although you don't mention a sensitivity figure for the Thieles, a figure in the mid eighties is borderline - better to go higher for choice. You may well find that 18W is perfectly satisfactory but I'd have an earful on approval first.

As you rightly point out, the laws of physics are not so easily circumvented, even by a line source. It largely depends on where your reference measurements are made from, in any case. A line source exhibits beam characteristics which, within limits, can be interpreted as inverse-linear, rather than inverse-square propagation. The further away the source is, the more the beam effect 'comes out in the wash' as interference patterns emerge, recombine etc. A line source such as a narrow panel might be expected to propagate alternative 'lobes' of high and low sound pressure; as I said, a good deal depends on where you measure from. In conclusion, there is some truth in what you've been told, but not the whole.

As regards switching equipment on and off, as I understand it, the reasons for leaving valve gear on have chiefly to do with avoiding cathode-stripping, heater filament flexing and the like. As far as it goes this is true. What concerns me more is that with quite a lot of modern gear (our World Audio kits, for example), the heaters are supplied with DC, which is inclined to 'creep' the metal molecules in the direction of the electron stream. This can lead to heater filaments burning out more rapidly than with AC supplies, and might be a point in favour either of AC heaters or else not keeping valves on all the time, according to choice.

My own system, largely valve-powered, draws something like 200W in quiescent state. In 24 hours this would clock up pushing 5kWh which is not killingly expensive until you multiply it by the ninety-odd days in a quarter. Perhaps these things are only for the rich!

RMW



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LITTLE DARLINGS

As parents of three inquisitive under fives, the wife and I have now endured around three hi-fi free years following our first son's early experiments with investigating the effects of prodding speakers and making big holes in the working bits.

Aside from any potential danger to him (our main concern, naturally) we also weren't prepared to keep replacing speakers until he learned that this wasn't the best path to tread. However, following hard on his heels has been a brother and now a sister, and we can no longer face a life of music only by radio-cassette/cd player . . . we want our hi-fi back! Nevertheless, the same problem remains; how to do it such that the children can't stick fingers, pens, glue, teddy bears and peanut butter sandwiches into the speakers.

We're not interested in bolting things to walls like the speakers themselves or stands etc. since one day we shall revert to more normal arrangements and don't want huge holes in the wall to cover up, fill etc., complete with non-equally faded paint/paper etc. Consequently we figure the answer is either some "baby speakers" with decent sound (a friend years ago had some Boses like this) that can be placed out of reach without being a superman or requiring a whole Jewsons of DIY kit (you may have inferred from the above that DIY and I aren't close buddies), or maybe flat speakers that could be "hung" from our picture rails (is it true they can be hidden behind actual pictures?).

Thing is, I'm now ten years out of the loop with hi-fi and haven't a clue what is available and what I need to spend. Budget is reasonably flexible although four figures is unfeasible - the system sitting in boxes is a budget system from 10+ years ago which may have an impact on recommendations - a Cambridge amp and Rega Planar 3 basically; I can't recall what CD player we have now. I still have the Castle Treants for later use, so this solution doesn't have to be "for life" - just workable and affordable!!

So - what are our options, and what's the cost? And, as a potential flight of fancy, are there such things as wireless speaker connections these days yet? e.g. radio waves, infra-red, microwave or somesuch? It seems such an obviously useful idea.

Cheers for any help you may have,

Ian. **RMW**

During the last year or two we've reviewed at least two loudspeakers which have grilles firm enough to resist some mishandling. Whilst no grille is likely to be impervious to liquids, pencils and fingers can be more readily stopped, at least until the child's strength really develops, by which time it may be possible to explain to him/her/it (thus writes a non-parent!) the error of his/her/its ways.

We reviewed Boston's CR6 units in September 1998, at which time they cost £150 pounds. If memory serves me right, they were pretty lightweight as well, so hoiking them out of arm's reach may be a simple way of avoiding damage when they're not in use. The perforated metal grill clips into slots running down the sides of the cabinets, so there is little danger of them being removed accidentally. Boston Acoustics are marketed by Portfolio Marketing who can be reached on 01489 705519. More recently - last month in fact - we reviewed the Klipsch KSB2.1 'speakers (£299). These too have a distinctly hardy grille which is recessed into a channel round the edge of the baffle - again this ought to prevent investigative little hands from getting too far into things. Klipsch are c/o Midland Radio Supplies on 0121 430 7817. By way of comparison, the KSB2.1s are certainly bigger and louder than the Bostons but this mayn't be everything if you have to persuade children to sleep, although I believe chloroform is good. Both 'speakers were designed with half an eye on the computer monitor market, so they are magnetically shielded and won't turn your television picture green.

Looking back a few years, there were some reasonably well-reviewed wall mounting loudspeakers from Sequence, but I haven't heard much on this score recently so they may be no longer available.

The NXT transducer system, which is what I think you mean by the 'pictures' loudspeakers, is proceeding apace but the jury is still out on whether they are 'hi-fi' yet. Applications so far have been on a fairly small scale, apart from demonstrations; the results have been impressive, all things considered, but the

whole idea is still in its commercial infancy although both Mission and Wharfedale have models out. As a psychological aside, a picture which 'talks' might be quite an attraction for a junior mountaineer armed with a pencil.

Wireless loudspeaker systems there are but since they rely on having amplifiers in the cabinets and are not high-priced, you may not be much further on from your radio cassette player as regards sound. Dixons or Currys may be able to help here.

As a final thought on this rather exhaustive reply, the last I heard they'd pretty well sussed what causes children, so you've only yourselves to blame!

Slimline Mission NXT 'speaker.



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CRITIQUE-AL CONDITION

Neat's Critiques have turned Pro. Richard White hopes for a few words before the big match.

There is still a lot of room in hi-fi for the informed amateur or the semi-professional, as witness the crowds of knowledgeable extras at any Audio Jumble. Countering this there are the 'proper' companies whose products of necessity have to make their presence felt in the account books, otherwise the dread 'discontinued' will be their unhappy lot. Neat Acoustics have scored some notable successes in the past (for the 'amateur' listener), and their Critique small monitor has carved a well-deserved niche for itself. Now they have introduced a 'Pro' version of this popular little loudspeaker. What makes a 'speaker turn Pro? What are the signs? Is it a notifiable condition within the meaning of the Act? Now read on . . .

The Pro is, basically, a slightly more affordable version of the original. Consequently Neat have not hampered themselves with trimmings for the Critique Pro. The most fastidious judge could not accuse the 'speaker of being over-dressed: no grilles are provided for and the cabinets are covered in workaday black vinyl. On the back, gold-plated screw terminals, a small port, and a paper label complete the set. Although not exactly elegantly proportioned (12½" 8½" 9" hwd) the Critique Pros do contrive to look 'neat' and workmanlike. The cabinets are reassuringly weighty and solid.

It sounded to me likely that the long and narrow port would load the driver more like a leaky infinite baffle than the broader drainpipes in favour at the moment. As I listened to the saurian elegance of the Prokofiev Romeo and Juliet music, I was pleased to find that the double basses and bass drum were not hogging the limelight, but instead sounding accurate and controlled. This is a good

sign in a reflex-loaded speaker; too often 'proper' orchestral bass lines seem to have picked up a twenty gallon oil drum en route, much to the detriment of tautness and clarity.

With Bach's English Suite No 3, played on a two manual harpsichord, the Critique Pros gave a very good account of themselves: incisive without being painful, yet capturing all the nuances of the instrument's often hidden tone colours with good grace, the tweeters helping to make a musical job of what

prefer your bass to be one note . . .

Delius' string quartet proved to be a fair indication of the Critiques dynamic abilities. One moment airily transparent, the next moment bitterly emphatic, I hoped that the Critiques would cope with all and sundry on this rather close-miked l'Oiseau-Lyre recording. At the end of the side I was probably in an eight-out-of-ten mood. Although the climaxes were broadcast with full passion and the aforementioned musical sound, I felt that some of the subtleties of the quieter bits

were glossed over. This may indicate that more watts are required, but I found that generally they spoke quite forcefully without undue pushing. For all their modest garb, I found the Critiques to be comfortable companions over a wide range of musical styles. They are free from boom at one end and shriek at the other and have a commendably detailed midrange. Possibly they are better suited to the space-challenged classical listener, but a rock fan who can tolerate accurately proportioned bass will not be disappointed.



Neat Critique Pro £385

**Neat Acoustics Ltd
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can be 'just' a display of transient response. With no worries about treble over-emphasis, I found myself enjoying this excellent Archiv recording without wincing.

It's possible that the brigade-of-bombardiers school of audio might find these 'speakers too well-behaved. I tried some very thump-ridden radio channels and found that the Critiques were wholly capable of dishing the dirt but steadfastly refused to shudder in the manner so beloved by 1000W-per-channel Escorts. As far as high fidelity is concerned, this is a good result. If on the other hand you

WORLD VERDICT

Unassuming appearance but very musical and reasonably priced. Smooth but clear performance without bass boom.

Measured Performance see page 115



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Tel: (01252) 702705 Fax: (01483) 301412

There it was, sitting on my equipment rack, looking sorry for itself. It was a good mid-price player in its day, but time hadn't smiled on my Sony CDP-X303ES. Although still capable of making a nice enough noise, with a tidy, smooth, detailed sound, it consummately failed to excite. I'd put a CD on and sit there thinking how much

users will be interested to learn that Clock 3 retains their oscillator module, but changes the voltage regulation circuit. Clock 2 used a Linear Technology, 3 pin regulator chip and tantalum capacitors for its power.)

So, what does this all mean in practice? Anyone of a tweaky disposition will know that Oscons need a while to run

a life of its own, with real energy and emotion pouring forth.

Most impressive though was the way all these little detail improvements come together to transform the Sony's overall character. It already sounded a very 'hi-fi' (i.e. smooth, clean and civilised) player before the mod, but Clock 3 not only built on these abilities but brought much

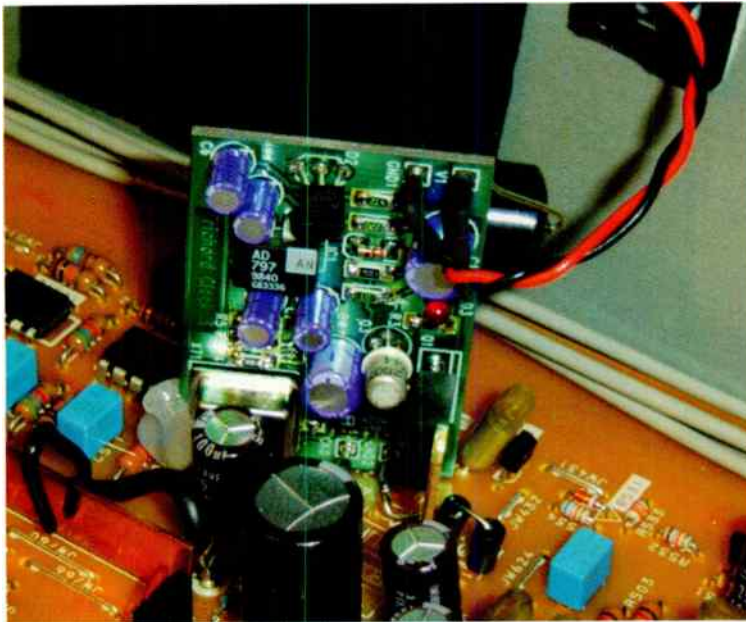
Time for an UPGRADE

Bored with his old CD player, David Price decided to give it a new lease of life, courtesy of Trichord's latest Clock 3 mod.

better my old Rega 3 sounded. So why not, thought I, give it a new lease of life courtesy of Trichord's new Clock 3 modification?

Trichord Research claim to have fitted over 8,000 Clock modifications in the last five years, from CD players and transports ranging in cost from £70 to £10,000. The mod doesn't pander to hi-fi black magic or alchemy, but simply addresses a common failing in all CD players, their substandard clocks.

Clock 3 features an active crystal oscillator module specially made for Trichord by one of the big UK crystal manufacturers. It produces a square wave with extremely fast rise and fall times of 4 nano seconds, thus greatly reducing the window of time available for the generation of jitter. Clock 3 also comes with its own on-board low noise voltage regulator supplemented with wideband capacitive decoupling to reduce noise even further. It uses an extremely low noise precision voltage reference and pass transistor, with Sanyo Oscon filter capacitors. Then there's the dedicated power supply, which not only generates the required current but isolates any clock generated noise from the rest of the player's circuitry. (Clock 2



in, so Graham was at pains to point out I shouldn't rush to judgement over the results. I have say however that I spotted a difference immediately. Even from stone cold, the X303ES was noticeably more fluid, and after running it in for a few days it was a revelation.

The Sony sounded sweeter, cleaner and more detailed - as if a thick veil had been lifted from the speakers.

Soundstaging improved dramatically, and discs that had sounded two dimensional suddenly developed real depth perspective. Bass was tighter and more tuneful, yet no less powerful than before. Treble seemed softer yet better resolved - like going from a good moving magnet to a moving coil. And the midband gained

needed musicality and fluidity to its repertoire. In short, it taught the Sony how to make music.

Criticisms? I had wondered about the dynamic improvements which Trichord claim. I could hear better 'microdynamics' - small rhythmic inflections and phrasing changes - but the overall picture wasn't dramatically better in this area. Puzzled, I connected the Sony to an external converter via its optical digital out and quickly realised this was down to the X303ES's onboard 1bit DAC. Via RME Audio's multibit ADI-1, the sound was far more powerful and commanding.

To conclude, Trichord's Clock 3 isn't hype or hi-fi black magic. It changed my ailing CD player's character quite dramatically, making silver discs far much more enjoyable. After several months of use, I've stopped noticing the differences and am just enjoying my CDs more. That couldn't be a better recommendation

**Trichord Research Ltd.,
6 Woodlands Close,
Malvern Wells,
Worcs WR14 4JD
Tel: 01684 573524**

SPRESSA YOURSELF!

More than just a CD writer, Sony's CRX120E-RP is a means of self expression. Or so the PR spiel goes. Computer Audio - World's resident narcissist Nick Tate took Sony's newest 'Spressa' CD writer on a voyage of self-discovery.

Outside this sceptred isle, Sony CRX CD writers go by the name of 'Spressa'. The idea is that they're more than just machines that burn photo-chemical dyes in CD blanks, they're a means of self-expression through the music you record or the photos you archive with them. Right then, fair enough.

Quiet at the back there, stop sniggering. Granted, it does sound very 'New Labour-luvvie-focus group, touchy feelie, Islington sundried tomatoes and Sainsbury's Maple and Pecan Crunch'. But look beyond the hype and (shock horror) you can really tell Sony have gone out on a limb to turn boring old computer technology into something that you'll want to use in everyday life. Or "drive the convergence of computer and consumer audio-visual equipment", as their PR people put it.

Okay, each 'Spressa' includes preformatted CD-RW discs (a house point for courtesy but ten CD-Rs would be more useful), a choice of fully featured or easy beginner-level CD writing software (good stuff - this is what we like to see), digital photo album and 'one-click' PC backup software (and damn useful it is too, even if I'm not supposed to say it, what with this being a hardcore specialist computer audio title), and a "My First CD" multimedia guide (a bit naff if you're as cultured as I).

Then there's the actual hardware itself, the Spressa CRX120E-RP, claimed to be the fastest CD-RW shipping today. Offering 4 speed write, 4 speed rewrite and 24 speed read (4x4x24x), it's no slouch. And all this from an olde worlde E-IDE (ATAPI) interface. Just in case you haven't seen our jargon-busting A-Z guide, I shall recap: SCSI is the biz for high speed CD writing, being reliable and very fast. The only trouble is you need to fork out an extra forty or so drink vouchers to buy one. E-IDE is the standard way

of connecting external drives and requires no adapters.

The trouble is that it isn't exactly bullet-proof at high speeds. Sony's choice of E-IDE shows this product is aimed at Joe Public who wants simple, easy connectivity. Fits in with the 'user-friendly technolo-



Sony's Spressa CRX120E-RP, claimed to be the fastest CD-RW shipping today.

gy' spin I guess, but serious computer audiophiles may well be humming. The Sony redeems itself thanks to a 2MB data buffer, which is what you need for reliable higher speed operation. Many E-IDE drives, such as Philips' CDD3610 (tested in CAW1), have only one meg' and hang up on you more often than your girlfriend in a strop

More brownie points come from the inclusion of CeQuadrat's WinOnCD CD authoring software - look out for a review in these pages soon. This program is particularly popular with US computer geeks, who take their software very seriously! Beginners fear not, you also get the entry-level just! audio burner and Instant Audio music software.

Finally, the Spressa drives support all CD formats - including CD Extra, Video CD and Photo CD - and write methods including Disc at Once, Session at Once and Track at Once. Interestingly, and importantly to yours truly at least, they also read and write full CD Text.

In use the Spressa impress(a)ed. Thanks to a well written instruction manual, it was easy as 1-2-3 to connect the thing up and get on the road. The software loaded up no problem, and started burning CD-R blanks without so much as a crash, a keyboard lock out or a screen blank. It just went. The drive proved fast - a few months ago I would have been stunned by how fast - but since I've tried an eight speed SCSI nothing can impress me anymore. As I say, it just burned away happily, recording 80 minute blanks in around 21 minutes (it takes about a minute to write the Table of Contents, if you're scratching your heads at my maths). And it didn't crash, unlike the last E-IDE burner I tried (oops, sorry to keep mentioning this, Philips). Sound was excellent. With Sony CD-R blanks (I never use CD-RWs for applications requiring top audio quality thanks to their poorer reflectivity), the '120 gave tight, powerful, clean recordings with solid bass lines and extremely clean - if not amazingly sweet - treble. I've heard marginally better from pricier SCSI designs, but these cost upwards of £100 more.

Overall, Sony's CRX120E-RP is highly recommended to those looking for something to use straight out of the box. It's a great package that boasts excellent hardware and software for beginners and seasoned computer audiophiles alike. You should take to it, whatever your lifestyle

Sony CRX120E-RP £200

Sony Computer Peripherals & Components
Phone +44 (0)1932 816660.

WORLD VERDICT

Super all-in-one package boasting fine sound, great reliability and top class bundled software

Home Entertainment

If you want music from your PC, Yamaha's WF192XG soundcard is a gifted performer, says David Price.



The full package

Considering that your PC very probably has a soundcard fitted already, why fork out an extra fifty odd quid for the likes of Yamaha's WF192XG? The problem with most multimedia soundcards is that they're very much an afterthought, about as high up on the computer designer's list of priorities as which brand of mouse mat to use. Quality invariably takes a back seat and sound suffers. Until recently this only affected the sonics of your nightly blast of Tomb Raider, but computers are now routinely used for downloading, playing and recording music, not to mention burning music CDs, watching enhanced CDs and DVDs and radio listening from the Net. Suddenly, a decent soundcard is becoming essential.

Yamaha have had considerable practice in this department. They've been making soundcards for ages thanks to their extensive involvement in pro audio, not to mention musical instrument manufacture. (Without keyboards like the Yamaha DX7, many of the eighties' top bands would still be playing the pub and wedding circuit). Of course, they've also been known to do the odd nice concert grand, 200 mph motorbike, classic tuner or studio monitor loudspeaker. You've got to hand it to them, they're a versatile lot!

The Waveforce WF192XG is at the affordable end of the company's computer multimedia range, costing around £55. This buys you a very nicely screwed together PCI card complete with TOSLINK optical digital output, a powerful DSP chip and 16bit onboard DAC, full MIDI

compatibility, Yamaha XG synthesiser with optional downloadable sounds and an impressive array of bundled software. The card has audio acceleration (meaning its audio-processor will take the burden off your PC's CPU while playing music, and thus speed things up), and gives full SoundBlaster Pro emulation (meaning it will work with all your shoot'em up games, too).

The card snaps into a spare PCI slot on your computer's motherboard, and is then secured by a couple of screws so its back panel lines up at the rear of the computer. There are a host of inputs and outputs, including 3.5mm stereo mini-jack sockets for Mic and Line in, Line out stereo speaker out, a 15-pin MIDI UART-compatible Joystick/MIDI interface, and an optical digital output of the sort you see behind most Japanese CD players. After you've bolted it in place, setting up is just a question of feeding your CD-ROM drive the supplied set up disk, which contains loads of software, and the drivers to get the card going. You load these up in the usual Windows Plug'n'play way and you're off - in this instance at least there was no need to plug and pray.

I didn't give it a serious listen until it had burned in, but even before this it seemed special. I noticed this whenever I heard Brian Eno's Windows 95 jingle that comes on every time I power up my computer. Instead of the usual screechy, clangy din you get from most cheapo soundcards, it sounded extremely rich and resonant. My first impressions were confirmed when I played my first .WAV file through it. Recorded from DAT at 16bit, 48kHz resolution, through the Yam it was a joy - really vivid and punchy sounding with stacks of rhythm and dynamics and a smooth, sweet treble. CDs and high quality MP3s gave similarly surprising results, whether I took a Line out from the Yamaha to my hi-fi, or played it through a set of NXT X-Space multimedia monitors.

A deeply impressive sound per pound ratio then. Despite its low price it trounced Creative Labs' SBLive! (at nearly

twice the price) and wasn't that far behind the likes of Guillemot's excellent £250 MaxiSound ISIS - a fantastic achievement. Then there's its TOSLINK digital out to consider - if you've got a DAT or MD recorder you can use it to digitally copy MP3s you've downloaded from the Net for car or portable use, or make compilations for friends. All-in-all then, a superb budget soundcard buy. Even if you're not terribly interested in Internet music possibilities, you could do worse that get a WF192XG just to give some of the free songs out there a fair hearing.

BLAGGER'S BANQUET- that Yamaha free software in full:

YAMAHA WAVE EDITOR - digital hard disk recording and editing software
YSTATION32 - music application that plays CDs, .WAV and MIDI files
YAMAHA SOUND VQ - music compression program, a la MP3
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WORLD VERDICT



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THROUGH The Aegis

Simon Pope encounters the bigger floorstanding brother of Acoustic Energy's Aegis One. Make way for the Aegis Two!

As we've no doubt mentioned before, the best thing about this job is being impressed when you least expect it, and this is usually at the lower end of the hi-fi price scale. And so it was last September when we cobbled together an octet of budget boxes for our group test. One of the two pairs that impressed us most were Acoustic Energy's Aegis Ones, which managed to sound exciting, controlled and civilised for relatively little money. For those who wish for a lack of stands and perhaps a bit more bass oomph, Acoustic Energy have added the floorstanding version, the Aegis Two, to their rapidly expanding range of loudspeakers.

The Aegis Two is basically the One, but with a bit more cabinet. The drivers are the same, the construction the same, 'speaker terminals the same, only the size is different. One of the overwhelming characteristics of the Aegis Ones is their sense of excitement and tautness, delivering bass that's never overblown, but tight and tuneful, indeed 'tight and tuneful' is the phrase that best describes the whole 'speaker. One of the reasons for this sound is AEs use of the distinctive white, metal mid/bass unit. Whereas some 'speakers with metal drive units can often emit a noise worthy of the Wilkinson Sword stamp, AE's babies are open and detailed.

In metamorphosing the Ones into the Twos it's obvious that design criteria was to retain the sonic stamp of the Ones and confine cabinet boom to a minimum. The result is that the Twos have little bass boom - perhaps the least bass boom of any comparable model on the market. In fact if the truth be told, for a floorstander there's very little bass, full stop. However, this is not necessarily a bad thing as too many cheaper floorstanders suffer from excessive bass. Playing Music: Response

form the latest Chemical Brothers album confirmed that the earth (or neighbours' walls) didn't shake, but the sound was clear and well-controlled. The AE2s excelled with music like this, that has a wide frequency bandwidth - from the lowest grumblings to the highest tinklings. The drumbeats were fast and exact with the strict electronic tempo never flagging. The bass was tuneful and again very fast.

The Twos also appreciated the giant spread of orchestral music. The Hungarian march from Berlioz's *Damnation Of Faust* was delivered with much verve and delicacy, bass percussion and cymbals smacking and glistening respectively. My only gripe came with the upper strings which showed up the slightly 'boxy' nature of the Twos, which resulted in the violins sounding a little lacking in blood. Everything else, however was A OK, so the classical test was passed.

Moving onto the blues and rock of John Lee Hooker and Cast, the Twos showed what they could achieve and also what they couldn't. Mr. Hooker's seminal *Boom Boom* ploughed through the 'speakers with downright dirty excitement, the vocals of the King of Gruff as low down as a snake's belly and the bass and drums powering like a steam train. Again, none of the boxiness was found in this open recording. This changed with Cast's *Finetime*, though. Guitar-based rock (especially of the British sort, for some weird reason) often results in very 'middy' recordings. These are actually good reviewing devices, because if 'speakers sounds good with a 'bad' recording then they'll be superlative with a good 'un! The tinny guitar and vocal sound unfortunately shrunk a little into the cabinets of the AE Twos. Climaxes just failed to open out, and instead crawled back into their shell. It must be emphasised though, that at no time was listening tiring or unpleasant.



The AEs have an inherent excitement in the design which is coupled with refinement to give a highly recommended all-round performance. Perhaps the extended cabinet of the Twos adds a little boxiness to the sound of the Ones, but at the price they're an excellent buy and well worth auditioning.

Acoustic Energy AE Two £250

Acoustic Energy Ltd.,
16 Bridge Rd.,
Cirencester,
Glos GL7 1PO
Tel: 01285 654432

WORLD VERDICT



A highly engaging sound that grabs the attention to great effect. They can suffer from a slightly thin sound with some recordings.

Measured Performance see page 115

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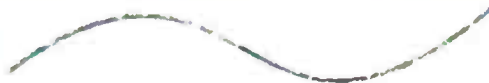
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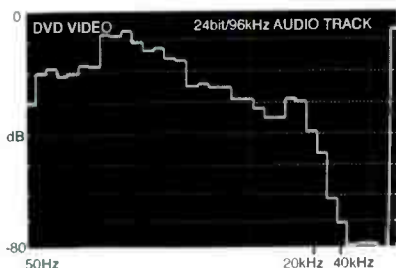
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HIFI WORLD

The DVD video players we've tested in this issue have an extraordinary range of abilities. Most have Dolby surround sound (www.dolby.com/dvd/) and can fill your room with action and explosions if that's what you want. All players have high resolution 24-bit/96kHz digital converters, meaning they offer better quality audio than CD, although few such discs are available at present. You can even get Digital Theatre Sound (dts) surround sound with 24-bit/96kHz resolution - better sound quality than CD (www.dtsonline.com/consumer). All offer a bigger, better experience than plain old CD audio, but of course you get that too.

I've waited for the day that the inadequate digital code of CD, developed in the late 1970s, would be replaced by



Analysis of a DVD video disc audio, The John Basile Quartet, recorded at 24bit/96kHz. It shows there's music energy up to 40kHz.

something that could give us back a sound more like that from LP - smooth, dynamic, detailed and dimensional, yet easy on the ear. I run a Garrard 401 with 12in SME312 arm and Goldring and Ortofon cartridges and genuinely look forward to hearing digital manage better!

Raising CD's amplitude description of music from 16 to 24 bits reduces digital distortion and will smooth out the sound. I do not believe we need the extra dynamic range as such (96dB up to 144dB), so much as to eliminate the shakiness and edginess of CD.

The frequency response of CD stops suddenly at 21kHz, due to "brick wall" anti-aliasing filters. Although most analogue sources, like loudspeakers, go little higher, their response rolls off slowly and they sound more open. Digital recording systems with a higher sampling frequency than CD have a wider analogue bandwidth. A 96kHz sampling

rate extends analogue bandwidth to 48kHz. This produces a clearer, more open sound with air and space around cymbals, finer detailing and richer tonal shadings.

But how much information above 21kHz is there in music? Doubts exist because musical instruments produce little energy above 8kHz, with the exception of close miked percussion and such like. Will extending bandwidth to capture the odd strike on a cowbell change everything? I analysed the musical energy in a 24bit/96kHz music recording on a DVD video disc from Chesky records, The John Basile Quartet.

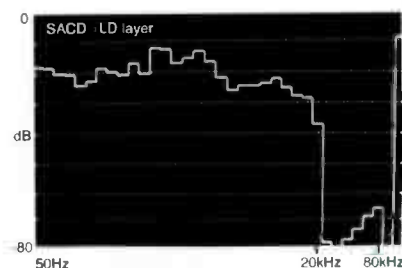
This analysis came as a surprise. There's quite a lot of harmonic energy above 21kHz, after just a few minutes of jazz so laid back it was almost horizontal. Music of this nature lacks strong treble energy and in fact you can see how there's a steady fall in harmonic level above the mid-band. A brick wall filter at 21kHz, imposed by an ordinary CD player, would curtail this natural roll-off, something the ear and brain seem able to detect, even though we can't otherwise hear above 18kHz.

Here's clear evidence that the 21kHz hard upper limit of traditional CD is too low and that raising sampling rate does measurably improve fidelity. Next I tested something more demanding, a modern blues recording - and got a shock.

I played a hybrid SACD disc in each of the DVD video players to make absolutely certain they would see and replay the LD layer of a dual layer SACD disc properly. This layer gives standard CD quality. Spectrum analysis showed the expected hard cut-off at 21kHz, imposed by a 44.1kHz sampling rate. Look at the energy spectrum of the recording though. A normal enough blues band comprising guitar, Hammond B3, bass, drum kit, trumpet, tenor sax, trombone, and vocalist - albeit very well miked up - produced an almost flat energy spectrum out to 21kHz. It's obvious that it'll take many octaves before the harmonics decay naturally to a low level, meaning an

upper limit of 192kHz, the highest used by SACD and DVD Audio, barely seems enough, if artificially curtailing harmonic decay introduces audible degradation. This test suggests modern recordings need very wide analogue bandwidth if their harmonic content isn't to be prematurely axed by anti-aliasing filters.

What these tests show is that CD isn't real hi-fi: the LP was better! They also show what the new formats will offer us. We will never get back to the



This analysis clearly illustrates why the 21kHz anti-aliasing filter used in CD players is called a "brick wall" filter. It cuts off dramatically above 21kHz. This blues recording has had its upper harmonics removed by the filter. A wider bandwidth disc would restore this musical information.

glorious sound of the LP, until computer enhancement improves, because there's some artifice in it. But I look forward to a smoother, richer and more open sound in future from SACD or DVD Audio. In the meantime DVD Video recorders

give us a taste of what is coming. They're impressive boxes of technology. ●



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[C U R A H I G H Q U A L I T Y
L O U D S P E A K E R S Y S T E M S]

If you're reading this, then the chances are you don't need to be reminded of the benefits of hi-fi separates over midi/mini systems. However, it would be churlish to believe that the wonderful world of hi-fi separates is without niggles and annoyances. Below is a worst case scenario involving forty things I hate about hi-fi!

So, you've made your purchase from a packed hi-fi store on a Saturday (1). Unfortunately one of the models you wanted was the last one and had to be taken off the shelf (2), whereupon the sales assistant attempts to package the unit in packaging (3) that owes more to the Krypton Factor than logic. On arrival home the same packaging sheds polystyrene beads all over the carpet (4). Whilst lifting the units out of their boxes you also cut your fingers on the sharp edged lid (5) and collection of screws and bolts hidden on the underside of the machine (6).

Packaging aside, it's now time to fit your new piece of hi-fi into its designated slot. The only trouble being that it's 1mm too wide for the space (7). Not to worry, a new space is found and the wiring up begins. Unfortunately the spring clips (8) on the back of the amplifier won't accept your chunky multi-strand cable, so this has to be exchanged for solid core which, after having taken one hour to strip back (9), promptly snaps (10) off at the terminal when manoeuvred into position. Things aren't much better at the 'speaker end either. The 4mm binding post socket plugs (11) take forever to prise out, and you curse the European legislation that brought them into being. Once out, the banana plugs fall out because the sockets face downwards (12) and the plugs have lost their tension (13).

As you connect the cable, the bi-wiring linking pins (14) fall out, are put somewhere "safe", but in reality are lost forever. New plugs fitted, and it's time to set up the tuner, CD and tape deck. At first you think the CD player's broken, but later find that the transit lock (15) is

still in place. You didn't realise it even had a transit lock as the salesperson neglected to tell you (16) and the warning sticker had been peeled off your display one. Sadly, the cassette decks mechanical controls (17) are so stiff (18) that when, combined with the deck's light weight (19), a button is pushed, the whole unit slides backwards (20). Blue Tac is what's needed here, as it is to hold up the pathetic freebie aerial (21) that came with the tuner. What a shame that the only position where a decent reception can be maintained is by being diagonally stretched across the most visible expanses of the entire room (22). The turntable takes time to set up, but all goes smoothly. How annoying,

” it would be churlish to believe that the wonderful world of hi-fi separates is without niggles and annoyances.

though, that the tonearm has no finger hold (23), and that the lid doesn't stay up (24). You know that the lid should be lifted off completely, but attacks from kids and/or pets make this impossible.

Now for the interconnects. It's almost impossible to read what is supposed to go where as the inputs are printed underneath (25) the sockets and the wrong way up (26) to be read from above. Inevitably one or two of the leads find themselves in the wrong sockets. It comes as quite a shock when removing one of the ridiculously tight fitting plugs (27) also brings the phono socket out with it (28). Nerves are now starting to fray, but it's nearly time to switch on. Just remove the 'speaker grills and snap! One of the locating lugs gets left behind in its socket (29), meaning the grills will never fit probably again. Whilst fitting the spikes you lament the fact that somebody at the 'speaker factory couldn't count and there are only seven instead of eight spikes supplied (30).

Powering up reveals a dreadful buzz

(31). You hope it's just an earth loop, but with that settled the amp continues to hum (32) because of poor design. Hearing a click though the hi-fi as the fridge switches on and off (33) hardly helps matters either. No matter, a separate mains loop will solve this in time. Now where is that remote control? You angrily call the store, thinking it's been left out of the box (34), only to be smugly told it was hidden (35) within the packaging that you've just thrown out. With remote retrieved it's time to start listening to some music. The CD, tuner and tape deck all sound fine, yet there's next to nothing coming out of the turntable. A quick read of the amps confusing instruction manual (36) reveals that a phono stage is in fact an optional extra (37). Still, it sounds good with CD, until the neighbours bat-like sense of hearing (38) forces you to "TURN IT DOWN!" Worse is to come when your other half wants to watch T.V. (39) and you're forced to listen using headphones. Just one small problem. There's no headphone socket! (40).

No doubt you'll tell me that I've just skimmed the surface here! But it really says something about the intrinsic allure of a decent hi-fi system that, should I ask in The Now Show style, "is it worth it?"

I, like them, will already know the reply. ●



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KIT88 VALVE INTEGRATED

AMPLIFIER KIT

NEW FOR THE MILLENNIUM



£440

Here is the amazing KIT88. The circuit is similar to that of the ever popular KEL34 with a few changes to incorporate the Tesla, JJ branded KT88 power tetrode. This is a pure Class A push-pull design providing 36 watts into an 8ohm load. Gary Devon, has come up with a gems of an output transformer (E/I), this combined with the KT88 offers a virtually unmatched result for a valve amplifier. Frequency response is 11Hz up to 75kHz, separation is 71dB, noise is 98dB, sensitivity is 400mV and a distortion of 0.03%. "As valve amplifiers go, the KIT88 is one of the best measured performances I have ever come across", says Noel Keywood. Jon Marks says, "The KIT88 pulled a series of surprisingly fast, meaty basslines out of its trickbag when dealing with Suzanne Vega's Nine Objects Of Desire album. As if this wasn't enough, the mid and treble were nice too - cymbals had a deliciously natural, golden shimmer without sounding soft, and vocals were extremely transparent and crisply defined. KIT88 didn't hang around when it came to exploiting the virtues of its four output valves on numbers such as 'Leaves' and 'Suspect Sustain' from Cirrus' Land's End Jazz CD. Saxophone had a wonderfully smooth, realistic character, and acoustic guitar mixed speed with harmonic richness to very impressive effect. Asian Dub Foundation and Moloko showed no sign at all of the sluggish, woolly bottom-end and poorly-delineated bass beats that most valve amps are to blame for. Which makes the KIT88 an all-round, high-end bargain." Weight 16kg, external dimensions with valves are 330mm(w)x300mm(d)x190mm(h).

KEL34 E&I VALVE INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER KIT

The KEL 34 E&I version is our second generation budget stereo integrated valve amplifier, providing a massive 40 watts of pure valve sound. With 4 line level inputs and one tape output. The KEL 34 E&I is a simple and elegant circuit design using a 6AU6 pentode input valve, an ECC82 double-triode phase splitter and a push-pull pair of Tesla, JJ branded EL34s. The result is a typically sweet, open valve sound with atypical bass control and power. The KEL 34 E&I will work its magic into 'speakers of average sensitivity too. Jon Marks says, "tonally the KEL34 E&I is a bit of a smoothie. It has a fast, dynamic sound, plucked guitar strings and bass drum enjoy crisp leading edges and great impact. Clear imaging and spacious sound slaying meant voices and instruments really jumped out of the loudspeaker boxes. Overall the KEL34 E&I is a beautiful power amp." At the price, this kit is second to none and will open up the benefits of valve amplification to a whole new class of audio nuts! Weight 12kg. External dimensions with valves: 33cm(w) x 27.5cm(d) x 18cm(h).

KEL34 Faceit - if you want your KEL34 to look like the KIT88 this is what you need - £75.00



£315

KEL34 Upgrade Kit- with a superb Panasonic volume control, stargate electrolytics & paper in oil capacitors and fast recovery diodes.

HD83 VALVE HEADPHONE AMPLIFIER KIT

The HD83 is our new headphone amplifier, a beautifully simplistic design using Mullard ECL83 valves, a triode and power pentode housed in the same envelope. It works directly from any source be it a CD, tape, tuner etc., or from an amplifier's tape out or pre-amp sockets. The circuit utilises high specification output E and I output transformers that will drive any headphone load from 16 ohms to over 300 ohms depending on how the secondaries are wired up. The HD83 is a single ended design with the power pentode wired up in triode configuration for that added purity and is as quiet as a mouse. For sound quality Jon Marks says, "The bass is punchy and controlled without becoming artificial, while treble has the crispness of the best solid-state, with the tonal purity, delicacy and speed associated with valves. External dimensions 18cm(w) x 30cm(l) x 8cm(h) weight 4kg.



£175

KEL80 MONOBLOCK AMPLIFIER KIT

£590 A PAIR



NEW!

Following the success of our budget KEL 34 40watt kit amplifier, we have come up with a 'bigger brother' design. The output stage utilises two pairs of TESLA EI 34 pentodes in parallel-push-pull mode, allowing KEL 80 to turn out 80 watts into an 8ohm load. Heading up the input stage we have the wonderfully linear Russian 6AU6 working into an American 5687 phase-splitter. KEL80's output transformers are 4ohm and 8ohm tapped. With an input sensitivity at around 380mV for full output, it will happily partner both passive and active pre-amplifiers. It is easy to assemble. Simon Pope says, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating and the KEL 80 is a feast for the ears, with solid bass attack, lightning fast reactions, that emphasises musicality as well as power, at 590.00 GBP a pair, a definite valve winner. Each monobloc weighs 12kgs., external dimensions with valves: 14cm(w) x 8cm(h) x 43.5cm(d).

K5881 MkII VALVE AMPLIFIER KIT

A 20watt, Class A power amplifier that uses reliable Russian 5881 output valves, a military version of the American 6L6, designed for low distortion audio work. Now with a super shunt regulated push-pull (SRPP) input stage K5881 offers amazing sound quality. It can be used with a simple passive pre-amp or one of our own pre-amplifiers, and it matches modern loudspeakers well. Weight 15kg external dimensions with valves 40cm(w) x 32.5cm(d) x 17cm(h).



£395

MkII with SRPP input stage!

£35

K5881 MkII Upgrade kit

Upgrade your present K5881 amplifier to MkII status. The kit converts your amplifier to the new 100% double triode input stage in place of the original EF86 pentode input

BEEN SO GOOD!

KLS10 HIGH TECHNOLOGY COMPACT MONITOR



Our mini-marvel uses an Audax carbon fibre bass/midrange unit, married to the world's most advanced tweeter, the piezo-electric gold dome HD3P from Audax. KLS10 offers high performance from a small package. The main 'speakers are designed to work alone, or with a dedicated subwoofer to extend their bass. Alone, they are suited to near-wall mounting and can be tuned by port adjustment to suit personal taste and location. They are easy to drive and need just 30-60watts. KLS10 is unique. Technically advanced, yet compact and relatively inexpensive. There is little to match it. Sensitivity 89dB 1W/1m, 15mm MDF, internal volume 9Ltrs, external dimensions 19cm(w) x 31cm(h) x 23cm(d).

£394

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DRIVE UNITS ONLY £358.00

KLS10 GOLD SUBWOOFER



£149.95

Designed to compliment KLS10 Gold stand mounters by providing a deep and open bass. The subwoofer is inexpensive, easy to build, comprising a simple crossover network to a high quality 8 inch Aerogel dual voice coil unit. A must for all KLS10 Gold customers. Sens. 89dB, volume 25 litres, external dimensions 28cm(w) x 43cm(h) x 34cm(d).

DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT £149.95
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KLS9 TWO WAY FLOORSTANDER



£230

Here's a storm for you - KLS9, with its BB4 alignment bass cabinet and Audax High Definition Aerogel 8in bass/midrange unit. Designed by Noel Keywood to possess optimal bass damping and a clean step response. Aided by a teensy bit of bass lift, KLS9 really thunders; it will re-arrange your furniture. But it does not waffle, falling silent when there's no bass in the music. Aided by a high power 1in fabric dome tweeter, KLS9 is detailed, evenly balanced and images superbly. It is an easy 12ohm load and is 88dB sensitive. For amps up to 60W. Easy to build and great for beginners. Internal volume 70Ltrs, 18m MDF external dimensions 25cm(w) x 93cm(h) x 40cm(d).

DRIVE UNITS & CROSSOVER KIT £230.00
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DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT £350.00
DRIVE UNIT PACK £230.00

KLS7 2 WAY CARBON-FIBRE DRIVER FLOORSTANDER

Compact and affordable two way reflex loudspeaker. KLS7's slim dimensions make it easy to accommodate, but it uses top quality carbon-fibre drivers, so performance isn't compromised. An audiophile bargain. Sensitivity 86dB at 1W/1m 12mm MDF, internal volume 18Ltrs, external dimensions 15cm(w) x 80cm(h) x 22cm(d).

DRIVE UNIT & CROSSOVER KIT £195.00
DRIVE UNIT PACK £110.00

KLS12 TWO WAY FLOORSTANDER/STANDMOUNTER



£175

KLS12 is a versatile budget loudspeaker that delivers fine sound quality at a low price. It utilises Audax's HT210F0 woven fibre glass cone, mid/bass unit, beautifully married with the TW034X0, 34mm diameter doped fabric dome tweeter. Noel Keywood says, 'The KLS12 is a transparent, vividly detailed reproducer with fine projection. It has tight well defined bass, which means it is best positioned close to a rear wall. Vocals possess a clean outline with an intense clarity.' At 89dB the KLS12 is easy to drive, thus, it is suitable for 20W and upward power amps. Internal volume = 34.1 litres

standmounter external dimensions = 58cm(h) x 24.2cm(w) x 34cm(d) floor stander external dimensions(with sand filled space cavity) = 58cm(h) x 24.2cm(w) x 34cm(d)

DRIVE UNITS & CROSSOVER KIT £175.00
DRIVE UNIT PACK £100.00

KLS11 3 WAY DESIGN



NEW!

Our newest design is a wonderful three way bass reflex enclosure stand mounter. Another star performer, featuring the superb gold dome tweeter, the HD3P! This, married perfectly to a HM100ZO midrange unit and utilising the deep full sound of the 10 inch PR24OZO bass unit. All units are from Audax. As both these units use high definition Aerogel cones they have similar sonic signatures, providing a deliciously gelled sound. Our KLS11 is a quality three way, with powerfull bass and midrange driver that ensures vocals are handled with high fidelity. The treble is both smooth and sweet. Sensitivity 88dB

Volume 45.5 litres External dimensions 31cms (w) x 37.3cms (d) x 64cms (h)

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With a sensitivity of 94dB, KLS8 needs very little power. Its 10in. professional bass driver and horn loaded tweeter give it a BIG sound. Ideal for low power amplifiers. Internal volume 50.5ltrs, external dimensions 29cm(w) x 65cm(h) x 36cm(d).

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KLS3 GOLD MK II



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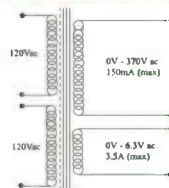
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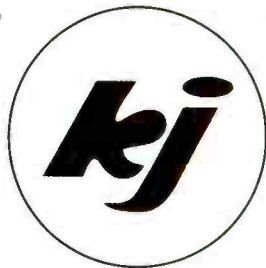
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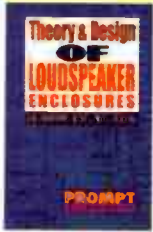
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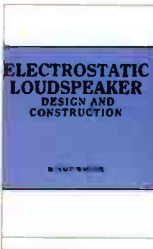
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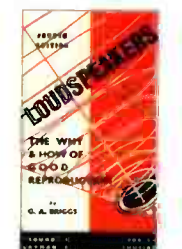
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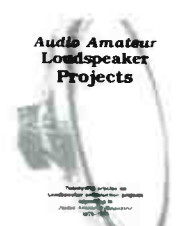
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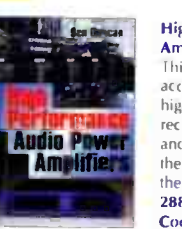


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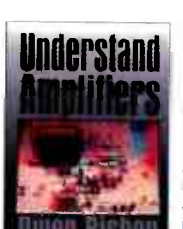
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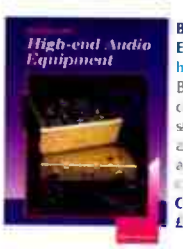
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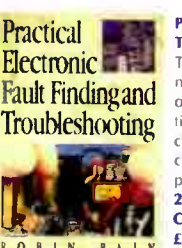
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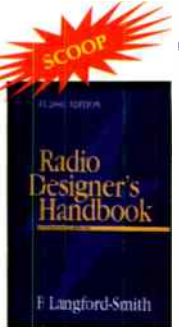
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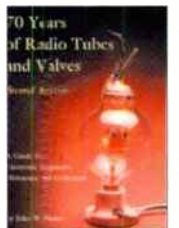
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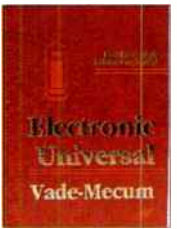
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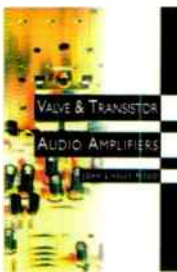
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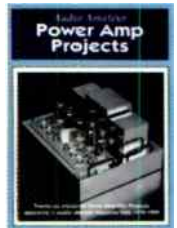
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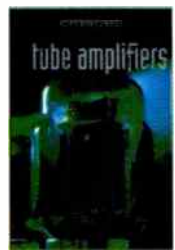


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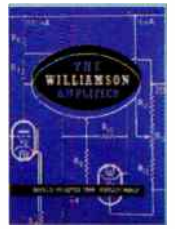


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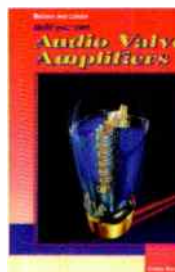
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WALES

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HI-FI WORLD

Buying Guide

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Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

Prices shown are those at the time of review



Aura LST 627.



Blue Room Mini Pod.

Under £300

Acoustic Energy AE100	£200	Jan 96	Reasonably neutral but ultimately lacklustre. Control of treble and mid-range poor.
Aura LST 627M	£240	Dec 97	Partner the Opals with warm ancillaries and you get an involving sound. Avoid bright amps and sources.
Aura LST 627M	£230	Aug 98	Energetic, bold and highly detailed, the Aura is one to consider for the budget-conscious.
Aura LST 627	£299	Oct 98	Like Aura's matching stand mounters, the 627Ms are lucid and controlled. Treble is brightish.
B&W 805	£200	Jan 96	Unrestricted and clean sound with satisfying musicality. An engaging subtlety not common at the price.
B&W DM305	£130	Apr 96	Clear open and detailed sound but balance too forward and weak bass.
B&W DM602	£250	Nov 96	Excels with taut hard-hitting bass with dynamic, uncoloured midrange. Metal tweeter bleaches out the treble.
Beaton CR6	£150	Sep 98	With simple music, the CR6s work well, but not quite as well as the best of the competition.
Castle 805	£230	Jan 96	A lively little animal, well worth the money.
Castle 121	£119	Feb 96	The 121s' powerful, confident sound belies a rather poor measured performance.
Castle Impact 15	£200	Jan 96	Big presentation but a rather distant quality. Could sound boomy and confined.
Castle Impact 23	£299	Nov 96	Sterling performance in the bass with speed and control. Good midrange projection.
Charlo Super 1500	£299	Feb 99	Quality construction and sound produce a very capable 'speaker. Open treble and firm bass for the size.
Elav Liberty 30	£150	Jan 98	A lot of loudspeaker for the money. Punch and slam in the bass but sometimes thin in the treble.
Elite Symphony 3	£240	Nov 96	Although bright, the Symphony 6s score for clarity and power. Bass is fast and accurate.
Elite 2	£140	Feb 97	Smooth, balanced performers that do a good job on any genre. Free from the nasties that afflict many at the price.
Gene Mini Monitor	£50	Apr 97	Not the last word in midrange or bass clarity, but gives real hi-fi results for a paltry £50.
GAL ICT150	£170	Nov 95	For their size and price they offer some super qualities, especially stable imaging.
Heybrook Heywhite	£270	Jun 98	A mini monitor with more precision and dynamism than the size and price tag would suggest.
Heybrook Opus	£259	Oct 98	Capable all-rounders, the Optimas combine smoothness, insight and control to great effect.
Heybrook HB1 53	£269	Nov 96	Excellent imaging with clear treble and midrange. Bass slightly dry and boxy but would suit a smaller room.
Jamo C750 Active	£200	Oct 98	In spite of a few colorations, the Jamos are fine examples of budget active operation.
JPW ML510	£130	Jan 98	With greater transparency and a bit more get-up-and-go, the 510s could be leaders of the budget pack.
KEF Q15	£200	May 96	The 60S is open and detailed but coloured too.
KEF Code 7	£129	Apr 95	Rhythmic push and tuneful bass are the plus points of these small standmounts.
KEF Code 8	£200	Jan 96	Breezy presence, good dynamics and a sense of fullness. Not the utmost in clarity, some box colouration.
KEF Code 9	£299	Jul 96	Strong bass can get out of control, as can treble. This tends to overpower the midrange.
KEF Q13	£199	Feb 97	Impressive bass and a sweet clarity make the Q15s 'speakers that'll put a smile on any audiophile's face.
Kenwood LS90UK	£298	Jul 98	The LS90UKs have dry bass and limited tonal colour, but staging and imaging are superb.
Kenwood LS90UK	£298	Apr 96	Well-behaved and with a decent tonal quality.
Mission 700	£130	May 98	The 700s are easily outclassed by Mission's own superb 731 Pros at a £10 premium.
Mission 731	£129	Apr 95	An initially impressive, upfront sound but ultimately a little uninvolved.
Mission 731 Pro	£139	Jul 97	Music makers with a clean, punchy sound. Real value for money.
Mission 731i	£130	Nov 98	Mission's babies are a truly worthwhile improvement on the original 731s.
Mission 731LE	£150	Nov 98	Excellent sound puts the competitors in the shade. Well built and pretty too!
Mission 732	£200	Aug 97	If you've got £200 with 'loudspeaker' written on it, then the 732i should be on your shopping list.
Mission 771	£170	Jul 98	Superb stand mounters of real refinement and musicality. A touch bass light.
Mission 772	£230	Apr 99	Civilised standmounters which lack nothing in control, finesse or transparency.
Monitor MM-1000	£200	May 99	A novel multi-media two-satellites-and-sub which nevertheless demands to be taken quite seriously.
Monitor Stand M200	£200	Jan 96	Very tight bass and an all-round big sound. Some sharpness in the treble but assertive and clear.
Net 801	£100	Jun 97	Impressive bass with midrange clarity are pluses. Prominent treble stops the 801 from challenging the best.
Paradigm Mini Monitor	£230	Aug 97	The Paradigms have a generally enjoyable sound but treble is sharp and midrange recessed.
QLN 122	£270	Jun 96	Solid bottom end will drive a large room well, but they're a bit bright too.
RDJ RA Labs Mini Pod	£99	Jul 95	Engineering is not tip-top, but with a smooth system they will produce a clear and open, if bright, sound.
Revolver Purdy	£200	Jan 96	Rather small sound for a big cabinet. Absence of deep bass hard to forgive.
Rogers LS1	£149	Feb 96	Clear, bright and open but with weak bass. Best used close to or against a wall.
Rogers LS32	£250	Nov 96	Detailed and clear with a forward midrange. Could be a little rough on vocals; bass extension is limited.
System Audio 1005	£299	Aug 96	Excellent all-rounder that provides a real open window into almost every genre of music.
Tangent Monitor 1	£200	Nov 97	The Tangents' bass has attractive speed and impact, matched with smooth treble and open midband.
Tangent Monitor 2	£60	Jul 96	Good imaging as well as control. Tweets a bit too much but more than fine for the money.
Tannoy Mercury m1	£120	Jun 98	The best at the price and capable of embarrassing many more expensive 'speakers.
Tannoy Mercury m2	£140	May 97	For £140, you get a 'speaker with transparency and enjoyability unmatched at the price.
Tannoy Mercury m3	£240	Nov 97	Even overall balance and taut secure bass, if not the deepest ever. Slightly lightweight and uninvolved.
Tannoy R1	£199	Nov 98	Worth an audition if you need to balance a bright source and amp, but treble lacks clarity.
TDL NFM 1	£120	May 97	Bright treble is partially balanced by taut, well integrated bass, but outclassed by the competition.
TDL Monitor 1	£60	Apr 97	Clean, incisive, detailed and revealing, especially in the bass.
W'ville Active Diamond	£180	Mar 99	Great value introduction to active. The sound is deep and powerful but could be a little coloured for some.
Wharfedale Futura 302	£150	Jul 96	Can work well if partnered to give weighty bass and smooth treble.

£300-£799

B&W DM15E	£600	Apr 98	Tuneful and confident, these 'speakers are well suited to Pop and Dance music.
B&W DM305	£350	Mar 97	All the ingredients for listening fun are mixed into the DM305. Overall presentation could be more cohesive though.
B&W P4	£600	Mar 95	Good-looking solid 'speakers with great spirit and tenacity but with a dry treble. Not fans of classical music.
Blue Room MiniPod	£400	Jan 97	Arresting style allied to an engaging sound makes the Minipods attractive. Best with smooth amps and source.
Castle OA 50.2	£585	Dec 98	Acoustic music gets nicely. More artificial pieces sometimes don't work so well.
Castle Aeon	£699	Dec 96	Taut, dry bass and lucid midrange but need matching to warm ancillaries to avoid sounding bright.

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Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

£300-£799			
Castle Howard	£799	Aug 96	Bass power and extension will impress but overall sound is uneven and rather sterile.
Castle Kinross	£450	Mar 98	The Kendals have great clarity but need coupling to warm ancillaries.
Castle Severn II	£579	Jul 98	Apart from some hardness in the tweeters, the Severn 2s are accomplished all-rounders.
Chorus Nova 1	£399	May 95	Music makers through and through with a great feel for rhythm and dynamics.
Chorus Lynx	£549	Apr 99	The Lynxes are superbly built but their rising bass and treble suit home cinema more than hi-fi.
Dark 400	£700	Feb 96	A powerful and rich sound from these competitively priced floorstanders makes them worth a recommendation.
Epoxi EB12	£495	Oct 96	Strong, punchy bass allied to detailed and articulate midrange and treble.
Heptabook Heyliss	£339	Mar 97	The Heyliss stand out for their bass depth, dynamics and sound staging. Overall balance prefers Classical to Rock.
Heptabook Heylis	£389	Oct 95	Posses a neutral, fast and dry sound. A good match for soft sounding systems.
Jamo 307	£300	Apr 95	Delicate, detailed sound, albeit with rather imprecise imaging. Will work well on a bookshelf.
JPW 98L110	£300	Nov 97	Not perfect but they make music fun. Quality, power and extension, the Milleniums are worth a listen.
JPW Ruby 2	£395	Oct 98	Once allied to warm electronics, the Ruby 2s mix insight with plenty of involvement.
Kef LS315A	£599	Jul 95	Partnered with the Rogers AB1, this is a substantial marriage.
Kef Q25	£350	Nov 97	Very accomplished midrange and treble but the dry in the bass. For Rock fans the upper bass speed is appealing.
Kef Q55	£499	Aug 97	The Q55s look rather expensive at £500 with their 'boom and tizz' presentation.
Kef RDM1	£499	Oct 97	The RDM1s soundstage well thanks to their Uni-Q drivers. Can be uninvolved because of a lack of scale and impact.
Line Taktari	£389	Dec 95	Highly musical standmounters that give similarly priced floorstanders a great deal to worry about.
Melton A100	£750	May 95	Very polite and many will appreciate their civility. Deep powerful bass.
Mission 733	£300	Apr 95	Captivating floorstanders that bring music to life - what good hi-fi should do.
Mission 734	£430	Sep 95	Engineered for low price and showroom appeal rather than absolute sound quality.
Mission 751 Freedom	£350	Apr 97	Charming little stand-mounters with a sweet, warm, musical sound.
Mission 752 Freedom	£578	Jan 97	Dynamic, punchy, and musical yet refined like few at the price. Bass lacks a little depth.
Mission 774	£500	Feb 99	With the right ancillaries, the 774s have a clarity and lack of colouration still rare at the price.
Monitor Sound M20	£300	Nov 96	Sweet sounding metal dome tweeter although the dry bass and rather plasticky midrange work against it.
Musical Technology FM15	£474	Jan 99	Sophisticated, neutral sound and fine musicality put the PM15s near the head of the class.
Next 104	£500	Jan 96	A thin and hard sound but precise with it!
Next Critique II	£445	Jan 99	Deserving 'speakers with good looks and build. Can fail to shine with over-polite equipment.
Next 113	£389	Aug 95	Very crisp sounding 'speakers best suited to smaller rooms.
Opera Prima	£495	Feb 99	The Primas offer a taste of the high-end at a sensible price. They are more fans of Classical than Rock though.
Orion Cap-Centre II	£329	Oct 95	Good value floorstanders with clean enjoyable sound - not quite supersonic, though.
Polk PSW100	£500	Jul 97	The PSW150 adds depth to a system but can sound obvious at times.
ProAc Dabala	£600	Aug 98	Amp-sensitive and slightly boxy in the lower treble, the ProAcs are still highly musical.
REL Q Bass	£350	May 96	Needs care in setting up but this subwoofer offers serious quality bass for not a lot of money.
REL Q110E	£500	Apr 98	Another capable sub from REL that boosts bass and improves sound staging.
Rogers AB 1	£499	Jul 95	When used with the Kef LS3/5a this sub delivers the goods, beyond a doubt.
Rowan RockOne	£595	Feb 97	Musically involving 'speakers that many will enjoy, but a little unrefined at times.
Sandwich 400	£329	Apr 96	Good at orchestral scale but coloured in the midband.
Sandwich Absolute 4P	£799	Oct 97	The Absolute 4Ps excel in all areas except for the rather bright, hard treble. Bass is exceptional.
Spendix 3030	£599	Jun 96	Smooth, focussed and coherent in their delivery with deep, taut bass extension. Not the most spacious sound.
Spendix 103	£400	Feb 96	Dry and clean sound, but can become hard and confused when pushed.
Tannoy Freedom P10	£300	May 98	Though very even in their performance, the P10s lack ultimate clarity and punch.
Tannoy Profile 633 plus	£300	Nov 96	Weighty bass and rhythmic detail work well on dance. Less satisfying with classical music. Firm imaging.
TDL RTL 4	£650	Feb 95	Easy going with plenty of detail and timbral richness. Better with classical fare.
TDC T-line 2	£550	Jan 97	Midrange and treble have good tonal colour, detail and speed. Bass is slow and blurred.
Technics SB-40300	£350	Nov 95	A great sound with solid bass from a compact and well priced 'speaker.
Technics SB-M500	£450	May 96	Clean, dry and taut with good imaging and sound staging. More neutral than Mission's 752s but less euphonic.
Triangle Conate TZX	£475	Jan 95	Quite pleasant, inoffensive sound but others costing less can offer more.
Wharfedale Vector 300	£300	Oct 95	Good for adding scale and power to a weak system or budget separates.



JPW Ruby 2.



Soundcraft Absolute 4P.

£800-£1499			
Audiophile E	£1450	Mer 95	Big, bulky and ultra-sensitive with quick pace and a well balanced sound, but not without flaws.
Audiophile M1 Sig	£1479	Aug 98	The M1 Sigs may be a little laid-back, but they have a pleasant and involving sound.
Audiophile M2	£1499	Jun 98	The M2s are marred by a boom 'n' tizz presentation that suits Heavy Metal but not much else.
BEAR CD307	£399	Feb 98	With warm ancillaries the CDM7s produce a weighty, open sound. Bass could be faster.
Castle Howard S2	£1099	Mar 96	Fantastically deep and tight bass but some treble sharpness requires careful matching.
Conquest A3	£1499	Jun 98	Focus is not a strength, but bass extension and even tonality are. Metal tweeter can be bright.
Chorus Academy One	£1199	Dec 95	Musical realism and a great real-wood finish make these 'speakers enjoyable, if not perfect.
Chorus Nova	£1250	May 99	Small cabinet precludes the deepest bass, but a sweet little act for all that. Seriously imaging abilities.
Epoxi ES22	£1185	Jun 98	Aside from a slightly cool balance, the ES22s shine. Dynamics, bass depth and control are tops.
Event 2020000	£829	Sep 98	Warm, detailed and well-endowed in the bass, the Events lack only a touch of overall control.
Harbeth DPM1 Active	£849	Sep 98	Now HHB's Circle Actives, these loudspeakers mix the best of pro and domestic to produce first-class results.
Harbeth HI Compact 1	£1329	Jun 96	Dry and analytical but truthful with it. A first class monitor ideally suited to acoustic or classical music.
Harbeth HL 85	£975	Dec 96	Clean, musical and classy - Harbeth have done themselves proud again!
KAR Torino	£895	Jan 97	The Torinos' stylish sound won't shame any system. That powerful bass does need space to breathe properly though.
Kef Reference 1	£395	May 95	Beautifully fluid and integrated mid band and treble but can be slow, with a little loss of bass control.
Kef Reference 2	£1499	Jan 95	Handles rock and classical with equal aplomb, with the ability to reproduce detail that flummoxes many other models.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



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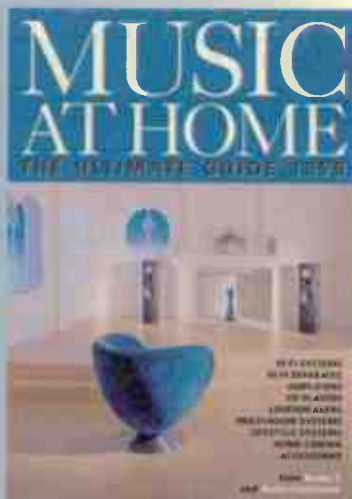
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Loudspeakers £ Year Verdict

£800-£1499

Kelly KT3	£1199	Apr 98	The KT3s go very loud very easily but they don't possess the most even response.
Klipsch Hermez 4	£1150	May 99	Hom and infinite-baffle hybrid with power to spare. Phasing and frequency accurate beyond belief.
KIK V8	£995	Sep 98	Ultra-detailed and revealing, the V8s are true pro more than domestic transducers.
Magneplanar MG 0.4 CD	£1370	Mar 95	Very clear detail and separation, but just fails to produce a fully 3-dimensional sound.
Magneplanar MG12/QR	£1200	May 99	Lightness of touch and clarity in trumps. Needs powerful amplification for 77dB/W/m. Not a valve 'speaker.
Mirage 600	£1075	Oct 95	An easy going, open and natural sound makes the mirages an attractive proposition.
Mission 754 F2	£1299	Sep 96	Articulate and Informative sound with fine imaging and tight, deep bass.
Mitsubishi Silver 600	£1450	Dec 95	Fast, tight and informative, but a poor tweeter casts a grey shadow.
Monitor Tech, Falcon	£955	May 96	Give a big sense of scale on rock and jazz but not subtle and even enough for the critical classical listener.
NEAR Soundmesh	£1199	Aug 95	An interesting, musical floorstander that's good value even at this price.
Origin Live System II	£1225	Jun 98	The OLs have transparency and detail in considerable amounts. Bass can be loose though.
RT Ventoac	£896	Aug 95	Smooth and refined floorstanders that some listeners will find captivating.
QLN Signature	£1499	Mar 96	Super sound staging, openness and detail. Well worth seeking out.
REL Studio 7	£995	Aug 95	Excellent bass performance means that this subwoofer is no toy.
Rufanin Orion 2	£1000	Jan 98	Unusual 'speakers with great rhythmic capabilities and bass. Could be more transparent.
Sarkis Picoac	£1099	May 95	The Paladins possess a detailed and expansive soundstage but also a rather dry character
Spendor 3040	£899	Oct 96	The tweeter works well but a recessed midband and one-note bass are the Achilles heels.
Tannoy FL8	£1275	Jun 98	The FL8s are warm, mellow performers which prefer Classical to Rock.
Tannoy D300	£1000	Apr 97	Impressive bass extension and control with precise imaging make the D300s a snip at £1000.
Tannoy Model 1 Sep	£1250	Sep 97	Good but the move from standard to Signature has taken speed and punch out of the Model 1s
UKD Classix Gold	£995	Jun 96	A rich and open sound, extremely musical if not strictly accurate. Great bass extension for their size.
UKD Omega	£1390	Jun 95	Not the most neutral 'speakers but they are extremely smooth with an overall coherence to the sound.
Veritas 7	£1000	Jun 99	Combine neutrality and detail with fluidity and sophistication.



Magneplanar MG12/QR.

£1500-

Andipositor 6	£4600	Jun 95	If you have enough room and money the 6s are capable of a highly musical, involving performance.
AME 107 Mk2	£1500	Dec 98	The 107 Mk2s may look slim but they have a solid sound and are fabulously revealing.
Cadence 88	£3500	Sep 95	Interesting design that incorporates an electrostatic tweeter. An impressive but inconsistent performer.
Champion A3	£1800	May 97	The A3s are quite simply superb. All you'll need to enjoy them is a large enough listening room.
Epps E524	£1505	May 95	An extremely coherent and focussed sound; these are true audiophile speakers. Captivating with classical music.
Herbeth HL88	£1999	Mar 97	Glassy clarity, bright treble, with bass that comes alive when given welly. Expensive though.
Haybrook Octet	£1800	Jul 98	The Octets are smooth, laid-back floor standers. Lack speed and transparency.
Jamo Concert 8	£2000	Dec 97	A worthy bigger brother for the Concert 8s, with a fast, transparent and even sound.
Jamo Concert 8	£1500	Jun 97	The Concert 8s are superbly clean and transparent. Their nature will show up any source shortcomings.
JBL S2000	£3500	Jul 96	Smooth, detailed and spacious with scale, dynamics and imaging. Capable of producing a real performance.
Kef Reference 3	£2000	Nov 95	For superb reproduction within large rooms, the 3s are a force to be reckoned with.
KEF Reference 4	£3099	Oct 96	Superb bass and near-electrostatic soundstaging make these involving 'speakers a bargain.
Living Voice Auditorium	£1500	May 99	Their strengths suggest a Classical 'speaker but they suit electronic compositions better. Rich tone but loose bass.
Peak Studio 102	£1500	Mar 99	They may be musically engaging but the ProAc's brightness suits them best for smooth valve amplification.
Para Audio Sportforce	£8000	Feb 99	The best home for a reflex-loaded Tannoy dual-concentric, but they don't come cheap!
Spendor 3040	£1970	Jan 95	Gorgeous looking. Listening becomes an enjoyable experience, full of surprises from subtleties.
Spendor 3040	£3400	Apr 96	One of the clearest and most expressive loudspeakers you'll ever find for a large room. Easy to drive, too.
Tannoy 3040	£2702	Aug 96	Bold and powerful with solid bass, clearly focussed midrange and delicious treble. Well worth tracking down.
Tannoy D300	£3999	Sep 97	£4000 may be a lot to pay for a pair of 'speakers, but the Tannoys deliver to great effect in all areas.
Tannoy HL 1000	£1500	Nov 96	Materially excellent value. Sound clean and extended but can lack involvement.
Thomas Transducers 310	£4750	Feb 95	Capable of producing a captivating performance of lifelike proportions with a great air of naturalness.
Thomas Ventoac Gold	£3395	May 98	Impressive horns that combine lightness of touch with power and clarity.



Jamo Concert 8.

Integrated £ Year Verdict

under £300

Alchemist Master	£299	Mar 96	Fluid and musical but upper bass is a little dry. Useful phono stage with but with a little sibilance and ringing.
AMC 3025	£150	Nov 96	A lot for very little money - sweet sound and good build make the AMC 3025 a great starter amp.
AMC 3026A	£170	Feb 98	Offers plenty of power for the money but sound quality is not class leading.
Amran Alpha 8 plus	£250	Oct 96	Good with efficient loudspeakers but generally needs more power and control.
Amran Alpha One	£230	Jan 99	In a smooth system with a warmish bias the Alpha One makes a strong case for itself.
Aura V400	£279	Apr 95	Excellent value for money and will get the best from any component. Needs a separate phono stage.
Aura V400 SE	£250	Mar 96	The Aura has a smooth, civilized sound with fine detail. Bass punch really rolls along. Good phono stage.
Cambridge A1 Mk II v2sg	£100	Jul 98	Involving and finely detailed, the Cambridge pushes forward the boundaries for inexpensive amps.
Denon PMA 250SE	£160	Feb 97	A mix of control, delicacy and detail allows it to excel with any music.
Denon PMA 400H	£230	Sep 95	Good drive, punch and an open soundstage, but suffers from confusion plus a thin midrange and treble.
Denon PMA 400SE	£280	Oct 96	Big and brutish but unfortunately bland with it. Something of a blast from the 1970s-80s past!
Herman Karben HV11E	£180	Jun 95	Thorough-going down to earth liveliness. Bright but clean which gives appealing vivacity.
Herman Karben HV20E	£280	Oct 95	Not quite a giant killer, the Herman 1s nevertheless a good solid budget buy.

Prices shown are those at the time of review



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Integrated £ Year Verdict

under £300

Altec Lansing E11	£299	Feb 98	A very capable integrated with a smoothness and warmth predisposed to classical rather than rock.
NAD 304	£239	Apr 95	Fine quality bass but rather lackadaisical as regards timing. Phono stage moderate. Needs careful matching.
NAD 310	£130	Jan 95	Good detail and a spacious open sound gives acoustic music and the majority of rock superb clarity.
NAD C300	£200	Apr 99	Younger sibling of the famous 3020 with many of its virtues to boot. Pre-eminently balanced and natural.
Phonon A103	£130	Mar 95	Luxuriant presentation doesn't compensate for the tendency to un-rhythmic effects. MM phono stage.
Pioneer A200K	£230	Apr 95	Another highly capable all-rounder although a touch sterile sounding for some tastes.
Pro-ject 7	£259	Apr 95	On a budget, the Pro-ject has strong merit, including an excellent phono stage. Not for all systems.
Realist RA 37052	£250	Oct 96	Fresh sound with sharp attack. A slight midrange emphasis can make certain music sound rather forward.
Realist RA 901	£150	Dec 98	For the money there's no faulting such a gifted performer.
Sony TA-FH30E	£250	Aug 95	bright clear and detailed, but needs a touch more refinement to prevail.
Teknova BU 4700 MK3	£250	Jan 97	A smooth unassuming sound misses out on the subtlety which brings music to life.

£300-£799

Aphoronic Valve EL34	£600	Feb 00	Low feedback integrated with plenty of slam. Not the ultimate in refinement but very good value for money
Alchemat Exim	£300	Sep 95	Musically rewarding; deserves serious audition. Great British hi-fi on a budget.
AMC 3150A	£329	Nov 98	Not the most musical amp ever but good value. The tone controls and balance adjustment will appeal to some.
Antan Alpha 6+	£350	Jan 96	Full and smooth sound, unfortunately with loose bass.
Antan Alpha 9	£500	Dec 96	Excellent value. A detailed and open sound gives great atmosphere to all types of music
A. A. Puccini EE	£595	Dec 97	All the main ingredients like rhythm and dynamics present and correct. Natural smoothness and transparency.
Audio Analogue Puccini	£595	Sep 97	Excellent sound quality outstrips the competition at up to £1000.
Audiobest 9006A	£500	May 95	Manages the rare feat of sounding powerful and lithe at the same time. Bass taut but not the last word.
Audiobest 9000C	£700	Dec 97	Powerful hefty sound which doesn't blench when driving awkward loads.
Beaufort's Progress EA 1	£680	Aug 96	Too thin and crisp which makes prolonged listening fatiguing.
Cyrus 3	£500	Oct 96	Highly refined and detailed performance with a clear well-proportioned soundstage.
Cyrus Straight Line	£398	Nov 88	A good, honest bit of kit with a fine musical sound and no glaring virtues.
Dorson II	£650	Dec 97	If a musical adrenaline rush is what you seek, fine. Listening in bulk, rather clinical and cold sounding.
Edmond E3110	£400	Apr 99	Solid build and a big sound make the ESI 10 worthy of audition. Not perhaps the transparent at the price.
ESL Audio	£750	Jun 88	Powerful and refreshingly pure; a sound investment.
Kenwood KA-T99R	£400	Apr 98	Excels with sound staging but lacks subtlety and tonal colour.
LED Music	£499	Jun 97	An extremely enjoyable, lucid little amplifier that really gets to the heart of the music.
Mosconi PM-46 X1 II	£400	Nov 97	An enjoyable and rhythmic sound but may be too lean for some bass-light 'speakers.
Novus M1	£695	Jan 97	An engaging musical performance; sweet overall sound. Doesn't cope with difficult loads so well.
North 50 Integrated	£320	Jul 95	A big open sound sets the Moth apart at this price. Low powered, though. Distinctly amateurish looks.
Phonon Fidelity X-61	£480	Dec 98	Two boxes don't form a pre and power in the X-A1 but the result is nevertheless a winning combination.
Myryad 7-40	£399	Nov 98	Couple the Myryad with a warm system and enjoy. Possibly a little lightweight on the Reggae & Rap side.
Real 517	£470	May 97	With 80 watts on tap, the NAD has power aplenty but is rather dynamically limited and ultimately uninviting.
Realist MA 370	£500	May 95	Rather monochromatic with midband emphasis and slightly dry bass. Good imaging but smallish soundstage.
Realist MA 370	£449	Jul 96	Clean, open, active sound. Smooth and detailed with good punch too. One of the best at the price.
Pioneer A-300R Precision	£400	Aug 97	A bargain at £400 pure and simple. Outclasses the competition in every area.
Phonon A400A	£300	Oct 96	Complements all sorts of music with power and confidence. Outstanding value for money.
Quad 37	£595	Feb 85	Although classically orientated, the Quad will rock too. Precise and stable imagery and fidelity to tonal values.
Portland Capstan	£695	Jun 97	Mixes the best of solid state and valve worlds (without valves!) to produce a seductive sound.
Rose Scion	£615	May 97	Great packaging and super sound make the Scion a winner.
Scionville Capstan	£579	Jan 95	Highly detailed and smooth sound. Worth searching out.
Sony TA-FH30R	£300	Feb 99	Partnered correctly to counterbalance its forwardness, the Sony offers a fast, rhythmic presentation.
Teac AX7H	£700	Jun 96	Big and powerful sound, but a little unsubtle with it.
Teknova SE-A900 MK3	£300	Mar 99	Nominally a separate pre and power, but the pre can't work alone. Exciting but unsubtle.

£800-

Audiobest 9006B	£1999	Mar 95	Needs the right loudspeaker but a good musical presentation is in there somewhere.
Coghead C8A 14	£1099	Apr 96	A sweet and subtle sound. Fine midrange; transparent and open with vocals.
Dorson DM 111	£1299	Jun 95	Dual mono construction gives strong stereo separation. Brutal resolution of detail but not the clearest ever.
Expressive Super XV	£800	Oct 95	A stringy-sounding transistor amp for rock. Build and finish could be better and price lower.
Gamma Rhythm	£2499	Jul 96	Partnered with sensible loudspeakers of good bass depth, the Rhythm is capable of impressive performance.
Layardi II	£3200	Apr 99	Has clarity in spades and an extremely rare tonal purity. Outclasses many transistor alternatives with ease.
Mosconi MAC800	£3735	Sep 95	A mighty confection of power, facilities and style, and it sounds good to boot.
Musical Fidelity A1001	£2499	Jun 98	Awesome power and seismic bass. A very good all-rounder with super-clean sound.
Real 517	£850	May 99	An excellent performer with any music. Adept at handling subtle details. Difficult to beat at the price.
Shantel Phase 2	£800	Apr 97	Even-handed performer deals confidentially with music regardless of genre. Not as smooth as the best.
Sony Dussions Anthem	£1295	May 98	A characteristically competent and musical integrated. Prefers fairly efficient loudspeakers though.
Stereoset Alabaster	£900	Oct 97	Excellent high-end integrated with a real love of music and plenty of poke.
Teac AX10	£1000	Sep 95	Very strong all round performer with excellent build and finish. Verging on the expensive though.
Union Res. Simply 843	£2950	Mar 98	Allied to all the right 'speakers will handle all musical genres with smoothness and power.



Audio Analogue Puccini.



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Pre-amps £ Year Verdict

under £300

AMC 1100	£150	Mar 99	Tone controls cannot be defeated and the sum total is a little metallic but value in spades.
Creek C8H-115E	£199	Apr 99	A very lucid, natural headphone amp which scores as highly on acoustic and Classical as it does on Rock.
Creek C8H-12	£200	Jul 98	Only poor cosmetics mar the Creek. Sonically it's a gem.
Math 30 Passive	£149	Mar 99	Won't win prizes for best build but a flexible effort for a passive. Somewhat dry presentation overall.
Musical Fidelity X-Tone	£130	Mar 98	If you haven't yet experienced the world of quality headphone listening, the X-Cans is the way to start.
Musical Fidelity X-Tone	£200	Jan 98	A smooth, sweet and musical performer.
Phono 7	£120	Mar 99	Easy-to-use stand-alone modern tone control with subtle effect. Rather a bargain.
Phono 7	£259	Feb 95	Immensely enjoyable and listenable, a rare mixture of sophistication and fun.
Real RC901	£150	Mar 99	Five line-level inputs and tone controls make for a flexible unit. Partnered by the RB-971 power amp, very good value.
Technica SU-C1180M&H	£299	Apr 98	Needs slightly more taut bass and a less grainy midrange to bring it up with the best.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

£300-£799

Audio Analogue Helix	£475	Apr 98	Organic and transparent. Free from transistor hardness.
Ark CA200	£749	Mar 97	A smooth and sweet sound devoid of roughness.
Comson C58M&C	£440	Nov 98	The phono stage is the main area of weakness. Can sound a touch muddled at times.
Orbit Epoch	£600	Jun 96	A fine sounding preamp, but the phono stage is weak in the bass.
Orbit Epoch	£650	Feb 96	Pre-amplifier has plenty of facilities, but sounds a little unexciting and 'conventional'.
Reizbrak Signature II	£549	May 97	Impressive smoothness and tonal colour, transparent as well.
RT Audio Lab 1.15	£650	Dec 95	This valve pre-amp is very good value indeed.
Ruffini Indu	£499	May 99	Passive pre of box-of-switches, whichever way you look at it the Indu is stylishly finished and well conceived.
Sumi Address 1	£767	May 96	More valve-like than transistor in sound; highly competent if not spectacular.
Tek Nutrition 1	£500	Jun 97	Flexible with a strong controlled sound, but won't suit all tastes.
Technica SU-C1000	£350	Feb 97	Good when mains powered, even better running on its batteries. One to consider at the price.
Thorens TTA2000	£550	Jul 95	Poor sound quality and engineering let this pre-amp down. Pricey too.
Umooc Rev. Fantasy 1	£795	Aug 98	Warm but still exciting, it is only let down by a slightly recessed midrange



Musical Fidelity X-Tone.

£800-£1499

Avolites 8000C	£999	Jun 95	Highly recommended for its blend of operational sophistication, build and sound quality.
Sumi Phantom	£1095	Feb 98	Smooth, even and transparent. Well worth the outlay.
John Shearer Phase 6	£895	Sep 96	Matched with a smooth amp and 'speakers the Phase 6 is capable of a transparent and rewarding performance
Lee Wynona	£900	Apr 98	In terms of musicality and involvement it falls short.
Meredian 502	£1295	Dec 96	Transparent, detailed sound with good tonal range and very natural presentation.
Meredian 502	£1200	Sep 98	A truly competent pre-amp whose high-end sound comes with a very reasonable price tag.
Naht NACT02	£999	Apr 97	This even-handed performer images well and deals confidently with music regardless of genre.
Quad 7741	£850	Jul 96	Bright and detailed, but phono stage is inadequate at this price.
TAD McLaren PA10	£850	Nov 98	Justifies its price with a very musical and revealing performance.
TSC Pre-1	£1000	Nov 96	This pre-amp is highly detailed and spacious.

£1500

Replicative P2730	£1995	Mar 95	A bright and lean approach to the valve sound.
Gateway 601 Mill	£1600	Apr 99	Very musical, very revealing. A credit to the valve tradition with considerable kick in reserve.
Chord CPA-1800	£1774	Mar 98	Has it all - detail, transparency, slam and rhythm. In a word excellent.
Final Music 6	£1500	Feb 99	Partner for the Final Music-6 power amp. Battery powered.
Focusrite Red A	£2345	Feb 96	Smooth and detailed sound. Not as clinical as some professional amps can be.
Golden Era	£1630	Nov 95	Smooth, but dull balance makes it suitable for bright systems.
Mairata 7	£3500	Mar 97	Superb, combines delicacy and power, especially with a vinyl source.
Mitral Orca	£1650	Oct 98	With its Panasonic pot, the Orca reaches new standards of transparency and involvement.
Umooc Rev. Mystery 2	£1750	May 98	Offers finesse, control and clarity for a very reasonable outlay.



Chord CPA-1800.

Power amps £ Year Verdict

under £800

AMC 2000	£150	Mar 99	Super value separate with first-rate sound staging. Midrange subtleties sometimes suffer but at this price . . .
Arcton 8P	£400	Dec 96	A detailed and open sound gives great atmosphere to all types of music.
Arcton Alpha 10P	£800	Jul 98	This power amp lags behind the best of the competition, and the build is flimsy.
Audio Analogue Donizetti	£575	Apr 98	As smart as an Armani suit, they sound powerful in a natural, organic manner
Ark PA10C	£749	Mar 97	A smooth, sweet powerful sound free from the rough brightness that afflicts many solid-states.
Creek A8D	£399	Mar 99	Shows what a skilled designer can do, even when hooked up with a passive pre. A very realistic approach.
Cyrus Power	£449	Feb 96	The Cyrus Power is simply impressive in all respects.
Linn LA100	£650	Apr 98	Well built, but judged purely on a musical basis they fall short.

AUDIO ANALOGUE

In just a short while, Audio Analogue has won plenty of admirers. When Hi Fi World tested the PUCCHINI Special Edition, they gave it their top star rating with the words

"Excellent sound quality ensures the Puccini S.E. outstrips the competition at up to £1,000". And the influential USA magazine Stereophile (Dec.98) praised its "harmonic richness, stunning purity of tone and sheer musicality". To top that,

the basic £475 PUCCHINI won Hi Fi Choice's Best Buy for amplifiers in an up-to £1,000 group test (Feb. '98). In their words: "This is a first-rate budget amplifier that looks and sounds like an altogether more costly model. Check it out". The BELLINI preamp and DONIZETTI power amp fared equally well. Ken Kessler in Hi Fi News (Jan. '98) had this to say. "A new benchmark in the value for money stakes". Now, we're proud to introduce you to the

latest member of the family: the PAGANINI. It's a real music-lover's CD-player. For more details contact:



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Prices shown are those at the time of review

Power amps £ Year Verdict

under £300

Law LK240	£750	Aug 97	The LK240 plays tunes exceptionally well, tonal colour and image precision are not its fortes though.
Monarchy 505	£795	Aug 97	Crisp, clear images are set in a broad spread between the 'speakers but the 505 lacks stage depth and grunt.
Monarchy DS70	£595	Jan 98	The Monarchy is a smooth, warm amp most at home with 'speakers that are' easily driveable.
Mullis 20 Power	£249	Mar 99	Refined approach with the lighter acoustic music but lacking a little in overall clout.
Mullis 2000	£549	Dec 95	This power amp unfortunately suffers from sharp sounding treble and poor depth.
Monical Felicity X-334	£500	Jan 98	Very smooth, sweet and musical performers, not over-analytical but very involving.
Orion 7747	£600	Jul 96	With good punch, speed and attack its not bad at all but can be a little uninspiring.
Royal RB 471	£225	Mar 99	70 Watts a channel helps give lucid presentation with deep sound staging. Perhaps on the bright side.
Royal Phase 3	£689	Apr 97	The Phase 3 possesses impressive clarity, detail and dynamics.
Talk Forward 1	£500	Jun 97	A flexible power amp with a strong, controlled sound, but won't suit all tastes.
Tronics SE A1000	£400	Feb 97	Smooth, warm sound has plenty of grunt when needed and is very enjoyable to listen to.
Tronics TTP 2000	£500	Jul 95	Its best feature is the key on/off switch, otherwise its a case of poor sound quality and engineering.

£800-£1499

Cherryhill Ruby	£995	Jan 96	Well specified and powerful, but dry and short of life. Suits Rock on bass-heavy 'speakers.
Cherryhill SPN 600	£1325	Mar 98	This amp has it all - detail, transparency, slam and rhythm. In a word, excellent.
Cherryhill CS300C	£800	Nov 98	These monoblocs have a tonal richness and bass speed rare amongst powerful amps.
Drift Sympa V	£800	Jun 96	Fast, clear and detailed sound will win friends in both the transistor and valve camps.
Drift 3A Class	£1469	May 95	Quality bass and a clear midband but the treble can be harsh at high volume.
DPA 2008	£1245	Jul 93	Serious audiophile product at an affordable price. Well constructed, pleasant to use and fine sounding.
Galactron Power	£1200	Nov 95	Smooth sound but dull balance make the Galactron suitable for bright systems.
HD Audio Duz	£1185	May 95	Not dissimilar to the Audiolab monoblocs, the sound has a sweet top and amazing clarity.
Hyperion Signature 4	£1051	May 97	Not quite as transparent as it could be but impresses with its smoothness and tonal colour.
Hyperion 557	£1400	Dec 96	Great control and dynamics allied to seductive smoothness. A rare combination of power and delicacy.
Monical Felicity X-A200	£1000	Aug 98	Hugely powerful and controlled, the X-A200s are still superbly musical.
Mullis Insight A2	£895	May 99	An excellent performer with any music. It is hard to imagine the A2 being beaten at the price.
Mullis X-110	£1000	Apr 96	The sound is a somewhat acquired taste and a little rough in places.
Orion Jewel One	£899	Jul 95	A lot of amplifier for the money. Big, warm, sweet sound places it ahead of most.
Orion 707	£800	Jul 97	The 707 embodies a rare blend of grace and power in its sleek grey casework.
Raffinetti Rubicon	£949	May 99	Low on power at 8 watts but fairly musical for all that. Good resolution of detail and texture.
Royal Phase 3	£898	May 96	More valve-like than transistor in sound; highly competent if not spectacular.
TAC McLaren 800	£850	Nov 98	Fully justifies the cost with a very musical and revealing performance.
Vin-Amp	£1495	Jun 95	Lovers of light piano-based fare and Baroque music will appreciate this amp's delicacy.

£1500-

Audiophile LCR	£1995	Mar 95	Eschews the traditional lavish tube sound for a brighter and leaner approach.
Carly 301	£3055	Nov 98	The 301 puts the 300B's traditional virtues to good use in a push-pull design that will drive most loudspeakers.
Cary 300B SE	£3975	Feb 95	Cary have a winning amplifier that is a prime example of how a 300B can sound.
Drift Sympa	£2925	Feb 98	Very natural, substantial presentation with lots of power on tap.
Fidel Alliance 4	£1500	Feb 99	Battery powered amp puts convincing scale and three-dimensionality into suitably sensitive loudspeakers.
Fidel Alliance 4	£2057	Feb 96	Powerful, smooth and detailed sound. Not as clinical as some professional amplifiers can be.
Gamma Aurora	£4999	Apr 97	Sound quality of these monoblocs is impressive but marred by a rather obvious hum. Build could be better.
Gamma 3	£8000	Mar 97	These monoblocs are superb, producing a beguiling performance of great control and verve.
Monical Alecto	£1989	Oct 98	The new Alecto is crisper, cleaner and more controlled than earlier incarnations.
Orion P2150	£6600	Aug 96	A powerful grip on usic, but articulate and detailed too. A rare combination.
Royal Phase 1	£1999	Oct 94	Good sound quality and an impressive tonal balance.
Symetra	£1550	Oct 96	The Symetra monoblocs impress with their grip. They run hot and sound warm.
Tube Technology Genesis	£2599	Jun 94	Valve monoblocs that produce explosive bass, midrange as clear as a bell and shimmering treble.
Tronics HSL Power 300B	£4250	May 98	Powerful, neutral sounding amps thanks to their modified 300B valves, but a little expensive for the same reason.
Tronics HSL Power 25	£1525	Aug 98	A great compromise between delicacy, power and practicality. Very musically satisfying, too.
Tronics 315	£2350	Jul 98	The S15's purity and clarity are impossible to beat for the money. Bass is not brilliant, but still better than most.
Tronics P2000	£2000	Nov 96	This power amplifier is smooth and seductive, although a little pricey.

CD Players £ Year Verdict

under £300

AAC CD6	£150	Oct 97	The CD8 is free from grain but can sound too polished at times.
Cambridge CD4SE	£200	Feb 98	Natural and very life-like, the CD4SE embarrasses many pricier players.
Denon CDC 405	£150	Apr 97	Crisp, up-beat player which is inconsistent in its overall presentation.
Denon CDC 400	£180	Feb 98	Rhythmically slick and dynamic, the Denon errs to the cool side of neutral.
Denon CDC 402	£280	Nov 98	Warm and smooth, the 835 is laid-back rather than in-your-face.
Shurelco CD3	£240	Sep 94	Great for simple Jazz and Folk, but soft bass slows things down.
Tronics ACD200	£157	Jan 99	Slightly muddled in the bass, the '230 isn't the most rhythmic of players.



Final Music-6.



Cambridge CD4SE.

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CD Players £ Year Verdict

under £300

Commodore CD-3000N	£180	Feb 98	One of the best budget all-rounders there is. A shade treble-heavy.
Commodore CD-3010	£180	Jan 99	A fine performer. Lacks only some of the spirit of its predecessors.
Marantz CD-43	£249	Jun 94	Upholds the Marantz tradition of lively CD players.
Marantz CD-47	£270	Nov 95	Fine vocal projection and treble. Bass is deep if not that tight.
NAD 510	£200	Oct 95	Hard to criticise at the price, with a typically smooth, fluid NAD sound.
NAD 522	£170	Jan 99	Warm and smooth, this is a cultured player. Can be over-civilised at times.
Philips CD721	£130	Feb 96	Not the most accurate machine, but holds its own at the price.
Power PD-101	£140	Feb 95	Rolled-off treble limits detail. Light bass retains foot-tapping ability.
Teac KT	£?	May 93	One of the top players at the price with great speed and grip.
Teac RCD-4000	£230	Oct 94	Controlled and invigorating player albeit a touch sterile.
Teac CD-P24000E	£200	May 97	Refuses to become flustered. Can lack emotion as a result, though.
Teac CD-4500	£249	Nov 92	Like many of its contemporaries, the Teac is too smooth to shine.
Technics SL-PG45A	£100	Jan 99	In spite of a bias towards bass and treble, this machine remains a bargain.
Technics SL-PG570	£200	Feb 98	Typical Technics' bright and bassy sound. Prefers Dance and Rock.
Yamaha CDX-410	£200	Mar 95	Mature, laid-back machine drops points for Inferlor timing and Imaging.
Yamaha CDX-500	£230	Feb 93	Detailed, refined but not particularly engaging or exciting.
Yamaha CDX-551	£180	Jan 99	Lean and up-front, the Yamaha is involving on Rock but can sound rough.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

£300-£799

A&O CD401	£340	Jun 96	Very musical outfit which gains sweetness with optional valve output stage.
Arzon Alpha T	£320	Jan 97	Superbly-designed, instinctively musical player destined for success.
Arzon Alpha 802	£599	Jun 98	The 8SE builds on the strengths of the standard 8 with HDCD filtering.
Arzon Alpha 9	£799	Dec 98	Apart from its tonal brightness, the Alpha 9 is a very capable machine.
Audio Associates Paganini	£749	Apr 99	Effortless, wholly musical delivery. The Paganini does for CD replay what its stablemate Puccini does for amplification.
Audio Innovations Alto	£449	May 96	Grainless treble is detailed but the Alto misses that vital emotional spark.
Audio CD20	£450	Jul 93	High measured distortion mars the treble and bass is dry.
Creek CD43	£499	Oct 93	A competent player with a musicality that will seduce any music-lover.
Creek 217 1.5	£398	May 99	Great detail and imaging with intimate music. Classical and Jazz suit the 1.5 best but Rock can sound harsh.
Cyrus 6A03	£598	Dec 96	Lacklustre with Classical, dramatic and lively on Dance and Rock.
Denon DCD-1550AE	£350	Jul 98	Clean and precise, the Denon lags only in warmth and openness.
Harman/Kardon HD730	£300	Aug 96	Strong on dynamics and drive, but lifeless treble can dampen music.
Linn Akro	£798	Apr 95	Tonally hard but possesses many, if not all, of the Linn rhythmic strengths.
Marantz CD-43 KI-11g	£500	Sep 96	This is a rare player, greater than the sum of its parts.
Marantz CD-63SE	£350	May 95	Taken as a whole, the CD-63SE is one hell of a CD player. No digital nasties.
Merrill T20	£600	Dec 98	With its brightness balanced by warm ancillaries the T20 will win friends.
Orto CD130+	£650	Mar 97	Clean and tidy on electronic music. Not so good with acoustic material.
Power PD-430A	£400	Sep 96	Fluid midrange leads a dry bass and tonally-limited treble.
Power RCD-900X Deluxe	£375	Dec 94	Fast, clean sound verges on the clinical at times.
Power RCD-971	£350	Sep 98	Refinement is a plus point, but lack of vitality holds the Rotel back.
Power RCD-975	£450	Sep 96	Tuneful, pungent bass are the pros, flat sound staging and tone the cons.
Shiny CDX-3000ES	£500	Mar 96	Neutral, dynamic and stylish but not quite up with the best.
Sony CDP-MX600	£300	Mar 97	In spite of fine sound staging and clarity, the Sony fails to involve.
Teac CD-5	£350	Jan 96	Clean and dry, the Teac is rather sterile compared to the competition.
Technics SL-P1640	£450	Sep 95	Not the last word in bass control. Midrange is more persuasive.
Thule CD100	£600	Apr 99	A very smooth and refined player with the added bonus of good detailing. Can lack rhythmic bite at times.
Tronix CD200	£549	Sep 96	Warm and bassy, but extremely natural. Not the most consistent player.
Tronix Revolution	£799	May 97	When it's good, it's very good indeed. Can get confused on dense mixes.



Sony CDP-X3000ES.



Marantz CD-63 KI-S.

£800-£1499

Audio CD2	£1000	Dec 96	Sweet treble and full midrange give the 8000CD a lucid sound.
Commodore CD4-258	£1199	Feb 99	Perhaps lacks the last ounce of strength on Rock, nonetheless has winning all-round ability.
Commodore CDP-10	£1279	Dec 97	Its warm, musical sound plus HDCD compatibility are a strong combination.
Cyrus 6A03	£899	Jan 95	Up with the best at the money, the Cyrus simply sounds 'right'.
CMA Harman/Kardon	£895	Jun 95	Breath-taking imagery and dynamics. Not strictly accurate, but who cares?
Harman/Kardon HD773	£800	Jan 94	Construction is price-correct, but not the excessively relaxed sound.
Heybrook Signature	£989	Oct 97	The Heybrook loses out because of its rough treble and lack of clarity.
Hoff Xara	£950	May 98	It's not cheap but the Xara scores for firm bass and exciting presentation.
L'Or Mistral	£999	Nov 97	The Mistral is outclassed in areas like pace and bass depth.
Marantz CD-17	£800	Mar 96	The CD-17 has a presentation which excels in musicality and lucidity.
Marantz CD-17 KI-E	£1300	Sep 97	The KI-S has a valve-like smoothness and clarity.
Meridian 504	£875	May 95	Characteristically dry Meridian balance which could do with more emotion.
Musico Family X-Ray	£800	Feb 99	Bright, clear and well-built, the X-Ray's transparency can be hard on poor recordings.
Peak Triangle Numerical Quad 77	£1099	Apr 98	This very natural one-box fully justifies its £1000 price tag.
Quad 77	£850	Nov 95	Competent, entertaining machine with neat styling and remote.
Roksan Caspian	£895	Aug 97	The Caspian is a gifted player well worth its asking price.
Sony 6021	£850	Mar 93	A superb all-rounder with particularly convincing rhythms.
Teac VHD-102E	£850	Apr 96	Draws you into the music. Soundstaging fine but treble is a little bright.
Teac VHD-105	£1300	Aug 96	Solid build doesn't make up for sound which lags in integration and detail.
XTC CD-1	£1250	Dec 97	Rhythmically satisfying, but can sound hard in the wrong system.

CD Players £ Year Verdict

£1500-

Armon CD1	£1600	Mar 98	Sweet sound and numerous features make the Anthem fine value for money.
Esoteric 937	£5460	Sep 94	Amongst the best with its belt-drive transport.
Marantz CD4-700E	£2635	Dec 95	Unmatched quality from CD at a high but fair price.
Meridian 508.24	£1995	Jul 98	The 508.24 is one of the top performers at its price.
Naim CD2	£1998	Apr 97	CD2 excites at the expense of subtlety. More at home in a Naim system.
Peak Triangle Liturgical	£2099	Feb 98	One-box player with sound capable of mixing it with the best.
Teac CD-X1	£2300	Jun 92	You'll either love or hate this machine's great flair and confidence.



Roksan Caspian CD.

Turntables £ Year Verdict

Under £800

Clearaudio Solution	£750	Feb 99	If you seek powerful presentation with musicality over absolute finesse, this could be the answer.
Orto Akro	£400	Sep 94	Definitely a turntable for devotees of attack and strong bass lines. Not strong on imaging.
Minimal Dynamics SE	£775	Apr 99	Great sound, superb build and excellent upgradability make the 'spider' a wonder at the price.
Rega Planar	£539	Jan 94	Silent and beautifully made, with transparent reproduction.
NAD 523	£200	Nov 94	Based on a Rega Planar 2. Both pleasant to use and look at with a mature sound, all for £200.
Peak Triangles Spitfire	£575	Oct 97	Simply the best at the money. Combines PT's customary transparency with real authority.

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	WAS	NOW	STATUS
ANALOGUE			
LUXMAN PD445, SME III, Westrack Super build and sound quality	?	495	s/h
LUXMAN T-50 Lab Reference Tuner Hope I get to keep this myself!	?	495	s/h
Michell Gyro SE/ mod RB300 No s/h or rival comes close	940	795	new
DIGITAL			
Audio Note DAC-4 Signature Upgradeable to DAC-5 for £1.850 but why bother?	9,990	4995	ex-dem
Audio Meca (Pierre Lume) Transport Audio Synthesis DA-X DAC Both items mint, very cheap	?	1995	s/h
Mark Levinson No 39 Owner going home cinema Near offer may be accepted	4,995	3995	s/h
Mission DiscMaster + DACMaster With PSX-R external PSU	2,100	795	s/h
PassLabs D1-DAC Months old, mint, amazing	5,250	2250	s/h
Pink Triangle da Capo Premium DAC 20 bit (1307) filter, £400 upgrade to 24 bit	3,500	1495	s/h
Trichord DAC Just in	1,250	495	s/h
AMPLIFIERS			
conrad-johnson Premier 7B Final version of this classic Exemplary phono, all-tube pre-amp	11k	4995	s/h
Graaf GM-200 OTL Mint, under 2 years, 2x 200w Worthy partner for 13.5B!	8k	3995	s/h
Gryphon S-100 Danish power with poise, truly Marvellous, far above the crowd	5975	2,500	s/h
Mark Levinson 380 Pre/334 (125w) Unique opportunity, with full Five-year warranty	9,500	6,900	ex-dem
PassLabs X-2 pre/ X-ONO Two box phono and line pre-amp Bal + true transistor single end	3,995	2,750	s/h
Sony Esprit TA-E900 pre-amp and TA-N 900 monoblocks Mint, box, manual bargain!	12000	3,995	classic
SPEAKERS			
Infinity Reference 1b All-time US classic Upgraded & silver wiring	n/a	3,500	classic
Martin Logan Aërius Mint, under 2 years old	2,199	1,199	s/h
QUAD ESL63 - 2 samples Classic cult, affordable!	3,500	995	s/h

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Now we've signed up with America's JPS Labs. We heard the rest, we got the best!! Similar no-nonsense pricing in USA, we are not a middleman distributor. We sell at US domestic prices + VAT (plus a surcharge for UK mains plugs on their budget AC cord).

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Product of extended research into Conductivity and Contamination. Our top interconnects are OFC (not plated) microscopic-strands (130 per wire), bi-wire with separate OFC earth drain even on single-ended (RCA) stereo interconnects, industry lowest R, C, and H values, low leakage semiconductor. Low crosstalk by mylar foil and geometry. Twinned tin/silver solder for combined density and adhesion. Custom 3-T (time, temp, and twinned solder for audio transparency). Custom phono plugs machined from solid and levered centre pin, pincer earth grip, direct gold plating; interior pre-flux cleaned, exterior contacts enhanced. CONTAMINATION triple passive screening achieves the industry's highest value of 85% against EMI and RFI, flat ribbon OFC earth braiding drained to source, in single-ended (RCA) cables, custom phono plug reflects interference, fluxing and cleaning minimises diode effect. Two further custom "C" points anti-corrosion coating stabilises HF skin effect, prolongs performance! And Cable Conditioning memory-aligns copper crystals for optimum burn-in. Full spec and a selection from our users comments available by post, e-mail, and maybe one day on our website.

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AN-V with AN phonos £129/199
AN-Vx solid silver plugs £309/499
AN-Vz solid silver plugs £799/1099

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+ST XLR or RCA £62/68
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+ST Digital XLR or RCA £26/35

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MI-330 ProLine Balanced £495
MH-330+ Series Three £499
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MI-330 SHOTGUN Balanced £849
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MIT Digital Reference (RCA) £320
MIT ProLine D.R. (XLR) £695

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Audio Note Zero 2m £25
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Analog UK 2m £249
Digital (UK) 2m £249
Power Lead UK 2m £349
Kaptovator (UK) 2m £999
LFD (England) Hi-amp 1.25m £80
PC-OCC amp cord 1.25m £85

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CAD 4 way/ 6-way 1.0m £64/ £94
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Audio Note

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MH-750 Series Three £20/£50
Bi-Wire option £20/£50
MH-750 SHOTGUN £995/ 1150
Bi-Wire option £1149/1350

Prices exclude interchangeable plugs from a wide choice of bananas, spades, etc.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

Turntables £ Year Verdict

Under £800

Project 1.2	£200	Jun 97	A bargain at £200 with its substantial and involving sound.
Project 2	£350	Dec 93	Involvement and rhythm are priorities. Highly recommended.
Project 6.1	£435	Sep 94	The 6.1 gives a very full, strong sound. A very exciting deck.
Systemdek E32	£500	Aug 96	Clear and precise sound through midrange and treble puts it up with more expensive rivals.
Systemdek R300	£415	Sep 94	Detailed sound stage and broad imaging with a good, even range of tonal colour.
Systemdek R102	£450	Jan 93	Combined with an SME 309 it achieves great results, with a massive sound stage.
Thorens TD146 MM	£405	Sep 94	Totally smooth with a warm midrange, but a little too laid back.
Thorens TD150	£180	Feb 95	A good, basic budget bargain.
Thorens TD200 MM	£199	Jun 93	Superbly lucid and clear midrange, but lower reaches are a little lightweight.
Vocal Ready Reference	£600	Nov 95	With fine detail resolution, transparency and a neutral balance the Reson rs1 represents super value.
VPI Junior	£500	Oct 97	The Junior is a very good deck indeed, with an assured and involving sound.

Turntables £ Year Verdict

£800-

Approved Symphonic	£1860	Nov 92	The Symphony has to be one of the best the British can offer. It's expensive, but a true sophisticate.
Madell Orbis	£1950	Apr 95	Fast and detailed with crisp sheer treble and clean, deep bass.
Qpac 3 Continuo/Canal	£900	Oct 95	Solid as a rock and almost as heavy, it's a satisfying performer, but not quite the best.
Origin Live Oasis-A	£950	Dec 98	Nice looks and a good sound, but can be bettered on price.
Origin Live Oasis-S	£2250	Oct 98	The Oasis-S is a cool, lean but very transparent performer thanks to battery power. Up against strong competition.
Pro-Ject Perspective	£900	Aug 93	Aesthetically, the Perspective is a winner, but better sound can be had from cheaper decks.
PT Anniversary	£2390	Oct 96	With its battery supply and ultra-quiet DC motor, the Pink displays great accuracy and neutrality. A top-flight deck.
Rekann Series X	£1295	Jan 97	An undoubted bargain and class leader in all areas with a precise, confident and well-balanced sound.
SME Model 20	£2500	Oct 92	This is a deck for those with a substantial record collection who demand the best. Exemplary sound.
Technics SL-1200 LTD	£1000	Apr 97	Looks expensive at £1000, but don't let that put you off the capable standard version.
Winc Demotech	£1775	Jul 96	Gives a technically excellent rendition but fails to really communicate the emotion in music.
Winc Research Paul Celso	£2000	Mar 98	Offers clarity in abundance with a natural ease. Looks gorgeous too.

Phono stages £ Year Verdict

Under £500

Creek OBN-800H-C	£160	Nov 97	One of the best MC phono stages on the market at the price
Creek OBN-800H-T	£110	Nov 97	Smooth and truly musical, exceedingly worthy entry-level phono stage.
Domain LP OLYMP-10	£350	Sep 97	A beautifully made, fine sounding device that looks great too.
EAR 83P	£340	Oct 94	Very fine phono stage with precise imagery and a bargain at the price.
Saharrah Black Cube	£395	Oct 98	Capable of involvement, neutrality and insight usually the preserve of stages three or four times the price.
LFD W404H	£299	Sep 97	The most lucid and musical budget phono stage around - a true audiophile bargain.
Musical Fidelity X-LP	£130	May 93	First-class inexpensive phono stage. MM and MC inputs catered for. Low on distortion, high on clarity, build legendary.
NAD PP1	£40	Sep 98	At this price the NAD is an accomplished all-rounder. Slowish bass will suit leaner systems though.
QED Discoverer	£35	Jan 97	A bargain. Beguilingly musical presentation, with more than enough detail and power for a mere £35.
Rotel HO-9700X	£130	Nov 94	Combine with a good cheap line level integrated and it will show you how good vinyl can be.
Sedley Sedley MC5M	£399	May 98	The Sedley combines transparency and fine dynamics with excellent rhythmic ability.

£500-

Anthem Piv 1P	£899	Aug 98	Despite a sizeable price tag the Anthem offers a smooth, lucid sound and superb build quality.
Audio Impression P2	£749	Feb 96	Fantastic bass and super insight make this one of the best phono stages around.
Audiolab 8800PPA	£800	Oct 94	Instruments can have a somewhat flat perspective, but excellent clarity.
DK DSP 2025D	£495	Oct 94	Could be too forceful for some, but with excellent detail and extremely powerful bass.
Kinosh Perfection	£525	Oct 94	Extremely impressive results, especially with MM cartridges.
Linn Linn	£850	Oct 97	Marries beautifully into the Linn family, but not too hot with other components.
Madell Iso	£528	Oct 94	Gives a thoroughly cohesive picture of a recording with a very tight and rhythmical bass.
Michael Lee HV	£850	May 98	Perhaps too good for some record collections. Extremely revealing.
Rekann Antares/DPS	£945	Oct 97	Doesn't worry about genre, it just gets on with the job of making music in an enjoyable way.
Sonic Frontiers Phono 1	£2000	Apr 98	Expensive, yes, overpriced, no. The Phono 1 is a superb all-round phono stage.
Union Simply Phono	£495	Mar 96	Liquid sound with great dynamics, but a little hissy and muddled too. Beguiling, but not perfect.

Cartridges £ Year Verdict

Under £200

Clearaudio Alpha	£130	Apr 99	Tends to sound quite hard at the top but imaging and detail are good. Best in a warm system.
Denon DL102B	£110	Aug 97	First manufactured in 1963, it sounds mature and sure-footed rather than over the hill.
Denon DL110	£165	Mar 94	May be a little soft-natured for some. Splendid dynamics and an even tonal balance.
DMR Mica	£185	Feb 98	Better Goldring's 1042 without difficulty. MC quality from an MM.
Goldring 1042	£90	Jan 93	One of the best MMs at the price with strainless delivery.
Goldring 1012GX	£60	Jul 93	Great with Rock music, the 1012GX is the best value low-price MM.
Goldring Heritage Silver	£119	Apr 97	Good tracking and inoffensive sound, but somehow lacks sparkle in any department.
Linn K3	£58	Sep 94	Rhythmic bite compensates for a lack of vibrancy in music (MM).
Linn S4C	£100	Jan 93	Smooth operator and very good value for money (MM).
Ortofon MC15 Super II	£110	Mar 95	In the right system, can be masterful with its dry and accurate response.
Ortofon MC15F	£170	Sep 95	A considerable achievement that adds true verve a pizzazz to the MC15 Super II
Rekann Cirrus Black	£120	Jan 93	Light and dry presentation with good presentation (MM).
Sony DS196 MM	£185	Sep 97	If you like the V15 you'll love the Brazen. Works well with an SME 3009.

£200-

Cartridge Man Music Moving Iron Cartridge	£549	Feb 99	Good price, high output and a winning musicality make this Moving Iron cartridge the one to beat.
DMR Linn	£1300	Jan 99	A Goldring make-over that tracks well and sounds good. Pricey, though.
DMR Riva MM Cartridge	£255	Jun 98	This betters the Mica, has super-MM virtues.
Dynavector DV20KH	£299	May 99	Delightfully musical sound makes the Dynavector a very strong contender in the budget MC stakes.
EMT 96HN	£850	Oct 96	Solid bass and smooth, musical sound make this rare MC cartridge worth the money.
Goldring Excel VX	£495	May 97	Has fine midrange clarity, but is bettered in other areas by cheaper competitors.
Linn Arkiv	£1200	Dec 97	Linn fans will love it but it's up against strong competition.
Linn Klyde	£489	Jun 95	Sumptuous sounding cartridge that borders on the bass heavy but has a good feel for music.
Lyra Lydian	£649	Jun 95	Extremely smooth, civilised MC with no obvious weaknesses.
Ortofon Jubilee	£1250	Mar 99	Detailed, musical and sure-footed, the Jubilee goes a long way towards justifying its elevated price tag.
Ortofon MC15F	£225	Sep 95	Delightfully sweet, musical sound with added refinement on FL that takes some beating.
Ortofon MC15 Super	£450	Jun 95	Involving yet refined presentation but some could feel it's slightly coloured.
Ortofon Rahnano	£1000	Apr 96	A top quality MC with superb tonal quality and excellent imagery.
Shure V15VDR	£295	Mar 97	Warm, dynamic rendition of music with great detail and impact (MM).
Transfiguration Spirit	£1000	Jul 98	A balanced all-rounder that misses out only on the last ounce of detail and bass weight.
Van Den Hul MC10	£840	Jun 95	The MC10 is very hard to fault. A honey, pure and simple.
VDR Grasshopper IV	£3750	Dec 95	Allows music to flow with superb fluidity and reveal things which were previously unheard - at a price!



Pink Triangle Tarantella.



Sonic Frontiers Phono 1.



van den Hul Grasshopper.

Tone arms £ Year Verdict

Hadcock GH 228 SE	£595	Dec 98	Construction won't worry SME but its sound quality will unsettle a lot of the competition.
Origen Live RB250/RO300	varies	Nov 97	These modified arms are a considerable improvement on the originals
SME 309	£689	Jan 93	Tight, neutral sound with good tonality, but lacks the IV's pace and precision.
SME IV	£828	Mar 92	Sexy chassis and staggering engineering along with potent performance earn it a place in audio history.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

Tuners £ Year Verdict

Under £300

ANG 77	£130	Jul 97	Although it has a tempting price, its sound quality is poor compared with its rivals.
Arcam Alpha 7	£230	Mar 97	An attractive, smooth sounding tuner that won't break the bank.
Cambridge 7000	£180	Feb 99	The T500 is one of the most gifted tuners under £500; a very accomplished all-round performer.
Hallmark/Kordan TV 900	£200	Jul 96	Sound quality is generally impressive. Let down by a rather constricted sound stage, but still good value.
Kenwood KT-2080	£130	Feb 97	Smooth, even balance allows the KT-2080 to convince with whatever it's receiving. £130 well spent.
Musenta ST-57	£150	Oct 97	The ST-57 is a smooth, warm tuner but lacks a little clarity and transparency.
Muson Gyna FM7	£299	Apr 94	Musical, communicative and extremely detailed and a steal at the price.
NAD 412	£190	Jun 96	A remarkably musical, natural sounding tuner. Unbeatable at the price, or even twice the price for that matter.
Origen T301	£160	May 94	A competent machine, but time has taken its toll on the sound quality.
Rega Radio	£230	Jan 95	Sounds on the whole more than its price, but in other respects it isn't especially competitive.
Royal RT-930AX	£175	Aug 94	The RT-930AX is a glowing little bargain. real quality at a very realistic price.
Sony ST-5A3ES	£250	Apr 97	The Sony is worth every penny of its asking price. If you're a fan of radio this is one to go for.
Sony ST-50700	£180	Aug 97	The ST-SE700 is one of the best at this price. LW reception is a welcome bonus.
Terraviva ST-07-200L	£140	Jun 95	Not a bad buy at all and a very good fit for budget and mid-price systems.
Yamaha TDS90 A112	£200	Feb 95	If you want something for casual listening with superior aesthetics, this might be the one for you.



Hadcock 228 SE.

£300+

Arcam GFT 554 J	£399	May 93	Quite musical but does not rejuvenate the waves! Good solid performance but less than luxurious.
Bathurst 307	£4347	Nov 94	This is not a cheap tuner, but its cheaper than buying a radio station, which is the only possible alternative.
Chorus T10	£399	May 98	A great little tuner. This is the one in the price bracket
Denon TU-1010	£400	Mar 98	A stylish, well-built tuner which has a detailed sound but needs careful partnering
Fanfare FT 4	£1350	Mar 95	Whether it's sweaty disco or symphony hall, the Fanfare comes up to scratch.
Kenwood KT4000L	£300	Oct 95	A good value, excellent sounding rds tuner, but lacks full EON facilities
Linn Karolik	£1645	Mar 92	Commendable basic performance but, considering the price there are limitations.
Micromega Omega FT141A	£749	Apr 92	Worth auditioning but bass rather dry and light.
Musenta ST-17	£600	May 99	Knock-out build quality and rich velvety sound. Poor-signal mute a bit too enthusiastic.
Mylar 304	£660	Mar 96	A clear, natural sound with good punch. Has strong rivals at the price, but acquires itself well.
Micromega Tuner	£700	Jul 95	An unusual design from Micromega that's well built but sonically unrewarding and expensive.
NAD 700	£330	Jul 94	Well worth auditioning, even if you've never previously considered a receiver.
Naim NAT 02	£499	Sep 93	Soft and pure, especially across the midband. Speech very well reproduced plus solid weighty bass.
Regent 51735	£350	Dec 94	Looks good, but the sound quality isn't really worth the asking price.
Pioneer F-504RDS	£300	Dec 98	One sole mark against the class-leading transparency is its slightly dry character.
Pioneer F-504RDS	£350	Nov 95	Well engineered and competent tuner, but a little uninspiring.
Rega Radio RHT10	£895	Mar 94	This classy looking tuner can hold its head up high amongst the best tuners at the price.
Royal RT 930AX	£500	Apr 95	The price of twenty concert tickets and for that you can listen as if you were there. A bargain.
TAG McLaren T20	£1100	Mar 99	Extremely well built with a lucid if slightly dry sound. The only real drawback is the high price.
Thames TR1 2000	£500	Dec 97	An otherwise competent tuner is let down by a rather processed character.



Rotel Michi Tuner.

Cassette £ Year Verdict

Under £300

Alwa AD-F380	£150	Apr 98	No Dolby S, but three heads and two capstans make the Alwa a bargain.
Denon DR15 500	£160	May 96	Good enough for the price and no worse than the competition.
Denon DRN-5002	£230	Aug 96	Top sound quality with ferric and chrome makes this deck a steal.
Origen C24	£250	Jan 95	Fair on pre-recordeds, OK when recording, but speed stability isn't great.
JVC TD-V640	£300	Sep 98	Only the lack of Dolby S conspires against the otherwise excellent JVC.
Kenwood KV-7000C	£200	Jan 97	Stable transport gives fine results on metal and chrome. Rough on ferrics.
Naim H13	£230	Jan 96	Decent playback and good recording when used carefully.
NAD 914	£270	Sep 95	Excellent electronics are let down by a low-grade transport.
Rotel RD-9080Z	£230	Oct 95	A solid, competent machine which is reasonable value for money.
Sony TC-611	£150	Dec 93	Auto-tuning is mediocre and the general results are unexceptional.
Sony TC-6190	£170	Jan 93	A mix of average heads and electronics doesn't make for happy taping.
Teac V-810	£100	Apr 97	The V-610's performance matches its price well, but audiophile it isn't.
Teac V-650	£150	Sep 94	Satisfactory for in-car recordings, but the low price shows.
Yamaha RC-580 SE	£250	Sep 97	The '580 lives up to its SE tag with a fine performance in all areas.

Billy Vee

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Epos ES22 Speakers (Light Cherry)(WOW!)	(1185.00)	£799.00	TAG T20 Tuner (2YR warranty)	(1099.00)	£799.00
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Linn Numerik DAC S/H (1YR warranty)	(1200.00)	£799.00	TAG PA10 Pre Amp (2YR warranty)	(849.00)	£599.00
Linn Keilidh inc Stnds (Blk) S/H (2 Yr G/tee)	(985.00)	£445.00	TAG PA20R Pre Amp (2YR warranty)	(1499.00)	£1039.00
Quad 606 Power Amp S/H	(750.00)	£459.00	TAG 60P Power Amp (2YR warranty)	(899.00)	£599.00
Naim NAC 72 Pre Amp (2YR Warranty)	(767.00)	£569.00	TAG 100P Power Amp (2YR warranty)	(1099.00)	£799.00
Naim NAC 102 Pre Amp (2YR warranty)	(1110.00)	£835.00	TAG 125 Mono P/Amps pair (2Yr G/tee)	(2398.00)	£1999.00
Naim NAP 140 Power Amp (2YR warranty)	(793.00)	£589.00	Pioneer 515 DVD Player (NEW)	(399.00)	£299.00
Naim NAP 180 Power Amp (2YR warranty)	(1122.00)	£839.00	Roksan Atessa CD Player S/H	(1390.00)	£549.00
Naim NAP 135 P/Amps pair (2YR warranty)	(3510.00)	£2590.00	Rega XEL Speakers (BLK) (WOW!)	(1040.00)	£479.00

Prices shown are those at the time of review

Cassette £ Year Verdict

£300-			
Altec AD-8900	£300	Feb 95	Vice-free playback is mirrored by impressive recording.
Denon TC-513	£300	Jan 92	On the right tapes, the Denon repays with delightful sound quality.
JVC TD-V1010	£400	Sep 92	Disappointing on replay but recording is another kettle of fish altogether.
Kenwood CA-7000	£330	Dec 94	Convincing all-rounder except for heavy-handed noise reduction.
Kenwood 1.5	£500	Jan 92	The Cassette Deck 1.5 has no rivals in its ability to recreate a realistic performance.
Nakamichi 770 3	£780	Jun 93	Not perfect but as close as you can get for the money.
Regent IV DR 3	£300	Mar 93	Unfortunately keeping the price down keeps performance below Nak's norm.
Sharp 1035	£350	Oct 94	Top transport but the electronics aren't on a par.
Pioneer CT-85	£1000	Mar 97	On chrome and ferric, the '95 is smooth and natural. Not so good with metals.
Sony TC-2000 Precision	£340	Feb 99	Three heads, ease of use and high quality make the Dolby S equipped Precision a strong contender
Pioneer CT-6740S	£430	Jun 96	Complex but superb in every important area.
Sony TC-90110	£330	Feb 94	Muffled on pre-recordeds but pulls out all the stops on recordings.
Sharp V4020S	£550	Nov 97	Solid build and solid sounds. Top-notch at the price.
Sharp V4030S	£650	Aug 95	One of the highest quality Dolby S decks available.
Technics SR-A27	£300	Jul 96	Excellent bass but mid and treble lack dynamics. Auto-tunes poorly on metal.

DVD £ Year Verdict

Denon DVD-3000	£700	Aug 98	The Denon is a fine performer with CD and better still with 24/96.
Denon DVD-3000	£1500	Mar 99	Build is second to none. Sound is very solid convincing, but not as musical as the 3000.
Denon DVD-A350	£700	Jul 98	The A350 wipes out the CD-only competition at the price and threatens players up to £2000.
Persepolis DVD-1 III	£1000	Nov 98	Isn't cheap, but it's an outstanding portable and a capable domestic device.
Sony DAP-5715	£700	Aug 98	The Sony is warm and smooth but lacks clarity and precision.

Minidisc £ Year Verdict

Denon CMD-1000	£300	Sep 98	With its uncoloured and natural approach, the Denon is digital done right.
Realtime Data CMD	£199	Apr 99	Well-tailored CD/MD pairing and a doddle to use. Sound quality is spot on for the price.
JVC XM-225	£230	Sep 99	Well-built recorder. Good but not exceptional as Minidisc improves generally.
Kenwood DM-2030	£500	Aug 99	An excellent tool for home recording; combines convenience, superb sound and a fair price.
Kenwood DM-2000	£500	Apr 97	If your heart was set on a Nakamichi cassette, have a listen to the Kenwood instead!
Kenwood DM-3000	£500	Jan 98	One of the best MD machines to date but CDR has the sonic edge.
Kenwood DM-5000	£330	Feb 99	Analogue recordings are especially good. Lack of digital recording level is a small setback.
Kenwood DM-5000	£330	Mar 98	This portable offers fair performance on the move but isn't the last word in sound quality.
Sharp 722 portable	£230	Aug 99	Flash looks with solid build. First-class portable with domestic potential, but it isn't cheap.
Sony MDS-JE501 MD	£300	Feb 97	Impressive sound and unmatched convenience make an excellent buy.

Headphones £ Year Verdict

Erigo Model 2	£140	Mar 99	Wonderfully lucid and transparent panel-like sound.
Kenwood Head 2	£100	Mar 99	Clarity and openness are their traits, rather than slamming bass, but still good value.
Realtime MD-600	£200	Nov 98	In the company of a smooth, warm system the 580s can shine.
Realtime MD-500 Yr	£1000	Feb 95	Electrostatic that set a class standard and can put a case for chucking out your power amp and 'speakers.
Shure SRH-1000	£80	May 98	Have a lot of potential but basic operating problems have to be cleaned up first.
Shure SRH-500	£50	Nov 95	Excitement that is rarely heard in headphones, but have a little trouble with heavy orchestral loads.

CD Transports £ Year Verdict

Audio 3000 COM	£1249	Aug 94	Distinguished by a wide array of facilities, thoughtfully designed and high quality.
Denon DDC-Master	£1800	Jul 94	Smooth and cohesive. The Disc Master looks good and comes with the Dac Master within the price.
Denon DDC-1000	£695	Mar 95	Solid and lifelike sound with Rock music and full bodied on Classical.
Kenwood DM-2000	£530	Feb 92	Superb build for the money and a very musical sound. Benefits greatly from clocking.
Marantz Dac	£3435	Apr 93	Excellent build quality and a sound quality to match.
Marantz DT-304	£1595	Jun 94	Isn't cheap but has a solid dependable sound with a big, powerful presentation.
Parasound CBO-2000	£1695	Jun 97	The belt drive is an interesting idea but the Parasound is bettered by cheaper transports.
RT Control	£1440	Feb 95	Heart-stopping speed and impact contribute to what is an exceptionally good machine.
Realtime MD-500	£450	Jul 96	Good, clean dynamic sound with a neutral and pure midrange tone.



Panasonic DVD.



Sharp 722 portable.



Sonic Frontiers 3.

Billy Vee

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CD Transports £ Year Verdict

Sony Frontiers 3	£6999	Sep 98	A handsome machine both sonically and aesthetically. We love the camera aperture-style loading system.
Sony Frontiers SFT-1	£2295	Aug 96	Top flight machine with an easy, musical and enjoyable sound, for those that can afford it.
Teac P-30	£2500	Jun 97	Costs a lot of money and sounds nothing short of superb.
Teac VHD2 T1	£499	Feb 95	Enjoyable player with good insight. Good finish and keen pricing make it a thoroughly good buy.
Thorens TCD 2000	£900	Jun 96	A soft and warm sound will please vinyl lovers, but it's not the last word in detail.
XTC CDT1	£1200	Apr 96	A warm and musical sound with a taste of high-end refinement and detail.

Prices shown are those at the time of review

CD Convertors £ Year Verdict

Armadillo TS-4-1	£300	Jan 99	Smooth, natural and relaxed on the ear, highly persuasive with acoustic material. A bit soft on Rock and Dance.
Arman BB100	£750	Aug 97	Smooth and accurate treble and easy-going rhythm. Measured and engaging; good value too.
Autolab K000DAC	£900	Aug 97	Treble roll-off serves to remove some of the music's sparkle; lags behind the group leaders somewhat.
Cambridge Design	£150	Jun 95	Instant upgrade for a budget player but out of its depth with In a properly designed hi-fi CD player.
Chord DAC 200 DAC	£1700	Dec 98	The Chord combines smooth composure with musicality and transparency. Fort Knox build and priced to match.
Chord DPH 14	£239	Jun 99	Combined DAC and passive pre-amp; at the money there is no competition.
DPA Enlightenment	£795	Mar 95	Powerful, taut bass and remarkably solid higher frequencies. A nice touch with acoustic music especially.
DPA Enlightenment	£825	Aug 97	An engrossing listen with good manners to boot. Never uninvolved or lacklustre, plays with realism.
DPA Low 92.3	£300	Nov 95	Don't be misled by the name - it's the budget convertor to have. Impossible to criticise for the money.
DPA SX17 DAC	£8000	Jun 98	A real smoothie for high-end conversion. Given the right transport, an outstanding sound is on the cards.
Master Soundscape	£895	Aug 97	If detail is high on your list of priorities, with a more forceful, hard-edged presentation, this looks like a very good bet.
Midiman Flying Calf	£109	Feb 99	A great little DAC which simply can't be beaten at the price. A bargain in all areas.
Midiman Flying Calf	£300	Jun 98	First-class as a DAC; doubles as an ADC for archiving to CDR - great value.
Monarchy Audio Delta 18	£595	Aug 97	Never offensive; its multi-bit convertor packs a mighty bass punch. Useful analogue volume control.
Monarchy Delta 18	£795	May 95	Delicate brightness does a lot to open out music and create a sense of space.
Musical Fidelity X-CAR	£300	Jan 99	Crisp, detailed and dynamic, the MF is a genuine music maker, if a touch hard and bright at times.
Musical Fidelity X-CAC	£300	Nov 97	Outstanding value for money. Excellent sound in the usual attractively styled package.
Ortofon DA188	£399	Jun 95	Nicely built using quality components, with a lively sound. Solid bass, tidy midrange and crisp treble.
Pre Trippel Del Capi	£1400	Feb 95	Old hand at the game. One of the first HDCD-compatible convertors still a fine piece of gear.
Prize Audio	£699	Nov 95	A fine musical performance makes this idiosyncratic CD convertor worth searching out.
RDP 900	£450	Jul 96	An affordable route into two-box players. Good, clean dynamic sound with a neutral and pure mid-range tone.
Sony Frontiers DAC kit	£240	Jan 95	Easy and fun to build, competitively priced and delivers fine sonic results.
Son. Front. Processor 3	£7000	Sep 98	An awful lot of money - use it forever. Quality which can outlive any amount of cheaper purchases.
Sony Frontiers Transdac	£699	Jul 95	The transdac has a smooth and focussed sound, but partnered with the Ultra Jitterbug looks expensive.
Thorens TCA5000	£700	Jun 96	Partnered with the TCD 2000, produces a sound that is certainly focussed, detailed and spacious.
XTC DAC	£1200	Apr 96	A taste of the elegantly smooth, slightly laid-back sound - the epitome of American good taste.



Midiman Flying Calf.

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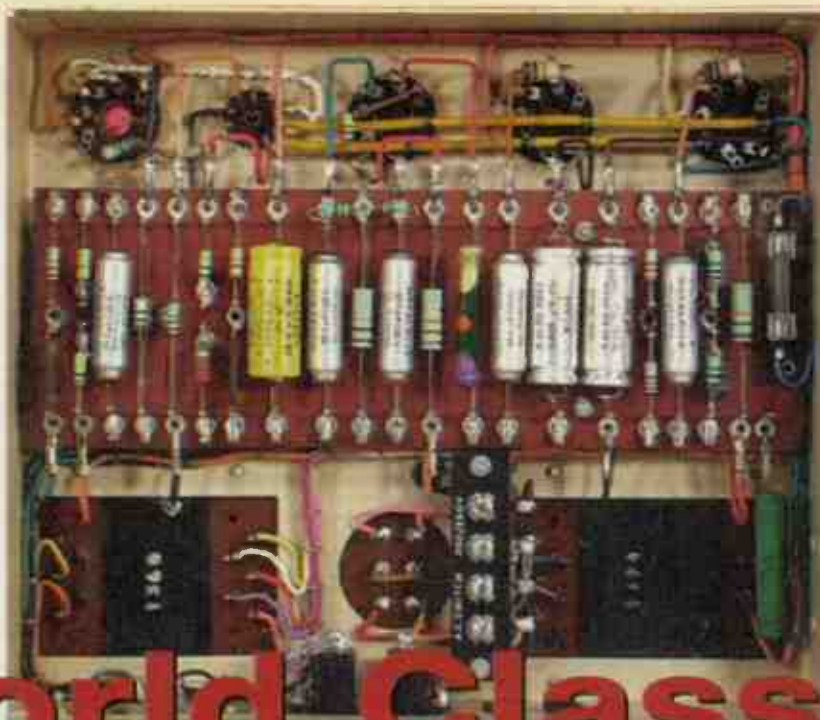


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T20 Tuner£1099.00
PPA 20sl Phono Preamp	..£1499.00
60isl Integrated amp£799.00
60lrvsl Integrated remote	..£999.00
PA10 Preamp£849.00
PA20Rsl Remote Preamp	..£1499.00
60Psl Power Amp£849.00
100Psl Power Amp£1099.00
125Msl Monoblock Amp	..£1199.00

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World Classic

Cassette

Nakamichi (various)
Yamaha TC-800GL

See main Guide

Early classic in serious cassette. Its ski-slope looks got it a cult following once it had ceased to be simply ugly.

CD Players

Mendian 207
Pioneer PD-91

Beautifully-built two-box with pre-amp stage. Very musical although not as refined as modern Bitstream gear. No digital output. Built-to-last player with easy upgrade routes for modifiers. Not knockout as it stands but get one cheap and have a go!

Amplifiers

Leak Point One TL12 & TL10
Leak Pre-amps
Leak Stereo 20
Leak TL12+
NAD 3020
Quad 33
Quad II
Sugden A21
Technics SE-A5 Mk2

Ancestors of hi-fi, consequently expensive nowadays. As with all vintage stuff, overhauling is de rigueur before use. Line of 'good for their time' pre-amps. Use of EF86 pentode for high gain rules out ultra performance. Not the highest-fi. Excellent workaday classic. In good order the 20 will not disgrace itself. Various upgrades are available from specialist repairers. Plentiful monobloc equivalent of Stereo 20. Reasonably inexpensive and a tweakers' dream. Genuine hi-fi on a budget. You can't argue with success! NAD's budget integrated gave thousands their first taste of hi-fi and remains great value. By no means a bad job and value for money. With its matching 303 pre-amp makes a good introduction to audio classics. One of the all-time classic mono amplifiers. Unusual circuit but it works beautifully. 22 pre-amp not up to today's standards. Seventies transistor integrated has an eminently likeable smoothness and musicality. Limited inputs via DIN sockets. Nice transformer and electronics, shame about the casework. With tweaking, this 150wattier can sound sweet.



Leak TL12 Point One.

Loudspeakers

Klipschorn
Leak Sandwich
Lowther PM6A
Magneplanar SMGa
Mission 770
Quad ESL57
Tannoy GRF & Autograph
Wharfedale Super 8 RS DD
Yamaha NS1000M
Tannoy York, Lancaster etc.

Not exactly plentiful or cheap but a splendid beast. For efficiency they have seldom been equalled. Space hungry! Rather warm sounding big infinite baffle but cheap with it. With reasonably powerful amp can sound quite satisfying. High quality full-range driver; still manufactured. High sensitivity, as fitted to many classic horn designs. Touch dry in the bass but a technological 'speaker with genuinely musical abilities. Usual warnings re: dipoles apply. Father of the 77 range which continues to this day. Well mannered with a warm sound and a kind load to amplifiers. Unrivalled. Properly serviced there is nothing like 'em. Their natural presentation may make them caviar to the general. Folded horn monsters which certainly sound good if you have the space. For Tannoy vintage see HFW November 1998. Ideal experimenters' driver. High sensitivity -14,000 Gauss magnet and extended frequency range. Inexpensive too! Hi-tech favourites of the Japanese and Americans. Viewed more warily in the UK but can give excellent results. Many similar models of infinite baffle or reflex design. Not the last word in tautness but the drivers work well in modern cabinets.

Vinyl

Acos Lustre
Alphason HR100S
Ariston RD11
Garrard 301 & 401
Goldring Lenco 88 & 99
Hadcock 228
Linn Axis
Michell Focus One
Shure M75
SME 3009 IIS
Thorens TD124
Thorens TD150
Trio L-07D

Very honest piece of kit, well made and easily adjusted. Vinyl beginners could do very much worse. First class arm, up to present-day standards. Buy carefully, though, as there's no service available now. A one-time king of turntables very similar to the Linn LP12. Now deposited but worth a look at the right price. Legendary and fairly plentiful. Excellent back-up available; many different custom plinths available. High quality. Great deck for the kitchen table enthusiast. Garrard fans won't look at 'em but cheap and capable. Servicing available. Recently out-classed by Hadcock's updated 228 Special Edition but a proper hi-fi arm for all that. Makers still service. Uncomplicated, lower-price version of the famous Sondek. Considerably less expensive than some of its stablemates. 20 years and still going strong. Early runner in the 'modern' turntable cycle with a first class arm. Factory servicing available. Recent line-contact improvements have left the M75 behind but the wide range of needles make it a handy tool. Everlasting classic tone-arm. Spares permanently available from SME. No longer the last word but peanuts second-hand. Best classic deck ever? Judging by the prices they fetch it's possible - 78rpm too! Mid-price deck with a keen following. No real difficulty with servicing - novices may find the suspension system unnerving. Knockout heavyweight from 1980 with stainless bearing and 11lb platter! Not a give-away and beware! - spares scarce.



Thorens TD124.

Tuners

Leak Troughline (original)
Leak Troughline II & III mono
Leak Troughline III Stereo
Marantz ST-8

Interesting ornament but no longer hi-fi. Bandwidth limited to 88MHz to 100MHz only. Arguably the best-sounding tuners ever. Adaptation for stereo easy via phono multiplex socket. Excellent tuner with indifferent stereo decoding circuit. Best when adapted to use modern outboard decoder. Possibly the ultimate Tardis console, including an oscilloscope for checking the strength of signal. Expensive even now.



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	Our Price	Original Retail Price
Exposure V Active x over (3 Way)	£ 295.00	£ 995.00
EAD 7000 Transport	£ 895.00	£ 2495.00
Magnum P200 pre amp	£ 895.00	£ 1895.00
Gale 401	£ 250.00	-
Micromega amp	£ 595.00	£ 1295.00
Micromega Tempo P	£ 595.00	£ 1250.00

New in This Month

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Electrocompaniet AW120 DMB	£2250.00	£ 4500.00
Jeff Rowland Model 3 Monoblocks	£2495.00	£ 4500.00
Mark Levinson 333	£4500.00	£ 8500.00
Audio Note Neuro (as new)	£9995.00	£16500.00
Graff 50/50	£1650.00	£ 2150.00

	£2250.00	£ 5700.00
PRE AMPLIFIERS		
Audio Research LS5 mk II	£ 695.00	£ 1200.00
Musical Fidelity F22	£ 995.00	£ 4000.00
Krell KBL	£1995.00	£ 2500.00

	£1495.00	£ 2288.00
SPEAKERS		
Martin Logan Aeries	£1295.00	£ 4000.00
Apogee Caliper Sig	£ 795.00	£ 1600.00
Acoustic Energy AE1 + Stands Piano Black	£1895.00	£ 4000.00
Martin Logan Quest	£4995.00	£12000.00
Sound Lab A3	£1495.00	£ 2000.00
Sonus Faber Grand Pianos	£1995.00	£ 2995.00
Acoustic Energy AE2 Signature Piano Black + Stands		

AV COMPONENTS

	£6850.00	£ 9500.00
C.D PLAYERS & DACS		
Oracle CD	£ 450.00	£ 995.00
McCormack DAC	£ 295.00	£ 500.00
Marantz 63 SE Ki Sig	£ 995.00	£ 2000.00
Micromega Duo 3.1	£ 95.00	£ 200.00
Audio Alchemy DDE 1		

	£ 595.00	£ 1200.00
TURNABLES/ ANALOGUE/ VARIOUS		
Alphason Sonata HR100 mcs		

Power Amplifiers

Graff GM 200	£ 4950.00	£ 7900.00
Plinius SA 100	£ 2850.00	£ 3450.00
Mark Levinson 335	£ 6500.00	£ 7500.00
Cello Performance 2 Monoblocks (4 chassis)	£ 9995.00	£20,000.00
Restek Extract Monoblocks (180 watt)	£ 1795.00	£ 3500.00
Krell KAS 2 Monoblock	£ 9995.00	£18000.00
Jadis JA500	£ 7995.00	£21000.00
Boulder 102 AE	£ 2650.00	£ 3400.00
Boulder 500 AE	£ 2995.00	£ 5000.00
Audio Note P1 SE	£ 500.00	£ 950.00
Jadis JA 80 Monoblocks	£ 4995.00	£10000.00
Audion Golden Knights	£ 1995.00	£ 4000.00
Jeff Rowland model 2 + battery power supply	£ 4500.00	£ 7600.00
Jadis Defy 7 mk III	£ 3250.00	£ 4790.00
Micromega Tempo 2 Integrated	£ 450.00	£ 900.00
Krell FPB 600	£ 8995.00	£12900.00
Krell KSA 250	£ 2750.00	£ 6700.00
FM Acoustics 611X Resolution Power	£14995.00	£22000.00
Lamm M1 Monoblocks (100W)	£ P.O.A.	£ P.O.A.
Quad 77 Integrated (Quadlink)	£ 495.00	£ 700.00
Krell 50S	£ 1995.00	£ 3690.00
Exposure XII psu	£ 485.00	£ -
Musical Fidelity F19	£ 2250.00	£ 4000.00
Audio Research D130	£ 1395.00	£ 1850.00
Lavardin IS Integrated	£ 1195.00	£ 1600.00
Audion Silver Knights	£ 1295.00	£ 3000.00
Musical Fidelity XAS 100 (X-dem)	£ 699.00	£ 799.00
Musical Fidelity A2 Integrated (X-dem)	£ 325.00	£ 499.00
Sugden Stermfoot SF60 Integrated	£ 350.00	£ 550.00
Alchemist Kraken	£ 295.00	£ 580.00
Quad 405	£ 225.00	£ -
Counterpoint SA12	£ 795.00	£ 1400.00
YBA 3a pre/ power	£ 1295.00	£ 2400.00
Naim Nap 250	£ 995.00	£ 1800.00
VTL 125	£ 1795.00	£ 3500.00
Exposure Super VIII	£ 550.00	£ 800.00
Exposure VIII	£ 450.00	£ 700.00
Copland CSA 28 Phono, remote Integrated	£ 950.00	£ 1299.00

Pre Amplifiers

Graff GM 13.5	£ 1850.00	£ 3750.00
Cello Audio Suite + master supply	£10,995.00	£28,000.00

Cello Audio Palette + master supply	£ 9995.00	£25,000.00
Mark Levinson 32 Reference	£11,995.00	£14,500.00
Jeff Rowland Consumate + Phono (3box)	£ 3995.00	£ 8000.00
Meridian 541 Dolby Surround	£ 650.00	£ 1095.00
F M Acoustics 266 Resolution	£10995.00	£17000.00
Krell KRC2	£ 1995.00	£ 4190.00
Jeff Rowland Synergie + External power supply	£ 3250.00	£ 5000.00
Musical Fidelity F25	£ 795.00	£ 1500.00
C.A.T. SL1 Ultimate	£ X-DEM	£ 5750.00
Croft Super Micro A mk 3	£ 495.00	£ 1000.00
CAT SL1 Sig mk III	£ 2995.00	£ 6900.00
Musical Fidelity X-P 100	£ 699.00	£ 799.00
Meridian 562 V	£ 695.00	£ 995.00
Exposure XIV/ IX	£ 1495.00	£ 3000.00
Audio Research LS3B remote	£ 1495.00	£ 2700.00
Exposure XI pre XII psu	£ 795.00	£ 1500.00

Quality Speakers

Cello Stradivari Grand Master (Rosewood and Piano Black)	£22,000.00	£60,000.00
Audio Static DC1+ (Audi Silver)	£ 2750.00	£ 4250.00
ATC SCM 50A Rosewood	£ 2850.00	£ 5000.00
REL Stadium Sub	£ 595.00	£ 950.00
Wilson Audio MAX	£24,995.00	£33,000.00
B & W 801 Series 2 (Black Ash)	£ 1895.00	£ 4000.00
Apogee Stage	£ 995.00	£ 3000.00
Sonus Faber Guarneri	£ 4500.00	£ 6500.00
Wilson System V.1 (Black)	£10500.00	£18000.00
Rogers LS3/ SA Black (NEW)	£ 575.00	£ 798.00
Rogers AB1 Sub (NEW)	£ 395.00	£ 598.00
Rogers LS55 (New)	£ 330.00	£ 430.00
Alon Adriana (New)	£ Special	£10000.00
Alon V mkIII	£ Special	£ 5500.00
Meridian DSP 5000	£ 2495.00	£ 3300.00
Meridian M 2500 Sub	£ 1095.00	£ 1800.00
Quad ESL 63	£ 1695.00	£ 3600.00
A.T.C. SCM 1000 SL Active Speaker	£ 4500.00	£ 7000.00
Sonus Faber Extrema + Stands	£ 3995.00	£ 6500.00
Jamo SW3105 active sub	£ 495.00	£ 800.00
Orelle Swings	£ 795.00	£ 1200.00
Proac Response 1SC + Stands	£ 1095.00	£ 1700.00
Dynalab 2.8 Ref (New)	£ 695.00	£ 1200.00
B & W 601 S2	£ 150.00	£ 199.95
Audio Physics LIBRA	£ X-DEM	£ 5000.00

CD Players & DACS

Meridian 200 Transport	£ 450.00	£ 900.00
Wadia 860 x (24/96)	£ 6500.00	£ 7500.00
Cambridge Dac Magic	£ 150.00	£ -
Mark Levinson No 39	£ 4250.00	£ 5000.00
Forsell Air Ref Transport mk II	£ 4995.00	£ 8000.00
Mark Levinson 30.5/31	£11500.00	£24000.00
Krell KPS 25s	£13995.00	£19995.00
Quad 77 CD Player (Quadlink)	£ 495.00	£ 700.00
Genesis Digital Lens	£ 1095.00	£ 1900.00
Meridian 203 dac	£ 225.00	£ 500.00
Arcam Alpha plus	£ 195.00	£ 500.00
Meridian 563 dac 20 bit	£ 495.00	£ 950.00
Meridian 565	£ 1495.00	£ 2500.00
Helios Model 1	£ 895.00	£ 1300.00
Helios Model 3	£ 495.00	£ 700.00
Audio Alchemy DDS 2	£ 450.00	£ 900.00
Linn Karik 2	£ 895.00	£ 1600.00
Musical Fidelity X-Ray (X-Dem)	£ 699.00	£ 799.00
Musical Fidelity X-10D (X-Dem)	£ 89.00	£ 119.00
Musical Fidelity E624 (24 bit)	£ 395.00	£ 500.00
Pink Triangle DaCapo (1307)	£ 995.00	£ 1850.00
Meridian 500 Transport	£ 995.00	£ 1245.00
Meridian 566 Dac	£ 895.00	£ 1095.00

Turntables & Analogue

EAR 834 P	£ 295.00	£ 450.00
Voyd Reference/ Reference Power supply/ Note 10 limited + P/S	£11500.00	£22000.00
Roksan Xerxes/ Linn Akita/ PSIII/ DSU	£ 650.00	£ 1200.00
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Linn LP12/ LVIII Lingo Cirkus K9	£ 1095.00	£ 2000.00
Linn Sondeck LP12/Vallhala/ Basic	£ 295.00	£ -
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Audio Synthesis DAX2 HDCD / Balanced	3000	1499
Aura CD 100 CD player	399	199
DPA Enlightenment Drive/Transport (New style)	995	695
DPA SX 64 DAC 24 / 96	800	599
Micromega Stage 3	999	495
Primare D20 24/96 CD player	695	575
Radford/Woodside WS2 CD player	1200	299
Restek Concretll CD player	2500	1499
Roksan Caspian CD player (New & boxed)	895	650
Roksan DA2 Converter	595	429
Turntables Tonearms & Cartridges		
Aphelion Audio 401 Plinths (New & various finishes)	250	169
EAR MC3 Transformer	629	399
Decca London Gold (Podded & re-built)	600	250
Decca London Gold (Garrot re-build)	N/A	195
Heybrook TT2 Turntable Black	N/A	129
Lyra Parnassius 600 hrs	1895	699
Roksan DS5.PSU	549	479
Roksan Radius 3 / Tabriz / Chorus Black	1170	499
Roksan Xerxes Black Ash / Tabrizi / XPS3 / DSU	1795	695
Roksan Xerxes X Black / Tabriz / Corus	2072	1200
The Transfiguration MC Phono Cartridge	1250	450
Preamplifiers		
Audio Note M1 Phono Preamplifier	750	599
Audio Note M2 Line Preamplifier	999	750
Audio Note M3 Phono Preamplifier	4650	2750
DPA Enlightenment New Style	799	599
Michell Orca Remote Preamplifier	1650	999
Rega HAL Pre Amp MM/MC Remote	998	399
Tuners & Tape Decks		
Aiwa F550R Cassette Deck	N/A	49
JBL ESC 200 Surround Package	299	179
Revox B77 fi Track 3fi - 7fi Mk1 Reel to Reel	1600	595
Roksan Caspian Tuner AM/FM	599	479

	Was	Now
Amplifiers		
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Audio Innovations 800 Series III power amplifier	999	399
Audio Note Otto SE Valve Integrated	1200	650
Audio Note P1 Poweramplifier	750	499
Aura AU80 Integrated	299	175
Pass Aleph 4 100W Class A Poweramplifier	5500	3750
Roksan Caspian Integrated (New & boxed)	795	595
Roksan Caspian Poweramps (New & boxed)	599	449
Sugden A21 with Phono Stage Ex- Demo	900	695
Sugden SP 30 Class A Poweramplifier	900	699
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Impulse Maya Loudspeakers	695	425
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Snell J MK2 Loudspeakers Black / Huygens Stands	900	399
Spendor SP2 Mk3 Black Ash	950	499
Totem Tabu Maple Loudspeakers	2300	1799
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Musical Fidelity X-10D Line Tube stage	129	75
Nordost Flatline Bi-Wire 2x10m	480	250
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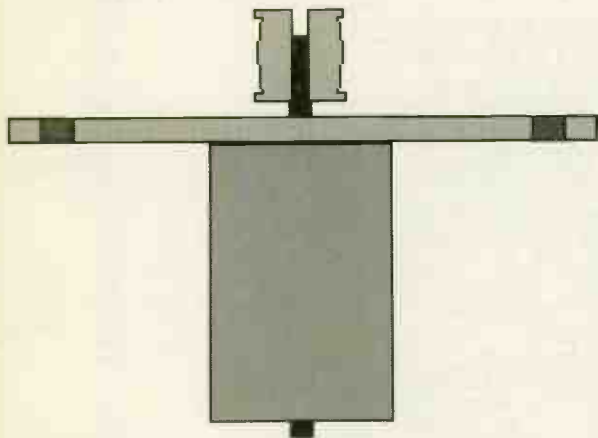
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HI-FI WORLD, FEB 1999

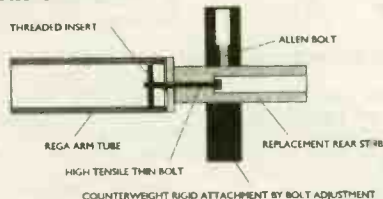
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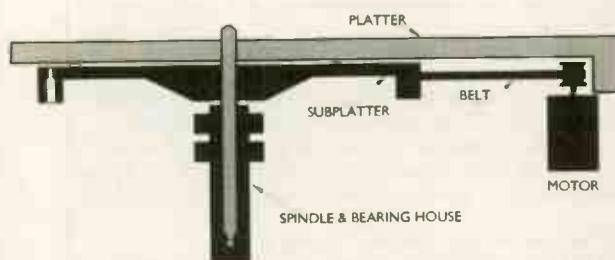
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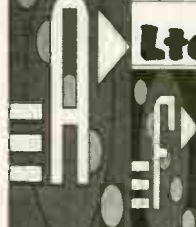
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TUNABLES/CARTRIDGES/ARMS

GARRARD 301 POA, 401 £ 120, MICHELL Gyrodeck MKII ex-demo £ 750; MicroGyro Arm £ 500; NOTTINGHAM ANALOGUE MENTOR REFERENCE (one of the best in the market) mint condition £ 2000, Interspace £ 350, Spacedeck £ 550; HyperSpace £ 1,190; NOTTINGHAM The Foot (12" tone arm) £ 850; SME 309 £ 550; SME 3009 £ 130; SME 3012 £ 250; ORTOFON Rohmann mint/sealed £ 750; MC10 Supreme £ 210; MC20 Supreme £ 375, MC30 Supreme £ 425, AUDIO NOTE IO-V £ 1,000; SUMIKO Blue Point S £ 199.

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MUSICAL IMAGES

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CABASSE FARELLA 400 beech speakers	EX/DEMO £1,000	£500
CHORD SPM1400B Mono power amplifiers inc Tragger feet	EX/DEMO£10,550	£7,000
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CHORD DSC1100 DAC inc Tragger	EX/DEMO £3,815	£2,700
CYRUS DAD3 cd player	EX/DEMO £600	£400
Linn Mimik 2 CD Player	EX/DEMO £875	£500
MICROMEGA PREMIUM DVD	EX/DEMO £1,500	£750
MICROMEGA AMP power amp	EX/DEMO £1,250	£600
MICROMEGA TEMPO P pre amp	EX/DEMO £1,250	£600
MONITOR AUDIO MA705PMC blk speakers	EX/DEMO £1,150	£650
REGA PLANAR 3 Turntable inc rega cartridge	S/H £350	£200
STAX Lambda Nova Signature Headset	EX/DEMO £400	£240
TEAC P30 CD Transport	EX/DEMO £2,500	£1,800
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TAG McLaren PA20R Pre Amp	EX/DEMO £1,500	£900
TAG McLaren 60P Power Amp	EX/DEMO £850	£500
TAG McLaren 60i Integrated Amp	EX/DEMO £800	£450
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AMPS & SPEAKERS

In the last couple of adverts I have referred specifically to 'speakers and then amplifiers, but space prevented me considering the even more complicated question of 'synergy' between the two. Sometimes the problem can be fairly simple, namely when a 'speaker manufacturer also makes amplification, so that in the case of ATC and AVI for example their electronics and 'speakers are going to work well together. I have often asked other speaker manufacturers which amplifiers they utilise when designing their speakers, as this is bound to effect the balance, assuming they actually listen to them and don't simply work on measurements. (I know of one amplifier designer who does just that and says that's how it should be designed, and if you don't like the sound that's just too bad!) But it's difficult to get them to say what amps they use, although many 'speakers can be very amp dependant. I am just wondering, while writing this, whether a 'speaker cable, such as the new Townsend Isolda, which is designed to provide the correct impedance between the cable and speaker and provide the correct load to the amplifier, may eliminate some of the synergy I am referring to here. Having only just obtained the Isolda cable and the new Townsend Seismic Sink speaker stands, I haven't had the time to listen on enough systems to answer that question yet. But watch this space! What is not in doubt is that both items can dramatically improve the sound of your system, although not cheap. In the meantime I will just refer to the combination of Ruark Equinox with Electrocompaniet amps and Alon 'speakers with AVI integrated on classical music or Chord amplifiers if you require more thump on pop music. Back to the testing! Please ring if you want to join in.

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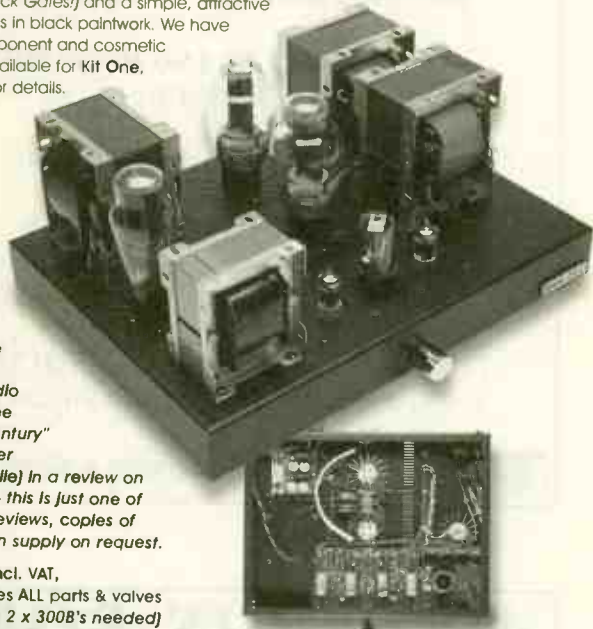
Audio Note Kit Amplifiers -

Power-Amp Kit

The Audio Note Kit One *(Illustrated)*

Based around the justly famous 300B directly heated triode, we see this kit as the introduction to *real* Audio Amplification, as it covers all the important aspects of design necessary, Single Ended, No-Feedback, Class A, Directly Heated Triode, to become a member of this exclusive club of amplifiers.

Kit One has one 300B per channel running at 420 volts with 75mA current giving 8-9 watts of the cleanest power you will ever hear, the input stage consists of a 6SN7GT with a 5687 double triode driver stage running in SRPP. The power supply is capacitor-choke-capacitor configuration with a 5U4G HT rectifier, the 300B's have a DC filament supply for hum-free operation whilst the other valves are AC heated. Component quality is similar to our Level 2 finished products, **Audio Note** paper in oil signal capacitors, Beyschlag 1 watt 1% metal film resistors, good quality electrolytics (sorry *NO Black Gates!*) and a simple, attractive stereo chassis in black paintwork. We have several component and cosmetic upgrades available for **Kit One**, please ask for details.



The Kit One has recently been awarded the title "The Greatest Audio Bargain of the Twentieth Century" by Dick Oisher (ex-Stereophile) in a review on the Internet - this is just one of many rave reviews, copies of which we can supply on request.

Price: £799 incl. VAT, which includes ALL parts & valves (yes, also the 2 x 300B's needed) but not postage/packing which to UK customers is £12.00.

KIT ONE ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-001

Audio Note is happy to provide a wide range of complete kits, output and mains transformers, chokes, paper in oil, aluminum, tin, copper or silver foil signal capacitors, Black Gate, Ceratine or standard electrolytic capacitors, tantalum, carbon and metal film resistors, silver wires, interstage and driver transformers, switches, balance controls, potentiometers, attenuators, chassis's and fittings for the quality oriented DIY'er, whether you are a beginner or hardened experimenter, male or female, we have the best (and *not always most expensive*) parts for most projects.

Audio Note Loudspeaker Drivers & Kits

We shall be offering the speaker drivers that we use in our own loudspeakers for general sale from now on. You can buy the drivers individually or together with matched and tested cross-overs, cabinet drawings and reflex ports.

Audio Note Circuits, Valvedata & Basic Technical Information

If you would like some suggestions which to base a future project around, then we shall be happy to provide you with a circuit pack containing good circuits like ONGAKU, KEGON/KASSAI, NEIRO, GAKU-ON plus several other power amplifier circuits and the M7Tube & M10 pre-amplifiers, which are the best sounding pre-amplifier circuits we have come across.

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We are in the process of building up four separate ranges of **Audio Note** output transformers, in order to offer the best possible outputs at different pricepoints, they will fall into four categories.

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Audio Note offer a design, prototyping and production service, where we can supply for almost any requirement. Please telephone for details.

Audio Note Mains Transformers

Available for most popular designs. We shall continue to expand the range as opportunities become available.

The Audio Note Kit Two

Kit Two features a single 6550 tetrode running in Single-Ended mode, yielding some 12 watts of pure Class A. With a valve rectified HT for the output stage, stereo chassis, and 6SN7GT input and 12AX7/ECC83 SRPP driver stage, componentry and chassis as Kit One.

Kit Two costs **£599 incl. VAT, includes valves, but not postage/packing.**

KIT TWO ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-002

The Audio Note Kit Three

Kit Three features 2 x 300B's per channel running in single-ended parallel yielding 16/17 watts in pure Class A. This kit is on two mono chassis with valve rectified HT supplies, no signal feedback, it uses a 6SN7GT double triode as input valve and a pair of 5687 double triodes running in SRPP as drivers. The **Kit Three** is essentially a mono version of the **Kit One** with double the power, the same component choices and on two chassis' instead of one.

The Kit Three costs **£1,550 incl. VAT but excluding delivery.**

KIT THREE ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-003

The Audio Note Kit Four

The **Kit Four** is really our introduction to valve amplifier kit building, the circuit and power supply being mounted on a single printed circuit board. The high-quality push-pull output and mains transformers are all mounted in a small aluminium chassis covering everything so nobody will be able to see that you have succumbed to the lure of the valve amplifier which is sweeping the world. The circuit consists of two 6V6GT tetrodes running in Push-Pull class A, yielding about 10 watts, driven by a 6SN7GT and a 12AX7/ECC83 input stage. Easy to build, even for the beginner. Visually **Kit Four** matches the **Audio Note** Pre-amplifier shown here but with a single chrome-plated volume control. As with all **Audio Note** kits everything (except solder) is included.

The Kit Four costs: **£299 incl. VAT but not delivery.**

KIT FOUR ORDER CODE: AN-KIT-004

Audio Note Driver, Interstage & Pre-Amplifier Output Transformers

Here is a product group that you do not see advertised every day! As usual we start small with the intention to grow quickly.

Audio Note Paper In Oil Signal Capacitors

These handmade signal capacitors are sonically superior to any of the plastic or other paper types we have come across. If you have never experienced the difference that a really good paper / oil capacitor can make in a valve amplifier, then you really should try.

Audio Note Paper In Oil Tin Foil Signal Capacitors

The tin foil is better than alu-foil for most applications, we recommend you try them.

Audio Note Paper In Oil Copper & Silver Foil Signal Capacitors

These copperfoil paper signal capacitors are considerably better than both the standard offerings and the tin foils. To start with there will be a few values / voltages of each available and we shall expand as fast as we can to cover all the popular values.

Audio Note Acid & Chloride Free Silver Solder

The best solder available, used in all our amplifiers from OTO to the mighty GAKU-ON.

Audio Note Cables & Wires

Audio Note manufacture a range of high quality copper and silver coax, speaker and wiring cables, which, depending on the overall price of the project, will do justice to any hifi system, regardless of price. Please call for prices and details.

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These handmade attenuators and switches are manufactured by a friend of Mr Kondo of **Audio Note**. They are the best you can buy.

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Audio Note endeavour to stock the entire E12 range of all the different makes of resistor, since most are used in our products stock is generally available within four weeks.

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Components & Valves

Pre-Amp Kit

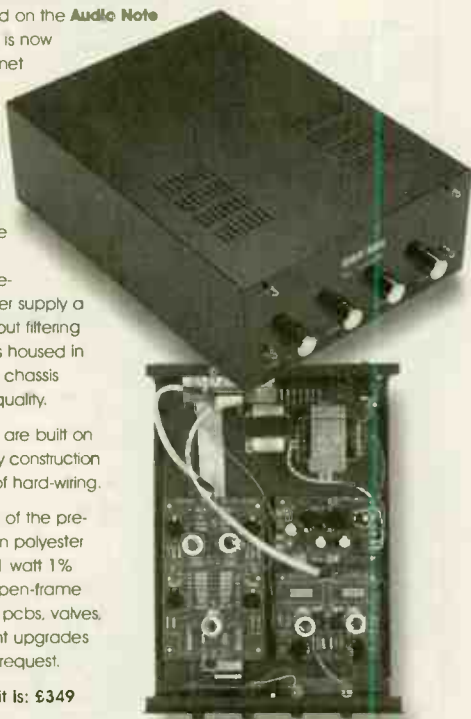
The Audio Note Pre-Amplifier Kit (illustrated)

A complete kit loosely based on the **Audio Note** M7 Tube pre-amplifier circuit is now available. The moving-magnet compatible phono stage consists of a cascode input, with passive RIAA equalisation and anode-follower output using the 12AX7/ECC83. Line buffer/amplification for the four line inputs consists of an ECC82 configured in parallel anode-follower mode. For the power supply a valve rectifier and choke-input filtering are employed. All circuitry is housed in a non-magnetic aluminium chassis giving the very best sound quality.

Both phono and line stages are built on 'track-less' pcbs allowing easy construction but with the sonic benefits of hard-wiring.

The standard-quality version of the pre-amp kit includes Roederstein polyester film capacitors, Beyschlag 1 watt 1% metal film resistors, Noble open-frame style potentiometers and all pcbs, valves, wire etc. Various component upgrades are available, details upon request.

Cost of the Pre-Amplifier Kit is: £349
Incl. VAT but not delivery.



Audio Note Black Gate Electron Transfer, High Performance, Graphite Foil Capacitors

Audio Note is currently the sole source in Europe that holds any significant range of values in stock, we use literally 1000's in production, as we were the first company to realise the tremendous benefits that Black Gate capacitors offer, and we are to date the only high-end audio company in the world to incorporate Black Gate capacitors consistently in our finished products.

There are very few audio parts that promise a guaranteed improvement when replacing practically any other part, but this is what the BLACK GATE capacitors actually do. Exchanging any electrolytic capacitor anywhere in the circuit of an amplifier or in the crossover of a speaker will greatly improve sound quality. We are working on some guidelines as to where, how and which types of Black Gates to use in different circuits, the first such technical guideline is available now and is called "Improving your CD-Player" and can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to us requesting this leaflet. All AUDIO NOTE Level 2 Signature products use Black Gate Electron Transfer in critical, signal / power supply junctions.

Audio Note Cerafine Powdered Ceramic Electrolytic Capacitors

We have at long last secured a reliable source for these fine power supply filter capacitors, a must in any single-ended project. The Cerafines really cover many of the Black Gates values and where the prices for the BG's are prohibitive the Cerafine is a fine sounding alternative. We have increased the range of Cerafines we stock quite recently, and strongly recommend all the Cerafines as a far superior replacement or substitute for ordinary electrolytics, and at the prices offered that should be within most budgets. All power supply Cerafines are supplied with a capacitor clamp and are upright mounting.

Audio Note Potentiometers

The best available from a sound quality / price viewpoint, made by Noble in Japan, utilising high quality conductive plastic film. However a better alternative is the KO-ON volume controls which are used in pre-amplifiers like the M7 Tube, M7Line, and in a mono version on the input in the NEIRO, KASSAI, KEGON and GAKU-ON, these are very good sounding pots by any standard.

Audio Note also carry large quantities of STANDARD TYPE SWITCHES, STANDARD ELECTROLYTIC CAPACITORS (good quality industrial types), RCA, BNC, BANANA, PLUGS, RCA SOCKETS, SPEAKER & GROUND TERMINALS & LOUDSPEAKER SPADES.

Audio Note Moving Coil, CD Line & Input Matching Transformers

Audio Note now offer moving coil, CD and input matching transformers for general sale. Common to all of these small signal transformers is that they come in a mumetal screening can with a threaded spindle with a nut for mounting.

Stock Clearance SALE

In anticipation of the arrival of the new in-house made Audio Note copper foil paper in oil signal capacitors, we are pleased to offer a **60% discount on current list price** on all Tobias Jensen made paper in oil aluminium, tin and copper foil signal capacitors.

Offer strictly limited to availability, while stocks last.

Minimum Order
4 pcs single or mixed values or £20.00.

Audio Note Selected Audio Valves

Our valves are selected from the best available sources and are tested to the same stringent standards that we apply in the production of our own amplifiers. They fall into two categories, standard production items and rare, mostly NOS (*New Old Stock*) valves which are no longer in production. We have compiled a special list of the NOS items, which is available against a stamped self addressed envelope, if you live outside the UK, send US \$2. You should be aware that the valves on this list are NOT cheap, but we have stock of original GE, RCA and United Electronics 211, both standard versions and reinforced anode type for the US airforce, 845 Westinghouse, VT25/10/10Y, VT62/801A, WE300B, STC4300A, Mullard GZ34/CV1377, Tungsol 5U4G (best sounding 5U4G we have ever heard!), Chatham 5R4WGY and many others.

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All other enquiries relating to Audio Note products should be addressed to their head office: Audio Note (UK), Unit C, Peacock Industrial Estate, Lyon Close 125-127 Davigdor Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 1SG
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Audiobab 8800A VGC / Bored (Grey)	500.00	349.95
Audiobab 8000A VGC (Black)	500.00	349.95
Musical Fidelity EA-50 Monobloc Power MINT / AS-NEW	500.00	349.95
Musical Fidelity LA-1 2x50 Wats Int. Amp. NEW	N/A	479.00
Musical Fidelity Pre-3A Pre-Amp. with MM/MC Phone VGC / Bored	550.00	229.75
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Audion Silver Nigma Valve Mono-Block MINT / Bored / New 300B's Fitted 200.00	200.00	119.95
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KT-88's (Very Rare and Very Good) VGC (Bring Your Forks!)	LOADS	595.00
Sunderland (Audion) 2x100Watts Passive Pre/Power (1-Box) VGC / Bored	750.00	449.95
Sugden CS1 Pre-amp VGC	N/A	500.00
Revin B-750 2x25 Wats Int. VGC	800.00	299.95
Quad 66 Pre. / Remote Control Station MINT	897.00	450.00
Quad 66B 172 x 170 Wats Power Amp. MINT	718.00	389.95
Quad 34 Pre. / 30A 2 x 50 Wats Power Amp. MINT (Grey) (May Split)	800.00	469.95
Quad 405 Hi-Fi Power Amp. £2 x 100 Wats	N/A	199.95
Quad 303 2 x 45 Wats Power-amp. VGC N/A	129.95	199.95
Narasim PP-66 SE II Signature Remote MONTAS NEW	400.00	289.95

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Trac TH 500 RDS (Gold) MINT / AS-NEW	170.00	99.95
Clazton 23 Remote Tuner MINT / AS-NEW (Bored/Manuals)	400.00	349.95
Denon TU-200 Digital MINT / AS-NEW	600.00	399.95
Quad FFL4 (Grey) VGC	730.00	249.95
Revin B-740 (BBC Reference Tuner) VGC / Bored / Manuals (Very Sought After)	1100.00	549.95
Leak Delta ALN / FSL (Gold-Scanz) VGC "Trane"	N/A	50.00

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Denon DMH 16 HX 3 Motor Etc.	N/A	119.95
Denon DMH 55D HX-PRO Etc. MINT/AS-NEW	140.00	129.95
Yamaha RX-S60 HX-Pro / Run-Back VGC	160.00	499.95
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Nakamichi BX-702E Auto-Rev. MINT	1050.00	449.95
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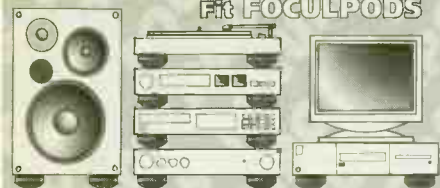
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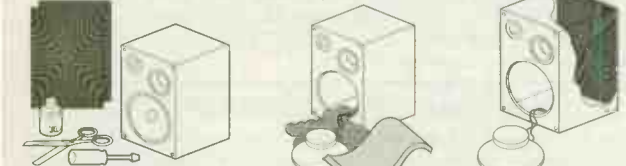
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DEFLEX[®] By SPECTRA Dynamics

Deflex material is a specially formulated low resilience polymer with exceptional shock absorbing properties. Loosely grouped molecules within the material rub together and transfer vibrations into heat. In its soft form the material has a texture similar to plasticine but with a high memory characteristic. The mechanical properties of the material guarantee to reduce unwanted noise.



You need at least 2 Deflex panels for a pair of small bookshelf speakers. 4 panels for a pair of Tannoy 6's, and at least 6 panels for larger cabinets.

Once you have gained access to the inside of the cabinet remove foam and/or wool damping from the inside of the speaker (if fitted)

Place the flexible Deflex panel thru' the speaker cut-out and stick to the inside of the cabinet using the recommended adhesive

DEFLEX ACOUSTIC PANELS

The simplest and most cost effective way to upgrade your existing system

Deflex panels seemed to give greater tightness and control, improved internal clarity, and pitch definition - all without deadening the sound in any way..."

Audiophile - January 1994

the result was sharper imaging, wider dynamics and a more natural sound..."

Hi-Fi Choice - January 1994

CHOICE VERDICT

Sound Quality
Value for money

a marked improvement was obvious from the first few bars of REM's Automatic for the people album

Hi-Fi News & Record Review - March 1994

But one thing for sure - the Deflex panels are no gimmick. They work

Now sit back and listen to the extra detail in sound, and far less distortion when played loud

PANEL PRICES

Standard Panel	£5.00	(28cm x 21cm)
Medium Panel	£4.00	(28cm x 18cm)
Small Panel	£3.00	(24cm x 13cm)
Sub-Woofer Panel	£12.00	(34cm diameter)
Adhesive	£3.50	
Delivery	£3.00	

"The only world acclaimed flexible acoustic damping pad for lining loudspeakers" (UK PATENT N° GBPT 2277008)

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Alchemist Nexus CD	600	395
Alchemist Kraken mk11 pre	550	350
Alchemist Kraken mk11 power (2 available)	550	350
Alphason Alceaus turntable power supply	n/a	95
Apogee Stage (mint boxed)	3000	1195
Arcam BB5 DAC	450	95
Audiolab 8000C Black (late model)	580	295
Audioquest Video Two (Digital Lead)	60	35
Audio Research D130 (balanced)	2000	1195
AVI S2000 MP	950	495
Chord Chameleon II Balanced 1/2 metre	125	40
Chord SPM 2000 B 6 Channel Amp	5500	3495
Copland CDA288	2000	1295
Dynaudio Contour 1.3 Beech	1300	595
Expos es30 Dark Cherry (brand new sealed box)	2600	1595
Exposure xx integrated	800	295
Gamma Gemini 12W SE Class A Integrated	700	295
Krell KST 100	3000	1295
Linn Kelidh (Walnut)	850	495
Linn Axis Akito K5	n/a	295
Linn 5120 (Centre Speaker)	650	395
Linn LP12 Ittok Cirkus Goldring 1042	n/a	695
Linn LP12 Valhalla (affromosia)	n/a	250
Martin Logan Quests	5000	2295
Marantz CDA 94 DAC (variable/balanced outputs)	900	295
Meridian 601 digitalpre/dac/balanced	2700	895
Meridian 602 transport	1800	595
Meridian 605 mono powers/balanced	2500	895
Meridian 201 Preamp	650	295
Meridian 263 Dac	650	250
Meridian 563 Dac	900	395
Meridian 541 plus Phono	1180	495
Meridian 518 Digital Preamp	985	695
Michell ORCA pre	1650	995
Micromega Dac 3(balanced)	1000	450
Mission 750LE (Rosewood) + Mission Stands	350	195
Musical Fidelity XA 50 monos	500	350
Musical Fidelity A1000 (class A integrated)	1600	895
Naim 32.5	380	195
Naim Nait 1	n/a	150
Naim 42.5	280	150
Naim 180	1100	750
Naim 62 (new style)	430	195
Naim CD2	2000	1095
Onix Soap power supply	n/a	150
Proac Tablete 11	550	295
Rel Q 50 Sub	395	250
Revox G36	n/a	395
Roksan Xerxes Artemiz Sumiko		
BPS piano black	2500	795
Roksan Xerxes Tabriz rosewood	n/a	495
Roksan Artemiz	950	395
Roksan Tabriz	350	195
Rogers LS35A (6 mths old) Black	800	395
Sony MDS JE520 (mini disc)	300	95
Stax Lambda Nova Signature + SRDX Pro (new)	800	495
Tag McLaren PA10	850	595
Various linn/naim/exposure cable (per pair)	n/a	10
XLO 2.1 Signature Balanced 1/2 metre	400	195

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Audio Silver Knight's Expert mono black valve power amplifier.	£ 1295	Parallel single ended 300B. Cost £2500. Mint. £ 1295
Audio Innovations S/300 integrated valve amp	£ 295	Creek 4040 MK2 integrated amplifier. Mint. Black. £ 99
Audio Innovations S/800 Anniversary power amp	£ 795	Suggden A21-A Class A mt Amplifier. Wooden sleeve. £ 149
Pioneer C90A Reference pre-amplifier	£ 200	Trio KA980 mt amplifier. Big, black & powerful. £ 160
Quad 405/1 Mint. Boxed	£ 195	Leak Stereo 50 power amplifier. Very rare. £ 495
Quad 405/2 Excellent condition. Boxed/instructions	£ 225	Quad 34. Brown finish. 5 pin din. Ground. Boxed. £ 200
Technics SU610 new class-A amplifier	£ 95	Technics SHCE 70 Graphic Equaliser. 12 presets. £ 80
Cambridge P25 integrated amplifier. Ex condition	£ 99	Linn Link integrated amplifier. Excellent condition. £ 340
Rekhenka X73 mono valve amplifiers c. 1955. Excellent cond	£ 125	Sorty T1A7 RBBS integrated amplifier. £500. Mint. £ 300
Rogers HC88 MK2 integrated valve amplifier	£ 450	Quad 33 pre-amplifiers. £ 75
Antiam Zeta 1 Prologon. Circuta amp. Cost £999.00	£ 390	Quad 34. Brown finish. 5 pin din. model. Ex cond. £ 125
17Vdc line level valve pre-amplifier. Mint. Boxed	£ 120	Scott Model 410A integrated transistor amplifier. £ 175
Quad 405/1 power amplifier. Not mint. Ideal for amp	£ 200	Nad 3020. The original and the best. Only. £ 60
Leak Stereo 20 valve power amplifiers from	£ 150	Royal 9708X pre-amplifier. Mint. Boxed. £ 100
Musical Fidelity Electra II 10 mt amplifier. Boxed	£ 60	Quad 11 Various. From £350 a pair. 350+ Suggden C51 pre-amplifier. Excellent condition. £ 99
Quad 11 Various. From £350 a pair. 350+ Suggden C51 pre-amplifier. Excellent condition	£ 195	Creek 4040 MK1 amplifier. Excellent condition. £ 99
Creek 4040 MK1 amplifier. Excellent condition	£ 79	Naim Nac 42.5K. pre-amplifier with MC board. £ 190
Naim Nac 42.5K. pre-amplifier with MC board	£ 299	Harman Kardon HK610 integrated amplifier
Harman Kardon HK610 integrated amplifier		Musical Fidelity E200 preamp with remote
Musical Fidelity E200 preamp with remote		

TURNTABLES

Oxford Acoustics Crystelle turntable with pedestal. Black finish. Cut-out for SME tone arm. C/W P8a. Rare	£ 695
Rega Planer 3. Ex condition. No arm	£ 89
Rega Planer 2 C/W RB250 tone arm. Excellent cond	£ 125
Garrard 401 in SME 2000 plinth system. Good	£ 200
Arstion RD80 turntable. C/W Linn Bask. Lvs. Boxed	£ 149
Apelton plinth for Garrard 401. New. Cost £199	£ 140
Cut-out for SME tone arm. C/W P8a. Rare	£ 695
Thorens TD125 in SME 2000 plinth system for SME 1000	£ 75
Thorens TD150 and dark oak. Finish plinth	£ 75
Thorens TD130 Chassis only	£ 35
Garrard 401 & 401 motor units all serviced from	£ 125
Royal RP460 turntable. Good condition	£ 75

SPEAKERS

Quad ESL 57 speakers. All fully serviced with full 3 months warranty. Hear what ESL 57's should sound like from £ 600 pr	
Living Voice Auditorium speakers. Complete with purpose built stands. Beech finish. Boxed. New price £1750	£ 895
Riark Sabre. Black finish. Mint condition	£ 170
Keswick Audio Volante. Cost £729. Mint. Boxed	£ 295
Bose powered Acoustimass 3 Spks. Unused. Boxed	£ 295
Mission 733 floorstanding speakers. Black	£ 125
B&W DM14 loudspeakers. A real hifi speaker	£ 199
Bose powered Acoustimass 3 spks. Unused. Boxed	£ 225
Mission 760 speakers. Black, C/W matching stands	£ 99
Montana Short M5700 with Decca Kelly ribbon. £ 150	TDL RT1 2 speakers. Black. Mint. Boxed. £ 160
Heybrook HB1 speakers. Black. £ 50	Linn Sara Isobaric speakers & stands. Ex cond. £ 325
Pair B&W DM13 speakers. Sounds like a Smith. £ 95	Pair Whiteley stentorian corner speakers. £ 75
Pair Rogers Studio 5 speakers. Ex condition	£ 250
Naim HB1 speakers. Mint. Boxed	£ 495
Cyrus 781 speakers. Excellent condition	£ 99
Richard Allan Monitor 80 speakers. Ex condition	£ 125

OTHER ITEMS

California Audio Labs CD transport and Gamma digital to analogue converter. USA import. Excellent condition	£ 495
Micromega Tru 3.3 Box CD player. Cost over £500 when new. Amazing sound. Must be heard. Bargain. Only	£ 150
Quad FM4 tuner. Brown finish. Ex cond. Serviced	£ 225
Hackack tone arm with Linn armboard	£ 149
Quad FM1 mono tuner with twin power supply	£ 50
Quad FM3. Mint. Boxed, instruction	£ 90
Technics Class AA 3 Head cassette deck. Dolby B/C. HX Pro	£ 80
Aiwa XT950 tuner. Unused. Boxed. Frnl w/Mw. £ 75	Avantec Beam Echo BM611 AM/FM tuner. Serviced. £ 190
Decca London Gold cartridge. Rebuilt cartridge man	£ 175
Minimum (Microgram) FM tuner. Good condition	£ 150
Supex SM 100 MM cartridge. Good condition	£ 35
Cyris Tuner AM/FM Chassis marked. Hence only	£ 75
Sine 300 tone arms. Various. From	£ 60
Leak Troughline 2 & 3 Mono/Stereo. From	£ 75
Wacker sleeve for Quad 34 FM3	£ 30
Rogers Ravensbourne 2 tuner in wood case	£ 35
Supex 980 super MC cartridge. Little used	£ 140
Adjustable Bias control. Good condition	£ 80
Quad 34 moving coil module. Mint. Boxed	£ 40
Trio KT880L synthesiser AM/FM tuner. Black	£ 75
Senheiser HD540 R10. Gold. Hiphones wood box.	£ 250
Trio KX 780 Cassette player. 3 Head. Dolby B/C	£ 95

QUAD ESL57 PANELS/SERVICING ETC

Fully reconditioned Quad ESL57 speakers from only £600.00.pr. why spend £4000

Rebuilt & soak tested treble panels. Fitted new dustcovers. Exchange	£ 100
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New high spec rectifier boards.	Pair £ 80
Clamp boards. (price per pair).	£ 45
New dust covers bass or treble panels. Fitted	Pair £ 20
Treble protection boards (before S/N 16800) price each	£ 20
Refurbish Grille with fabric overcover. Black or brown. Each	£ 30
Stands for ESL 57 speakers. Wood finish.	Pair £ 140

Full servicing facilities available.
"Classique Sounds servicing restores the Quads to a position where they can hold their head high", Jon Marks. HIFI WORLD. April 1999
12 months warranty on all panels/parts

One Thing stereo decoder MK2.

(lets a tuner speak for itself). Awarded 4 globes. Hifi World. June 1999. Only £175.00
Troughline tuner service & realignment £75.00. (excludes valves. Rarely needed)
Subject to tuner being in a serviceable condition, with no major faults or modifications

TRANSLUCENT. (somewhat of a bargain) Hifi World. Jan 1999

PURE SILVER INTERCONNECT CABLE

99.99% pure silver conductors. Quality gold plated RCA phono plugs.
Half Metre terminated £60.00 One metre terminated £80.00
7 day money back guarantee if not better than existing cable. Regardless of price or quality

99.99% pure silver wire .5mm (unsleeved). Only £4.95M

NEW EAR/YOSHINO EQUIPMENT

Ear 834P MM/MC phono stage with/without volume	Brand new. Boxed at only £529
Ear 834L MM phono stage. No volume control	Brand new. Boxed at only £379
Ear 834L Line only valve pre-amplifier. Amazing	Brand new. Boxed at only £479

301/401/124 PLINTHS (lets the Garrards inherent quality show through) HIFI World. Oct 98
Plinth £ only £199 unfinished or £299 finished/overcoated. Awarded 4 Globes October 98 (HIFI WORLD)
Choice of veneers available. Extra for special finishes

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www.emporium.dircon.co.uk



	COST	PRICE				
VALVE AMPS						
AUDIO INNOVATIONS CLASSIC 25	1000	400	QUAD 34/306 grey 400 will split	200	each	
ART AUDIO QUINTET monoblocks	2000	1100	QUAD 44/405.2	400		WADIA 6 cd player with digital volume mint boxed
AUDIO NOTE MEISHU 300B integrated with phono	EX DEM		QUAD 77 int no remote	700	300	PS AUDIO LAMBDA transport inc AT&T glass optical out
with full manufacturers warranty	3250	2000	RAPPAPORT power amp (Krell like monster)	450		PS AUDIO DIGILINK DAC
AUDIO NOTE M2 RIIA phono stage EX DEM	1050	550	ROTEL RC 872/ line pre	800	125	PS AUDIO MUSICLINK DAC / Pre combined
AUDIO NOTE M2 pre with phono	1500	800	ROKSAN CASPIAN	475		
AUDIO NOTE p2se power amp	1500	800	ROKSAN CD & AMP	1000	the pair	
AUDIO NOTE P4 monoblocks	4200	2100	SUGDEN OPTIMA 200 line integrated	900	450	
AUDIO NOTE KASSAI parallel single ended			Toca 22 class a powerc amp	1900	900	
300B 18watts per channel silver wired output x	23000	8500	LOUDSPEAKERS			
AUDIO INNOVATIONS 1st Audio monoblocks		600	ALIANTE LINEA (sonus faber electas clones)	2500	1100	
BEARD BBA100 line integrated	1500	450	ATC SCM10 black boxed ex dem	1080	600	
BEARD P35 MKII power amp		400	AUDIOPLAN KONTRAST MARK 2	2800	1200	
BEARD P500A PREAMP	1000	300	AUDIO NOTE ANJ tweaked	500	500	
CROFT V POWER		300	Audio Note ANE factory seconds new boxed	1520	760	
CONCORDANT EXCELSIOR phono pre with psu	1500	600	AUDIO PHYSICS TEMPOS with Essex digital equalizer	4000	1250	
EDISON 12 power amp 12 watts class A		200	BANDOR BANDORA in light oak	1350	500	
GAMMA RYTHM INTEGRATED latest version	2500	1000	CADENCE ES mk I	3500	1000	
GAMMA AEDN MONOBLOCKS latest version	5500	2500	CASTLE SEVERN mk 1 floorstanders	579	300	
LUMLEY M75 monoblocks 75 watts		1000	Celestion 5000 with ribbon tweeters	700	350	
LUXMAN LX33 valve integrated		600	DYNAUDIO AUDIENCE 5	400	200	
MELOS 333 two box line pre	3000	1200	IMPULSE H2	2250	1000	
MORE FIDELITY 300B stereo power amp	2200	700	JAMO CONCERT 8 cherry	1500	850	
ORANGE VALVE PRE with Phono		300	JR 149 round version of ls3/5a		150	
RADFORD STA 25 RENAISSANCE		700	KLIPSCH LA SCALAS, black, deluxe, boxed	2500	1350	
SONIC FRONTIERS SF5 40 POWER AMP	2000	1000	KEF 103.2	140	700	
TRILOGY 948 Stereo power amp.	2000	900	ORIGIN LIVE SOVEREIGN floorstanders	1200	700	
CONCORDANT QUAD IIs		400	ORIGIN LIVE RESOLUTION	875	250	
TRANSISTOR AMPS						
ALCHEMIST FREYA/PRE/ODIN POWER AMP	2100	700	PROAC TABLETTE 50 SIGNATURE (ebony)	800	450	
ATC SCA2 with phono and remote	3000	1650	REGA ELA ex dem		325	
AVI S2000MP preamp	950	500	REI stygian subwoofer		250	
AUDICLAB 8000C pre grey colour	450	200	RUARK 5 WORDSMAN	100	600	
CRIMSON latest spec pre amp & monoblock	1400	800	TANNOY LITTLE GOLD MONITORS	4000	4000	
CYPRUS pre/power	1100	700	TANNOY WESTMINSTERS latest version		900	
CYRUS STRAIGHT LINE integrated amp	400	275	TANNOY ARDEN objective audio rebuild (twice as heavy as the		900	
CYRUS surround sound processor	700	200	originals with 15" hdds. Awsome sound		900	
CYRUS two	650	150	TOWNSEND GLASTONBURY MK II		900	
DENSEN D200/D300 pre/power "	1850	1080	UKD CARUSO Ltd edition, four way floorstanders	2500	1250	
DPA DPA pre amp	800	450	TUNERS, CASSETTE DECKS & REEL TO REEL			
ELECTROCOMPANIE pre/power 25 WATTS CLASS A		500	ARCAM CASSETTE DECK		450	
EXPOSURE VII pre mm/mc with psu		250	CAMBRIDGE T55 silver fm tuner		75	
LINN KAIRN with brilliant psu & phono	1500	750	FERROGRAPHS SFM1 FM Tuner		80	
As above but with phono boards	1700	800	LEAK TROUGHLINE III STEREO		100	
LINN MAJIK	800	400	MERIDIAN 204 tuner	650	350	
MERIDIAN 505 MONOBLOCKS	1700	1000	NAIM NAT101 TUNER with psu		450	
MERIDIAN 205 MONOBLOCKS	1000	600	NAKAMICHI 700 tritracer		200	
MOTH 60 WATT power amp wood finished mint		650	NAKAMICHI cassette decks BX2		200	
boxed		300	QUAD FM4 tuner		250	
MUSICAL FIDELITY EIDO	700	350	REVOX B77 2 track one owner from new, full service history		600	
MUSICAL FIDELITY MA50 MONOBLOCKS	850	400	REVOX A77 several available serviced	200-250		
NAIM NAC 32 "		150	REVOX b261 tuner boxed	350		
NAIM NAIT ONE "		150	YAMAHA tl fm tuner black analogue tuner	100		
NAIM 250 old style		700	CD & DACS			
NVA pre/power old style 50 watts 4 box		350	ALTIS top loading transport and two box dac, best cd midrange I've		5500	
NVA passive pre	350	200	ever heard		1350	
Naim snaps		150	CYRUS DISCMASTER/DACMASTER transport/dac		1750	
OCM 500 power amp stereophile recommended		2500	KENWOOD DPX9010 TRANSPORT ONLY		500	
components list 250 watts per channel		1200	LINN KARIK cd player		2000	
PASS LABS ALEPH 2 MONOBLOCKS	6200	3800	MARANTZ CD17		800	
PASS ALEPH P LINE PREAMP	3800	2000	MICROMEGA SOLO cd player		1500	
PIP TWO PREAMP serviced last year	2000+	1200	MUSICAL FIDELITY DIGILOG DAC		100	
PLINIUS SA 50 new class a power amp boxed	2800	1800	MUSICAL FIDELITY E24 current model		500	
PRIMARE A20 AMP	800	400	PRIMARE D20 cd player, amp also available		700	
PS AUDIO TWO PLUS C power amp		250	PIONEER DVL909 DVD player!		900	
			ROKSAN CASPIAN cd player		900	
					600	
TURNTABLES, ARMS & CARTRIDGES						
ALPHASON SOLO + BASIK arm	450	150				
AUDIO NOTE T2	425	200				
AUDIO NOTE IO v II Petrtr Quortrup's own example	2000	1300				
AUDIO NOTE ANS3L silver wired step up TX	1600	900				
AUDIO NOTE ans2 step up tx	400	225				
CLEARAUDIO EVOLUTION TURNTABLE with						
parallel arm & beta cartridge	1650	1000				
FIDELITY RESEARCH FR 64 s silver wired arm		350				
HADCOCK CH228 ARM		300				
LINN AXIS		300				
LINN LP12 valhalla, linn arm board		300				
LINN LP12/ PINK LINK		650				
LINN LP12 VALHALLA/BASIK		350				
LINN LP12 VALHALLA/BASIK PLUS/P	77	380				
ORACLE DELPHI MK I		450				
ORTOFON spu gt		250				
PINK TRIANGLE pt too with rb 300 arm		450				
ROKSAN XERXES		400				
ROCKPORT TECHNOLOGY CAPELLA						
with 7000 arm, Ex. Dem.	12500	9500				
SME 312 silver wired ex dem	1000+	600				
SME V with gold detail and silver internal cableing just serviced by SME		1150				
boxed as new	1774					
TRANSCRIPTORS SATURN with ORIGINAL ARM & LID		250				
VPI TINT mk111 boxed	4000	2000				
WELL TEMPERED ARM		500				
CABLES						
Please note orig prices are approximate, I can't be bothered to look them up						
XLO TYPE S 1.5m spades	800	400				
GOERTZ M1 centre stage 5m bananas	200	125				
NORDOST FLATLINE GOLD 2.5m biwired bananas	160	80				
OCOS DC SERIES 8 2.2m single/bi or tri wire 50	100	150				
YAMAMURA MILLENIUM 5000 2.5m bananas bit tatty	3000	700				
FURAKAWA FS-2T155 PC-OCC 3.5m bananas and 2mm 800		300				
SONIC LINK LILAC 1m phonos	65	40				
MADRIGAL HPC 1m phonos	400	200				
VAN den HULL gold 1.2m	800	300				
LFD bi-wire cable 6metre pair	450	225				
SONIC LINK CABLE RANGE NOW IN STOCK						
VINTAGE						
lots of obscure cheap valve amps for restoration from 10 pounds						
CLASSIQUE SOUNDS 301 PLINTH		200				
GREEN MARBLE TD 124/SME 3012 PLINTH ONLY		250				
LEAK STEREO 50 REBUILT		500				
MINT RESPRAYED QUAD II		pair 600				
QUAD ESLS7		400				
ROGERS CADET 111 pre/power		100				
ROGERS BABY DELUXE 6V6 pp pair		500				
SME 3012 arm		185				
TANNOY SPEAKERS		POA				
BUDGET EQUIPMENT						
GOLDRING G88		40				
GARRARD 401 depending on condition		60-120				
In addition to the above we have loads of cheap stuff - come and have a look						

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"I was mesmerised" HiFi +
"Natural, Fabulously neutral"



"Outclasses alternatives at the same price easily" HiFi World Apr 99

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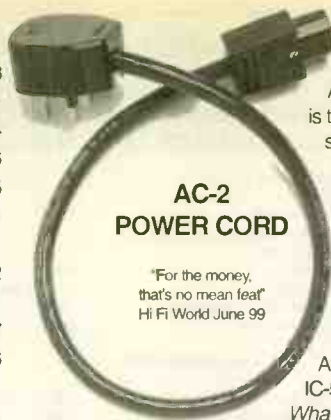
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LAT AC2 POWER CABLES AND DISTRIBUTION BOXES ARE AVAILABLE FROM:

- Audio Concept - Ealing - 0181 567 8703
- Audio Reflections - Wakefield - 0113 252 8850
- Custom Cable Service - (mail order) - 0181 942 9124
- Musical Images - Covent Garden - 0171 497 1346
- Musical Images - Edgware - 0181 952 5535
- Orpheus Audio - Lancs - 01257 473175
- Sounds Of Music - Tunbridge Wells - 01892 547003
- Sounds Of Music - London - SE1 - 0181 357 8882
- The Listening Rooms - London SW7 - 0171 244 7750
- Unilet Sound & Vision - New Malden - 0181 942 9567
- Kronos Hi Fi N Ireland - 01868 753 606

Taperwise flat speaker cable

418 - ★★★★★ WHAT-HIFI, What Hi Fi Ultimate Hi Fi Guide



AC-2 POWER CORD

"For the money, that's no mean feat"
Hi Fi World June 99

L A T INTERNATIONAL

World Class Cables Made in U.S.A

AC-2 Power cable - Silver clad, Teflon insulated at 10awg; this is the largest gauge of power cord we know of. The design of our shielding system effectively eliminates interferences from RF and EMI sources. Fitted with a MK Tough plug and IEC or Fig of eight connector. European connectors also available. Solder connections with Wonder Solder. 2ft £49, 3ft £59, 4ft £69, 6ft £89. Other lengths to order. 4, 6 and 8 way all steel distribution boxes with 3 ft of cable & MK Tough plug £149 £179 £209.



Analogue Interconnects, IC-50, IC-80, IC 100, IC, 200. - refer What Hi Fi for review ratings. Hi-Fi World Sep 99 - IC-50 "this months bargain". Speaker cables - SS800, BIWIRE, SS1000

Hi-Fi World Aug 99 "gained speed, control & involvement. Improved cohesion and musicality"

Sunfire Corporation

...from the mind & soul of Bob Carver



CLASSIC TUBE PRE AMP, optional all valve phono stage (MMMC) with CD input (reverse RIAA equalisation)



STEREO POWER AMPLIFIER 300 wpc HEXFET with no heat sinks

FIVE CHANNEL POWER AMP 200 wpc x 5 - HEXFET with no heat sinks
THEATRE GRAND PROCESSOR PRE-AMP- phono stage, tuner, Dolby Digital, DTS, auto source sensing, intelligent remote

2700 watt TRUE SUB-WOOFER 11 inch cube 18Hz

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Avante Garde RX20 - a mere 36" tall and 12" x 12" at the base - Absolute Sound review - " a true torture test with a bass line that's big, super fast and continuous - the Gershman's handled it beautifully, servo driven Infinity RS1 towers have more power but are way too slow. The Magnepan MG3.5/R's, can't match the low bass impact of the Avant Gardes, only the Thiel 3.6 can handle this track with aplomb and even they don't sound quite as fast. Unquestionably, the Avant Gardes are a tremendously musical loudspeakers". X-1, Specter, Enigma 500-X, GAP-520X



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Measured Performance

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ACOUSTIC ENERGY AE2

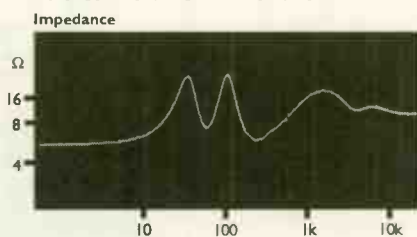
Acoustic Energy have gone for a ruler flat response with the AE2. It gives a loudspeaker well presented treble, avoiding warmth or dullness. Tweeter integration was excellent over a wide forward angle, which also helps increase treble energy put into the room. Absence of a crossover suckout will ensure good detailing.

There's no treble peakiness either so likely no strong treble character - a good thing.

A small amount of upper bass lift will give the AE2's sound good body. Lower bass rolled off a bit earlier than expected from the cabinet volume, measuring -6dB at 76Hz. The bottom of the loudspeaker is a cavity for sand or lead shot so internal volume is less than it appears. The port is tuned high, around 50Hz, giving the AE2 a bass performance more akin to a smaller stand mounter. For its size, it does not

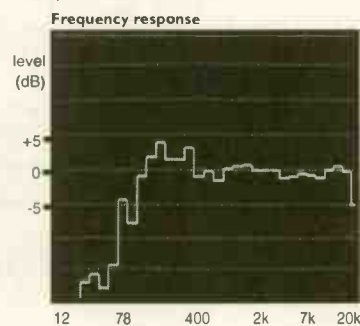
go low at the bass end. Expect a fast sound, rather than a deep one.

The impedance curve is both high - above 8Ω - and flat, meaning the loudspeaker draws little current and is largely resistive in nature, making it a very easy load for an amplifier. Impedance measured 9Ω overall, as the curve suggests. Sensitivity was mediocre at 86dB, again in line with a smaller loudspeaker rather than a higher volume floorstander, highish impedance also acting against the AE4 in this area. Volume will have to be



turned up a bit compared with more sensitive speakers, but the small bass cones mean very high volumes are not appropriate in any case.

The AE2s are neatly engineered to give a highly detailed and accurately balanced sound, with smooth if strong treble. Bass will be fast and light. They are an easy amplifier load, needing around 60W from an amplifier. NK



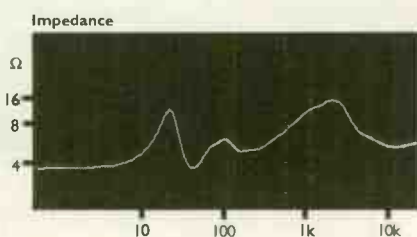
TANNOY R3

Tannoy have the experience and knowledge to get their loudspeakers to measure well. The R3s have a smooth frequency response characteristic, with a slight lift up at bass frequencies to give their sound body and warmth. Integration between the tweeter and the bass/midrange unit was excellent, with only the smallest dip showing where this takes place. Phasing was well arranged, keeping the sound balance stable off-axis. The tweeter in itself measures flat to 16kHz and will likely have little character of its own as a result, another factor aiding subjective integration.

Output from the front of the bass cones extended down to 50Hz (-6dB). The rear port was well damped, itself having a flat output that ran from 60Hz down to 20Hz (-6dB). How well this integrates with the forward response depends upon the room - always an unknown with reflex loudspeakers - but the R3s go low and, in a big room (20ft long or more)

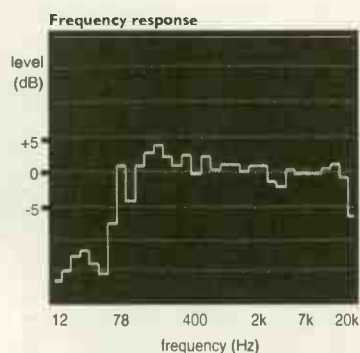
should move the furniture.

Sensitivity was good at 88dB sound pressure level from one watt input power. Larger floorstanders reach 90dB or so these days, so the R3s are not especially sensitive. This was a little surprising in light of the fact that their impedance measures 6Ω overall. Over most of the frequency range it is predominantly resistive, the gentle slopes of our impedance analysis indicate. Broad port tuning is reflected in the impedance curve as a flattening of the upper 'peak' commonly seen in reflex loudspeakers. All this makes the R3 a reasonably easy load as far as an amplifier is



concerned, although they will draw current if asked to deliver high volume in a large room. Under such circumstances a beefy amplifier is recommended.

The R3s are well thought out in all areas. They possess good fundamental accuracy, a peak-free response (meaning few resonances), better-than-usual bass damping and excellent tweeter integration. Loudspeakers like this need to be driven by an amplifier of 100W or thereabouts. NK



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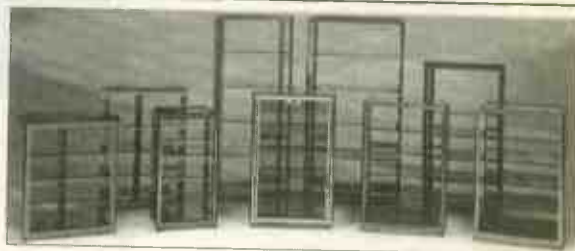
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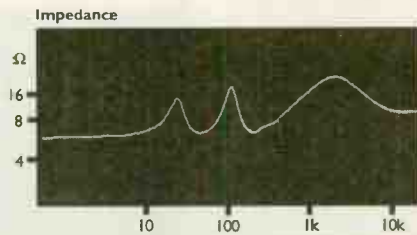
NEAT CRITIQUE PRO

Although the Critique Pro measures flat across the central portion of the audio band, it has a lift in its response at both ends of the frequency spectrum. The tweeter peaks up at 16kHz, by 3dB or so, enough to add some sharpness, or perhaps incision to the sound.

The bass/midrange unit peaks up at 160Hz too, which will give some speed to the bass, especially hand drums and such like. Being a fairly well defined peak, rather than a smooth progressive lift, this is almost certainly due to mechanical interaction between driver and air compliance. I prefer to see a smoother lift at low frequencies, to add a little body and warmth, engineered within the crossover. I suspect the Pro will have

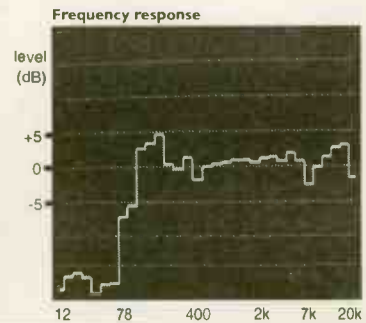
'bouncy' bass. Below 100Hz bass output falls away, measuring -6dB at 63Hz. The port is tuned high, to 40Hz, the impedance curve reveals, so bass does not go especially low.

Overall impedance measured 9.5Ω, a high figure. With little reactance in the load, it means the Critique Pro will not draw much current, nor store it. It is an easy enough load for any amplifier. At



86dB SPL for one nominal watt of input (2.84V) sensitivity was about average for a speaker of the size. Amplifiers of up to 60W will be suitable.

The Critique Pro has bass and treble emphasis, which will colour its sound a little. It should come over as lively and detailed, with fast bass. NK



dvd players

Although DVD video players are not expected to be hi-fi, the audio sections of the five machines we tested all reached the same high standard of measured performance as a CD player, replaying an audio CD. This is in contrast to the D/A converters of computer drives, for example.

Frequency response measured flat from 5Hz up to 21kHz, within 1dB, from 16bit/44.1kHz coding. The Sony would not process a pulse test signal so it was tested with a gliding tone, which is why its response analysis looks different (it's a third-octave analysis). Otherwise, differences were minimal and all players will give a balanced sound free from either

obvious brightness or dullness. Having said that, sharp ears may pick up the fact that the JVC will sound a little brighter, perhaps 'glassier', than the others because it has just the smallest amount of high frequency lift, whilst the Pioneer had most treble roll off, giving it a more integrated, 'natural' sound. All players measured out to 48kHz with 24bit/96kHz coding.

Digital-to-analogue converters are now sufficiently refined and inexpensive to give little distortion over and above that inevitable with 16-bit linear digital coding. Our analyses at -30dB, a representative level for music on CD, all show an absence of quantisation noise and at 0.007% or thereabouts distortion was

minimal. None of the five players produced a bad result and all could resolve a very low level -90dB test signal, albeit at 30% distortion (16bit). Budget digital converters invariably fail this test.

With good channel separation, low noise and an output level of 2V these five DVD players measured as well as any hi-fi CD player with 16bit/44.1kHz CD audio. They make no concessions as CD players, although individually they will display the usual - practically unmeasurable - differences in timbre. So too will they suffer from the well-documented limitations of the CD format generally, when playing 44.1kHz Audio CDs. NK

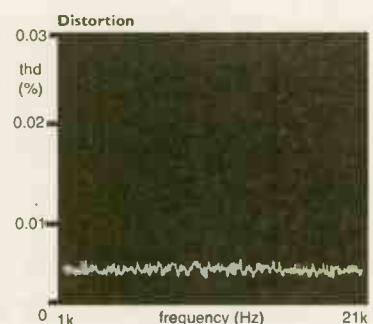
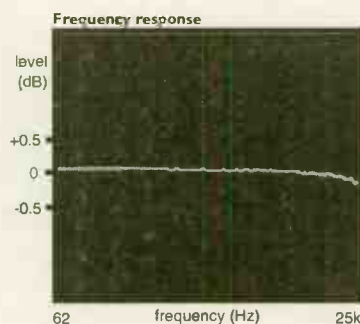
DENON DVD2500

Frequency response 5Hz-21kHz

Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.004	0.004
-30dB	0.006	0.006
-60dB	0.36	0.34
-90dB	30	30
Separation	left	right
1kHz	114	113
20kHz	110	109

Noise with emphasis -116dB

Output 2.1V





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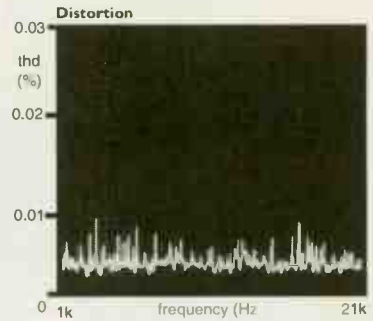
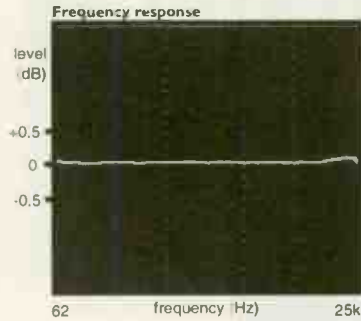
JVC DVD XV-D701

Frequency response 5Hz-20.7kHz

Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.005	0.004
-30dB	0.009	0.009
-60dB	0.4	0.4
-90dB	28	29
Separation	left	right
1kHz	112	112
20kHz	106	105

Noise with emphasis -106dB

Output 2.2V



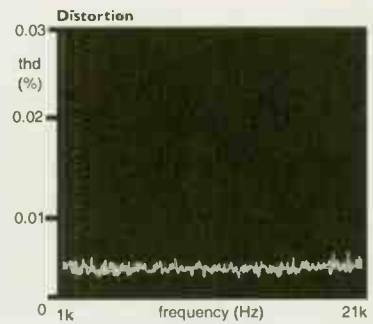
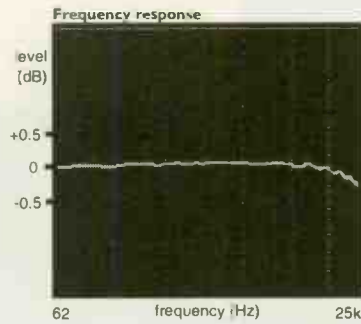
PIONEER DVD-626

Frequency response 5Hz-20.7kHz

Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.006	0.006
-30dB	0.006	0.006
-60dB	0.36	0.36
-90dB	28	28
Separation	left	right
1kHz	114	116
20kHz	106	107

Noise with emphasis -116dB

Output 2.1V



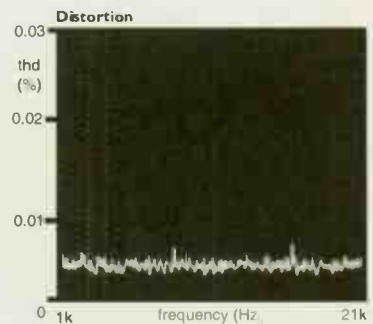
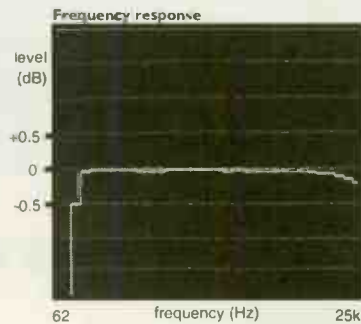
SONY DVP-S725

Frequency response 5Hz-20kHz

Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.005	0.005
-30dB	0.007	0.007
-60dB	0.4	0.45
-90dB	30	30
Separation	left	right
1kHz	113	113
20kHz	102	103

Noise with emphasis -115dB

Output 2.3V



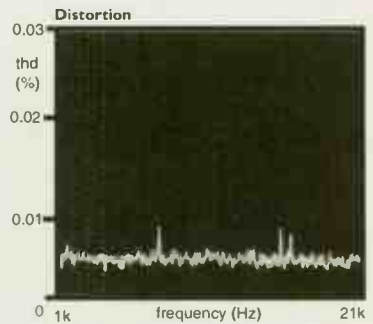
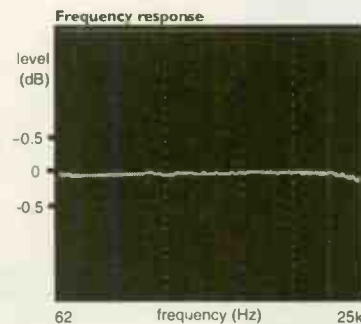
YAMAHA DVD-S795

Frequency response 5Hz-21kHz

Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.006	0.004
-30dB	0.009	0.009
-60dB	0.6	0.6
-90dB	32	32
Separation	left	right
1kHz	112	113
20kHz	108	109

Noise with emphasis -116dB

Output 2V





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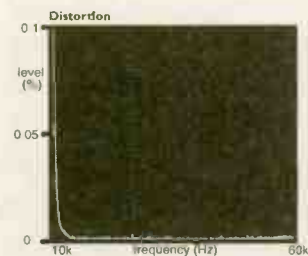
Distortion was minimal, with just the smallest amount of second harmonic present. Noise was also low, if a few dB higher than the best. A slight hiss may be audible at high volume, but no hum.

Moving coil gain can be adjusted from

x560 up to a massive x3200, suitable for very low output, high quality cartridges. Like most solid-state phono stages, output cannot swing more than 10V rms, so overload varies from 18mV in at minimum gain, down to 3mV input at maximum gain. The input load can be adjusted from 33Ω up to 1kΩ. There is no 47kΩ setting for MM, so the Delphini is MC only.

The Delphini measures well in all areas. It will accommodate most moving coil cartridges, due its wide range of gain and load settings. NK

Frequency response	8Hz-90kHz
Separation	∞dB
Distortion	0.0058%
Gain (MC)	x560-x3200
Overload	3.3mV in /10V out



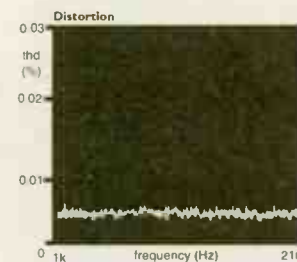
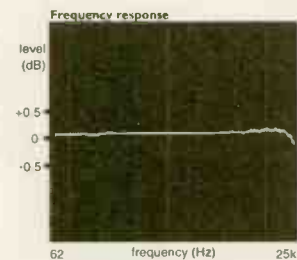
cd players

NAD C540 COMPACT DISC

The NAD has a small rise in output above 5kHz, before its filters roll off response at 21kHz, as always for CD. This is likely to give the player a little more brightness and sheen across the upper midband than many rivals, also strengthening detailing I suspect.

Distortion levels were low for 16-bit, right down through the dynamic range to -90dB. Low level signals were well resolved and channel separation wide at over 100dB. With a normal output of 2.3V and low noise, the NAD C540 provided a good measured result in all respects. NK

Frequency response	5Hz-21kHz	
Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.006	0.006
-30dB	0.006	0.006
-60dB	0.42	0.36
-90dB	29	29
Separation	left	right
1kHz	117	116
20kHz	102	101
Noise	-105dB	
with emphasis	-105dB	
Dynamic range	108dB	
Output	2.3V	

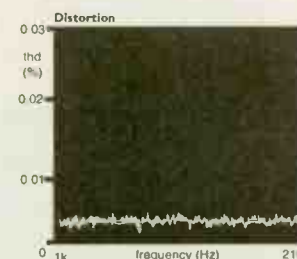
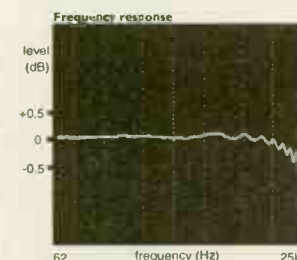


ROTEL 991 COMPACT DISC

The Rotel RCD991 has an unusual frequency response characteristic, reminiscent of early Philips players, with a roll-off in higher frequencies, plus filter ripple. Together these are likely to give the player a soft and fairly relaxed sounding top end, free from any sign of hardness or spit.

The digital convertor produces little noise and is very linear, producing less distortion than most rivals. Our trace has a low noise floor and a complete absence of quantisation effects. The player mutes at digital zero, giving an output noise figure of -116dB. With wide channel separation and Philips' standard output of 2V the RCD991 measures well in all areas. It will have a smooth but fairly soft, or even warm sound. NK

Frequency response	5Hz-21kHz	
Distortion	left	right
-6dB	0.004	0.004
-30dB	0.007	0.008
-60dB	0.3	0.3
-90dB	28	28
Separation	left	right
1kHz	118	117
20kHz	111	110
Noise	-116dB	
with emphasis	-116dB	
Dynamic range	108dB	
Output	1.98V	



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 £150. Mordant Short Decca/Kelly
 Ribbon speakers with 12" drivers,
 all just serviced £175. SME S2
 (mint) £60 ono. Tel: 0151 353
 0930 (Mar/I)

**LINN SONDEK, LV2 silver, Linn
 Trak cartridge, mint condition
 £650. Also selection of LPS.
 Tel: Day 0956 577 616, eve
 01827 720 265 (Midlands)
 (Mar/I)**

NAIM CD3 £600, NAC92 + MM
 boards £300, NAP90/3 £300,
 Flatcap £175, Kef Reference 3
 Rosetta (new) £2000, Linn Keilidh
 with bases £400, Yamaha DSP595
 surround receiver (new) £250. Tel:
 01189 714 986. (Mar/I)

NAIM NAIT 3 integrated amplifier,
 excellent condition £415. Naim A4
 speaker cables 2 six metre lengths
 £10. Phono leads by on 2 one
 metre leads noiseless. Tel: Tim
 01723 376 786, (Scarborough)
 (Mar/I)

MICHELL REFERENCE hydraulic
 transcription turntable. Circa 1970.
 Unipivot arm. Silicone fluid
 damped. Excellent bass. Design
 Council Award. £300. Tel: 01923
 249 237 (Mar/I)

ARCAM 8SE CD player, mint
 boxed £330 (£500). Polk LS50
 speakers - HFC recommended
 £300 (£800). Linn LP12 (black)
 Valhalla Basik+ £325. Tel: 01280
 705 619 (Mar/I)

MERIDIAN MK2 active speakers
 £250 104 and modular pre-ampli-
 fiers £50 and £175. Sony MDP
 650D L/D player £175 plus popular
 title laser discs at various prices.
 Tel: 01905 640 422 (Mar)

LINN SONDEK LP12 (+25 +26
 transcription turntable) Grace Arm
 Supex 900 Super cartridge Lentex
 pre-amp. All perfect condition
 £450. Quad 30, 303 £75 Tel:
 01522 524 732 evenings (Mar)

QUAD 606 power amps £600 the
 pair or £325 each. Quad 77 inte-
 grated amp & remote £350.
 Accuphase E203 integrated amp
 £500. All immaculate condition.
 Offers welcomed. Tel: Ian 01484
 680 902 (Mar/I)

OPEN REEL tapes sizes 10.5", 7",
 5", little used, many brand new.
 Tel: 0181 868 1806 (Middx) (Mar)

AUDIO SYNTHESIS Dacs Decade
 Dac and pre amp in one, as new
 £1500. Meridian 500 transport
 Clock 2 £500. Exposure CD new
 £500. May PX/swap Tel: 01273
 239 356 or 01580 850 924 (Mar/I)

QUAD A4 grey phono £250, 306
 £250, Linn LP12 Valhalla, rose-
 wood Basic+ £425. Celestion
 SL600 £300 all virtually mint Tel:
 01736 797 608 (Mar/I)

CONCORDANT EXQUISITE pre-
 amp cherry finish. Separate regu-
 lated power supply. Latest spec.
 Mint. New 14.01.98 (£2000)
 Bargain £850. KEF Q55
 (mahogany). New 15.05.99 (£500).
 Giveaway at £225. Tel: 01902 786
 818 (Midlands) (Mar/I)

MICHELL 150/HERA phono stage,
 £275. VDH CS122HB 4x 3.5
 metres speaker cable £110. VDH
 D102III interconnect 1 metre £50.
 Mana Sound. bases size one
 £110. £500 the lot. Tel: 0181 205
 6778 (Apr/I)

NAIM EQUIPMENT all as new.
 72/140 pre/power latest models.
 MC/MM boards £850. Naim CDI
 CD player £950. Tel: Andrew
 01703 442 591 (Southampton)
 (Mar/I)

NAIM NAIT 3 (MM phono boards)
 £415 (£689). Only 18 months old.
 Immaculate, manuals, boxed,
 receipt (Grahams Hi-Fi). Sale due
 to upgrade. Can dem. Tel: 0208
 691 0098 Greenwich (Mar/I)

**QUAD ESL 63 speakers,
 brown, excellent boxed, condi-
 tion (RRP £3500) £1400. Audio
 Research Classic 30 re-valved
 silver paper in oil capacitors,
 great sound, good condition
 £950. Tel: 01473 273 810 or
 07071 226 276 (Mar/I)**

AUDIOLAB 8000S and 8000P,
 Odysseus integrated valve ampli-
 fier, Meridian 200/203, Kef 104/2.
 Reference, Sony Minidisc MDS-
 JB930 and JA3ES, Philips
 CDR870, Sony WM-DC6,
 Panasonic NV-HD100B. Tel: Tim
 0121 358 2708, Email: mill-
 wardt@aol.com (Mar/I)

PROAC RESPONSE 2 's', cherry
 RS2 stands, mint, £1375 (£2600).
 Counterpoint SA20 power amp,
 mint £875 (£2700). LFD PA2
 monobloc power amps, vgc, £650
 (£2600). Copland CSA28 amp,
 mint, £895 (£1300). Infinity
 Modulus speakers with stands,
 piano black, £345 (£1000). Tel:
 Adil 0181 673 3850 or 0171 919
 8559 (Mar/I)

AUDIO SYNTHESIS DSM-X DAC
 mint £250. Pioneer PDS703 stable
 platter CD £70. Denon TU 260L
 tuner £60. Garrard 401, in oak
 plinth £250. Leak ST20 refurb-
 ished £300. Tel: 01827 261 082
 (Tamworth) (Mar/I)

SONUS FABER grand pianos, 4
 months old, not run in, boxed, cost
 £2200. £1250 ono. Genuine rea-
 son for sale, mint condition. Tel:
 01795 870 157 (Mar/I)

COUNTERPOINT SA3000 Pre-
 Amp. Hi-end USA design. Valve
 circuitry, superb phono stage, won-
 derful sound. Immaculate, recently
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 Cost new £2200. Sell. £750,
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 Add-On Dolby ProLogic processor.
 Tel: 01727 764 726 (Mar/I)

MERIDIAN 508.20 £1000.
 Meridian 502 505 pair with 1m and
 6m balanced interconnects, new
 £3500, now £2100. Can demo, all
 mint. Genuine reason for sale. Tel:
 Les 01703 470 107 (Southampton)
 (Mar)

TDL MONITORS plus stands,
 black ash, fantastic, boxed £1200
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 £300 ono. Audiolab 8000M
 monoblocks £750 pair. Boxed with
 manuals. Tel: Keith 01296 714 534
 (Mar)

HI-FI WORLD magazines 1991 to
 1999. Hi-Fi Answers magazines
 1987 to 1994. Hi-Fi News & R/R
 magazines 1987 to 1995. Offers.
 Tel: Mike 01895 440 602. Mobile
 0860 155 521 (Mar)

QUAD 66 pre and remote, 66 FM,
 606 II power £1200. Quad ESL 63
 speakers £1300. Tel: 01993 883
 523 (Mar/I)

Classified Ads

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ALL MUSICAL TASTES AND POCKETS

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*As reviewed by Richard White
Hi-Fi World June 99*

ARCAYDIS AS2



*As reviewed by Simon Pope
Hi-Fi World October 99*

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AudioSource

**TRY AN £800 INTERCONNECT IN YOUR SYSTEM
... AND KEEP IT FOR £125**

Most cables have a sonic signature or tonal character to match specific components. In well-matched systems these cables are often found to be harsh or dull.

Petros cables were designed for AudioSOURCE to complement transparent components in a well-matched system: the goal was neutrality - musical flavour transmitted as water flows along a smooth pipe. If our cables sound bright or blurred, be confident that it is the equipment that you are hearing! **Stratos** cables have the greatest differentiation of all interconnects we have compared, that is to say that different recordings and different components just yield their own characters, transparently.

The design is the attention to many details, based on simple physics and many listening tests. We are now so far ahead of the game - and still moving the goal posts - that we will disclose the basic principles. The two major principles are conductivity and contamination. **Conductivity:** low resistance, capacitance, etc, using the highest purity copper (silver content acid-free solder) in very fine but many strands. In outer space, such cables would transmit Nothing But Signal (hence the esteemed American **NBS** brand! Incidentally, we have some of their amazing cables for sale at half-price). **Contamination:** since the invention of radio we are aware that your wires act as aerials. Designers cannot eliminate this in the equipment without serious degradation of the music signal. Planet Earth is now contaminated with EMI, RFI, you name it fields from cellular phones to AC mains. Coming from your neighbours, factories, and your own hi-fi and non-hi-fi devices. Our cables use twin axial (quasi-balanced) plus and minus wires, inside a triple-shielded braid earthed at source only and taken through to the plugs. We also apply **Kontak** cleaner to greatly reduce RF rectification and enhance surface conductivity. It lasts for about six months. If you haven't tried it, you don't know

what you are missing. £14.95 per bottle.

Stratos Series II (launched in August) is a major leap forward in interconnects which exceed the sonic performance of all but one extremely expensive (**NBS**) digital and stereo interconnects we have tried in a wide variety of equipment. Series two features our own RCA state-of-the-art phono plugs which use our tried materials (solid phosphor bronze, not bent copper) for enhanced contact and noise rejection. **Do not judge the performance by the price.** Customers are disposing of major brands now shamed by Stratos II because our cables are sold direct to end-users without marketing costs. This saves at least 75% when you consider that packaging and promotion double the cost of cables and dealer margins and vat double it again. One stereo metre of Stratos II thus sells for only £125. Stratos II Digital costs £59. Terminations are RCA or Neutrik Black Gold XLR from stock; others to order.

"These cables are everything you said they were ... this has been the cheapest and by far and away the most significant upgrade I've done to my hifi in years. I ordered cables, and when I opened the box, the contents looked like cables but these Stratos cables are much, much more than that. They have made such a huge difference to my listening pleasure that it's the equivalent of replacing one or more of the key items of hardware. At £120 [series II now £125] a 1 metre pair, they are the cable bargain of the decade." - Mr E.H., Aberdeen, 12/08/99.

Dirty mains has been neglected for too long in the UK but conditioners can degrade sound by limiting speed and power. The best place to clean up your mains is between your wall and the equipment. We are at beta test stage on effective AC mains cords, and can advise you on high-end products from America before you invest. Advice on speaker cables freely available.

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see page 130 for details

GARRARD 401 turntable, Slate Audio green marble plinth. Origin Live modified Rega RB300 Ortofon MC15 Super II cartridge or SME 3009 glass-mat £600 Tel: 0161 688 9792 (Mar/I)

MARTIN LOGAN Aerius-1, mint, boxed £1390. Impulse H2 horn loaded loudspeakers £890. Ruark Logrhythm subwoofer new, boxed, cost £825 sell £590. Tel: 0121 353 1593 (Mar/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000c pre-amp £200. Pair Rogers Studio One speakers £175 with stands. JVC RX205L receiver £70. Tel: Bob 0171 207 7190 evenings or weekends. (Mar/I)

NAKAMICHI DRAGON serviced, mint 1994 (£2000) £1300. Studer A80 on trolley vgc £600. Quad FM4/34/405-2 walnut rack MM/MC stages boxed manuals vgc £450. Spondor BCI classic speakers £125. Tel: 0161 764 8888 or 0161 762 9884 (Mar/I)

AVI PRE-AMP remote (£900) £380. Power monoblocks (£1350) £580. CD (£950) £420. All boxed, manuals. Nakamichi cassette 2, vgc. (£350) £130. B&W DM4 unmarked, boxed, manuals, mint £60. Tel: 0161 762 9884 or 0161 764 8888 (Mar/I)

GRADO REFERENCE RS-2 headphones. Mint. Audiophile heaven. (£495) £195. Tel: 01752 773 369 (Mar/I)

MICHELL ARGO pre-amp. Hera PSU. Panasonic Pot. Volume control modification. Excellent condition. £199. HNE. 21" granite speaker stands. £199. Tel: Mike 01952 406 759 (Mar/I)

CYRUS 3i amp £350. Yamaha KX580SE cassette £110. Sony Tan 55ES power £150. Mission 751 spiked stands £175. Denon DM7 system 6 weeks old £250. Sennheiser 535 £55. Tel: 0121 246 0486 (Mar/I)

MAGNAPLANAR SMGA's £380 ono. Quad 33 FM3 303 in teak. Sleeve upgraded, excellent £350 ono. Quad 33/303 vgc £190 ono. Linn Kans teak plus Linn stands £190. Sherwood 3020 CD Player, remote £60. Tel: 01322 409 742 (Mar/I)

LOWTHER ACADEMY Horn, piano black 2XPM7C £1200 (£2200). Audion Silver Night 300B monobloc £1100 (£2200). A lovingly cared for audiophile system. One owner. Will accept genuine offers. Tel: 0181 743 0580 after 7pm. (London W12) (Mar/I)

PAIR ATACAMA R724 speaker stands designed for high quality monitors to give the ultimate support. Height 60cm. Sand filled. Cost £130 accept £70. Tel: Nick 01494 783 012 (Chesham, Bucks) (Mar/I)

VDH. FIRST Ultimate 0.6m £150 VDH Teatrack 2 x 2m biwire version CS122 £80. XLO Reference 0.5m Digi £35. Audioquest Ruby 1m £35. All cables terminated with plugs. Tel: 01943 864 097 (Mar/I)

MERIDIAN 501 pre-amp. Excellent condition. Boxed. Instruction manual good sound. Excellent facilities (upgrading) £480. Tel: 01633 254 673 (eves) (Mar/I)

NAD S300 integrated amplifier Silverline still unopened, great bargain £1000. Could be viewed in London area by arrangement. Tel: 0141 573 3840 (Mar/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000S integrated amplifier (£450), Meridian 506 20 bit CD player (£775), Yamaha digital surround sound processor amplifier DSP - E1000 (£250) - all in excellent condition, boxed with instructions and remote controls. Tel: 0181 946 4927 (SW London) (Mar/I)

CASTLE RICHMOND'S £45. Sony 771.3 CD mini hi-fi £200 (£500). Marantz CD63KISI £325. TDL T-Line 2's £350 (£600). Technics tuner/amp SA300L £40. Quad QCII's pre £25 ea. Sony CDP320/RC £99. Marantz CD42 £90. Pioneer amp/tuner FM £20. Wanted - Audiolab, Meridian, Quad 63's. Tel: 01206 510 392 (Colchester) (Mar/I)

TECHNICS SP.10 Mk.2 turntable, SH.10 Obsidian plinth/cover, EPA.100 arm, all boxed, as new, £800. Rotel RX 1203 tuneramp, £300. Original model IMF professional monitor speakers, £1000. Tel: 01253 875 194 (Fleetwood, Lancs) (Mar/I)

LINN ISOBARIK speakers, external crossovers, unmarked £775. Naim 32-5 pre-amp £150. Pioneer POS 505 CD player £175. Tel: Paul 01305 770 222 (Dorset) (Mar/I)

MARANTZ CD17KI £595. Naim 72/90 £695. Naim phono boards MM/MC £40. Epos 11's with stands. Minor repair required, hence £225. All items boxed and very good condition. Tel: 0141 334 6059 (Mar/I)

LINN KARIK III, Numerik, Kairn (phono), Klout tri-wired kabers, all boxed, excellent condition, remote, interconnects, speaker cables, supplied by Audiofile, will not split. Tel: 01279 718 072 £4000. (Mar/I)

EAR 509/2 valve poweramp monoblocks. 100wpc. Beautiful and unusual copper chassis. Recent full service including new valves by GT Audio, £995 (£4000). GTAUDIO (Tron) Nucleus valve line pre-amp. Remote volume. Most impressive. £950 (£2200) £1850 together, or high end swaps, p/ex? Tel: Jerry 01372 468 266 (Mar/I)

CYRUS dAD3Q CD player with PSX-R. Both as new, hardly used. £650. Tel: 01642 559 204 (Mar/I)

AUDIO INNOVATIONS 'First Audio' amplifier (superb) plus two sets new 6B4G triode output valves £450. Meridian 200/203 transport and Dac (excellent) £350. Quad ESL 57's (magical) pair £250. Tel: 01978 750 151 (Wrexham) (Mar/I)

ORACLE DELPHI, Zeta, Aciore £750. Adcom 555 £250. Beard P35II £350. MGIC £225. Pioneer A400 £80. DB101 £65. Troughline £60. Xcans £70. Grado SR60 £45. Hitachi 5500 £60. Tel: 01280 701 185 (Mar/I)

REGA PLANET CD player with remote £250 ono unwanted gift, boxed as new. Tel: 07946 642 664 (mobile) or 01268 510 198 (eve) (Essex) (Mar/I)

MERIDIAN 501.2 pre-amp, brand new, still sealed in box, warranted. Unwanted gift. £600. Tel: 01527 541 501 or 0467 250 255, Email: mharbon@uk.att.com, (Worcestershire) (Mar/I)

QUAD FM4, grey, £125, mint. Quad 34 pre-amp, grey, mint, £125. Both ono. Tel: 0171 487 2767 (eve) (London NW1) (Mar/I)

DAT PIONEER DC88 full size portable DAT player/recorder. Virtually unused, stunning recording quality, superb build quality, boxed, etc. £900 (£2000 new) Tel: 01225 420 494 (Bath) (Mar/I)

AUDIONOTE MEISHU Line Signature, less than a year old, fitted with Western Electric 300B valves. Superb sound and condition £1950 (£3700 new). Tel: 01225 420 494 (Bath) (Mar/I)

ROGERS LS7 loudspeakers, 56x27x28cm, classic BBC monitors, real teak finish, immaculate, £300. Matching metal stands, fully welded, spiked, 40cm tall, 26cm square top-plate, very heavy, £150. Tel: Peter 0181 941 2882 (Mar/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000 CDM plus 8000 DAC with Chord AES/EBU connector. Immaculate, boxed £925. Denon D-65 system CD, tuner, twin-tape with TDL speakers £200. Tannoy 605 speakers £40. Tel: 01293 411 500 (Mar/I)

WANTED ARC 101 speakers also Nytech CTA 252XD2 and CXA amplifiers. Tel: 01474 702 939 (Kent) (Mar/I)

CROFT 'ABSOLUTE 1' preamp, walnut fascia, 18 months old, mint condition, £1400 ovno (new £2750). Meridian 200 Mk2 transport, mint, £275. Stax Lambda Signature headphones + SRM T 1 S valve energiser, 12 months old, mint, £675 ovno. Tel: 01780 754 694/764 149 (Mar/I)

KESWICK AUDIO Figaro speakers, rosewood £490. Audio Innovation Series 1000 triode monobloc poweramps £1000. Quad 777/707 pre/power, with remote control £900. Tannoy P4 speakers in cherry £500. Gale 401 speakers in walnut £275. Tel: 01977 643 629 (Mar/I)

QUAD FM4/34/306, grey with wooden rack, £450. Tannoy M2 speakers £70. Yamaha TC800 wedge cassette £100. Quad 2/22/FM/AM £400. Gaumont-Kallee valve monobloc poweramps KT66 etc £400 pr. Tel: 01704 530 928 (Mar/I)

SANSUI 9090 Receiver, 150wpc £200. Stax SRD 7SB Lambda electrostatic headphones £100. Kef Celeste loudspeakers £50. Crimson 510/520 pre/power £150. Cambridge P40 amplifier £30. T40 tuner £30. Various loudspeaker units. Tel: 01704 530 928 (Mar/I)

ARISTON RD80 T/T £40. Denon DRM20 cassette three head £50. Hitachi FM5500 tuner £40. Marantz SD52 three head cassette £60. Musical Fidelity X10 CD Enhancer £50. Nytech 302 amp £60. Tel: 01704 530 928 (Mar/I)

NAKAMICHI CASSETTE Deck DR10 latest model, 2 months old, virtually unused, unwanted present £500 (£800), will demonstrate Tel: 0181 690 4122 evenings (Mar)

QUAD ELS 57 loudspeakers for sale £200. Tel: 01765 635 394 (N.Yorks) (Mar/I)

MERIDIAN DSP 5000 loudspeakers, 4 months old, rosewood finish mint. Boxed. Paid £3000 accept £1975. Genuine reason for sale. Tel: Ian 0378 766 578 (Mar/I)

NAIM NAC 32.5 £190 NAIM NAP 90 £170. Tel: John 0956 329 067 (Essex) (Mar/I)

KRELL KAV300i as new (warranty) cost £2550 sell £1900. Ruark Equinox (walnut) one year old, sell for £1150. Audioquest cables (call for details) Reluctant sale. Tel: Robbie 01577 864 562 or 0796 805 8930 (Mar/I)

CASTLE



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Email: sales@castleacoustics.co.uk www.castleacoustics.co.uk

*Special Internet offer
see page 130 for details*

REVOX B710 Mk2 £350. Revox B760 tuner £400, Potel 830 tuner £25, Thorens 160Mk2 & Mayware £70, Dynalab SDA Speakers £300, Phillips 4502 reel to reel £100, Mission Cyrus One MC2 £30, Nakamichi BX2 cassette £40 needs attention, Sony 1010 cassette £80. Tel: 0171 394 0870 (Mar/I)

MUSICAL FIDELITY F25 F16 pwr/preamps, new, boxed £3100. Musical Fidelity F15/F22 pwr/preamps as new (mint) £2450 boxed. Castle Avon speakers, cherrywood, mint condition £450. Tel: Tony 01424 431 536. East Sussex (Mar/I)

SONY ESPRIT TA-E901 TA-N901 pre-power £1000 ono. Oracle Delphi, Sumiko Premier ATOC7 Kimber wired Onix PSU £900 ono. Meridian 602 £500. DPA PDM I Mk3 £350. PS Audio 46 pre-amp £350 Tel: 0121 459 9616 (Mar)

CYRUS 3 + PSX-R £520 ono. Flatline twin biwire to match £50 (6m). Sonus Faber Concerto + stands £800 ono (£1250). All items immaculate and boxed. Tel: 01293 417 785 (Crawley) (Mar/I)

LEAK STEREO 20 rebuilt with Audio Note components. Excellent sound and condition £400. Ortofon T20 step up transformer £100. Yamaha tape deck £60. Sound Style support £90. Tel: 01525 854 652 (Beds) (Mar/I)

WILSON AUDIO System 5. Desert Topo latest spec. Serial Nos 6643/4 mint. Awesome. New Nov 98. Cost £18,000. Bargain at £11,000. No offers. First to see/hear will buy. Tel: 01902 786 818 (Midlands) (Mar/I)

LINN LP12 Syrinx PU2 arm MC cartridge £350. Meridian 280 CD, pre MC phono £400. Boxed in mint condition. Tel: 01634 724 081 (April)

ACTIVE SYSTEM: Linn Kabers with Naim Naxo/Hicap £2000. Exposure VIII monoblocks (6 of) £2000. Exposure XI + X1i pre-amp + PSU: £700. Tel: Rob 01603 618 770 (Norwich). Email: robert.marshall.pt@norfolk.gov.uk (Mar/I)

QUAD 303 pre-amplifier FM3 tuner 405 amplifier with manuals, £325. Pair KEF 105 Series Two loudspeakers £450. Tel: 01438 351 006 (Stevenage) (Mar/I)

PROAC RESPONSE 1SC speakers ebony finish light usage boxed perfect condition £650. SME IV arm boxed £450. Tel: 01924 290 749 (Mar/I)

MERIDIAN 551 amplifier £450, Marantz 52SE CD £160, box of new-old stock valves £100. Wanted: Dynaco A25 speakers. Tel: John, office hours 01223 216 253, evenings 01480 464 691 (Mar/I)

KRELL CD DSP MK II £1700 (£5800 new). Lumley LVI pre-amp £400 (£1000 new). Lumley ST40 power-amp (chrome) £500 (£1325 new). World Audio KLS3 piano black floorstanding loudspeakers £350 (compare well with £2000 speakers). Tel: 01939 261 644 evenings or 07971 179 604 (Mar/I)

WANTED: TANNOY Canterbury loudspeakers or Tannoy drawings to enable construction of Canterbury enclosure. best prices paid. Buyer will collect. Tel: 01302 761 058 (Mar/I)

TEAC T1 Transport £275. Sonneteer Sedley £250. Nakamichi CR2 cassette £175. Pioneer CT940 £195. All equipment mint condition, boxed, manuals etc. Also Meridian 101/103 pre/power offers? Tel: 01277 659 650 (Essex) (Mar/I)

NAIM NAP 250 old style £650. NAC 72 new style £340. Partington A450 stands £60. Ariston RD140 turntable, Moth arm £350. Townsend Seismic Sink £75. NAD 3120 £65. Tel: Brian 0181 952 2044 home (Mar/I)

RADFORD VALVE STA 25 111 amp, pre-amp & FMT 1 tuner £965. Revox F36 valve tape recorder £185. Swiss Ensemble PA Reference Silver speakers, bi-wire £950. Fisher 800C AM/FM valve receiver £695, McIntosh MC 225 valve amp 117v, £625. Tel: 01202 767 873 (Poole) (Mar/I)

LUMLEY LVI pre-amp (£1150) £390, Trichord pulsemaster (£350) £180, BBE Sonic Maximiser £85. Tel: 01772 314 151 (Mar)

CRIMSON G10C/630 monoblocs £775. Sony CDP920E CD player £199. Pioneer A300, Tom Evans modified £375. DNM Reson speaker cable £5.50 per yard. SME V Tonfarm £999. Moth 30 active pre-amp £125. Acoustic Precision FR1 speakers £550. Tel: 01582 724 414 (Mar/I)

KEF REFERENCE Series Model Three in Rosetta Burr. Lead filled support plinth. Look and sound superb, boxed. Retail at £2700. £1500 ono. Tel: 01394 210 614 (after 6pm) or mobile 07714 659 760 (Mar/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000C & P £650. Audiolab 8000CD £550, boxed, as new. B&W602 £120 boxed as new. Tel: Shaun 01925 710 887 evenings or 0797 476 3126 (Warrington) (Mar/I)

VINTAGE HIFI for sale. Tannoy Lancaster 15" speakers, excellent condition £475. Beam Echo DL7/35 valve monobloc, EL34s tubes - offers. Lowther Corner Acoustics £400. Garrard 401, SME 12" arm, SME plinth, as new £400 ono. Leak 10.1 amps £500. Tel: 0171 349 9675 (Mar/I)

MUSICAL FIDELITY preamp MVT Mk3, mint condition, boxed £300. Tel: 01945 581 111 (Wisbech, Cambs) (Mar/I)

AUDIOLAB 8000A £240. Marantz CD63 Mk2 KI Sig £260. Both boxed, mint. Together £450. Tel: 01526 320 513 (Lincs) (Mar/I)

ROKSAN CASPIAN amplifier/CD, silver, boxed, manuals, vgc, 6 inputs, remote control £599 each ovno. Sound Organisation hi-fi stand Z560, 5 tier, black. Tel: 0181 986 1726 (East London) (Mar/I)

RUARK TALISMAN-II. Still under warranty £485 (£749) to include 5 litre tub of mass loading. 2x8m Cabletalk Concert 2.1 bi-wire £110 (£224). Denon DL304 low mileage example £100 (£220). Stylus balance £10 (£20). Selling to help fund treatment for upgraditis. Tel: 01483 281 234 (Surrey) (Mar/I)

AVI PREAMP, latest spec £475, AVI Stereo poweramp £425, Teac P500/D500 2 box CD player £550. Castle Harlech speakers in yew £550, Linn Keilidh speakers £375, Audio Innovation 400 integrated valve amp £300. Tel: 01977 643 629 (Mar/I)

EAR 509 Mk2 power amps, 802 preamp £1800. Legendary Altec Lansing studio monitor 604G speakers £1000. Quad 57 electrostatics on custom stands £400. Townshend Glastonbury II £600. Lowthers £300. Tel: 01823 432 388 (Mar/I)

SPENDOR BCI speakers, good condition £200 or near offer. Tel: 0181 906 0929 (Mar)

QUAD ESL 63's mint condition, black ash, black grill cloth. First to see will buy. £1450. Tel: day 07990 658 175, eves 01159 272 567 (Midlands area) (Mar/I)

QUAD 34 Pre and 306 power amps. Excellent condition with manuals. Grey gloss finish. Quad 77 CD player, excellent condition grey. Amps £400, CD player £300. Tel: 07775 625 375 (Worcs) (Mar/I)

VAN DEN HUL The Second balanced interconnects, 8mtr XLR (2) of £60 each. Ecosse 2.3 speaker cable 2x6ft lengths, no terminations £45. Tel: 01292 266 697 evenings (Mar/I)

MARTIN LOGAN Quest £2200. Meridian 602 transport £595. 601 DSP pre/Dac £795. 605 monoblocs £895. Roksan Xerxes/Artemiz Bluepoint Special £695. DPA PDM1 Mk2 DAC £175. P/X considered. Tel: 01450 860 676 anytime. 0403 632 236 mobile (Mar/I)

QUAD VALVED equipment. 2x Quad II amps, FM tuner, control unit, 2 AM tuners (overseas model) M+2 short, home model LM+S (mainly Quad serviced). Tel: 01900 604 858 day, 01900 602 126 evenings (Cumbria) (Mar/I)

LUMLEY REFERENCE ST70 valve poweramp chrome with matching LV1 preamp. Both items boxed in stunning condition. Cost £3000. Sell for £850. Tel: 01162 811 736 (Leicester) (Mar/I)

MISSION 752 floor speakers, bi-wired with 2 sound stages per speaker £275. Arcam Delta poweramp £200. Akai 9X65 cassette deck, 3 head system £100. Mana type equipment table, ditto wall bracket for large deck. Both with sound stages £100 the lot. 100 plus classical LPs offers over £100. Tel: 01793 330 990 not between 5pm and 7.30pm (Mar)

LINN LP12 ,Valhalla, Ittok, LVII, Cirkus, Trampolin, new motor, Klyde (recently rebuilt) £695. Nakamichi 600II (recently serviced) collectors item £250. Quad FM3 tuner £100. All excellent condition. Tel: 0161 282 2997 (Mar/I)

TUBE TECHNOLOGY Synergy remote controlled integrated valve amplifier £3500 (£6900) Proac Response 3.5 loudspeakers, yew finish £2300 (£4675). Both items in excellent condition, boxed with instructions. Tel: 01703 601 222 (Southampton) (Mar/I)

NEW KEVLAR 8" mid bass drivers. Bohm, 180wpc. Cost £100 each, sell for £65 each. Tel: 01933 678 251 (Northants) (Mar/I)

NAIM NAC82 preamp, mint, boxed, receipts, 14 months old £1695. Linn Sara 9s, boxed, vgc £350. Tel: 0181 337 1725 or 0976 695 218 (Mar/I)

MORDAUNT SHORT Performance 860 Reference speakers. 5 star reviews, excellent condition £995. Tel: 01869 278 249 (May/I)

LUMLEY ST70 Power amplifier, switched pentode triode £650. Tel: 01724 336 113 (Mar/I)

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Romers Hi-Fi	Rishton, Lancashire	01254 887799
Hazlemere Audio Consultants	High Wycombe, Bucks	01494 437892
Audio Illusion	Langley, Berkshire	01753 542761
Mid Shropshire Audio	Telford, Shropshire	01952 502097
Rothwell Electronics	60 Pennington Road, Great Lever, Bolton BL3 3BR	01204 654614

ENGLISH audio

The following items are either demonstrated or second-hand (s/h), mostly mint, please ask CD

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Pink Triangle Da Capo	S/H	1500	699
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Arcam Alpha 8 CD		450	275
Arcam Delta 270 CD	S/H	800	299
Arcam Alpha 8SE	S/H	600	299
Exposure CD	S/H	1050	599
AMPS			
John Shearne Phase 6 Pre	S/H	1000	599
John Shearne Phase 3 Ref Power	S/H	750	399
John Shearne Phase 2 Integrated		690	399
John Michell alecto Monoblocks		2000	1199
Naim NAC62/160 Pre/Power	S/H	-	399
Naim Hi-Cap (Early casework)	S/H	-	299
Cyrus III Integrated	S/H	600	399
Arcam Alpha 8P Power	S/H	300	199
Tag McLaren PA10 Pre		850	499
Tag McLaren 60P Power		850	499
John Shearne Phase 1 Pre/Power	S/H	3500	1599
Alchemist Forsetti APD 15A Integrated		1250	899
SPEAKERS			
Mission 753/Rosewood	S/H	700	299
Rogers LS55/Black	S/H	400	199
TDL RTL4/Rosewood		600	199
Heybrook Optimas/Black		680	399
Naim Intro/Black		680	399
Arcaydis AK3/Rosewood		600	199
Pro-AC Studio 150/Cherry		1400	799
Castle Severn II/Cherry		600	399
Heybrook Quartets inc stands/Walnut	S/H	850	399
MISCELLANEOUS			
Cyrus FM7 Tuner		400	249

37 Whitecross Road, Hereford, HR4 ODE
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Registration No. 333 9324 60

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SALE

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S/H	Systemdeck + Mission 774 arm	£200
S/H	Well tempered with pu arm (£1600)	£950
S/H	FM 212A M/C step up (£850)	£350
S/H	Sony HA 55 set up (sought after)	£125

DIGITAL

S/H	DPA Little Bit	£99
S/H	DPA PDM 1 MK3 (£1280)	£425
S/H	DPA PDM2 (£2500)	£595
(Ex Dem)	VRDS9 TEAC CD Player (£695)	£575
(Ex Dem)	D1 TEAC DAC (£499)	£375
S/H	PS CD Player (£695)	£125

LOUDSPEAKERS

(Ex Dem)	Magneplanar MG20 £11,000) Biamp Xover	£8000
(Ex Dem)	Clements 600 Black (£995)	£625
S/H	Gale 401c Walnut (vintage) boxed	£250
S/H	Apogee Centaurus (boxed)	£1750
S/H	Apogee Centaur Major (£5000+)	£3500
S/H	Klipsch La Scala (originals) Black (current £2600) £	1350
S/H	Klipsch Ilseey	£595
S/H	Wilson Tots & Puppies MK1 (£1200 then)	£7500
(Ex Dem)	Magneplanar 1.5 (black)	£995
(Ex Dem)	Sequerra MET 7 walnut (£695)	£425
(Ex Dem)	Clements 300i black £695	£395

TAPE/RADIO/VINTAGE

S/H	AVO all wave oscillator (boxed) c1947	£100
S/H	AVO valve tester c1947	£100
S/H	Revox 710MK2 cassette	£295
S/H	JVC XPA 1080 Digital Acoustics Processor	£275
(Ex Dem)	Teac TBX 10 RDS Tuner £399	£295
S/H	Luxman T50A Tuner (rosewood) excellent	£175
(Ex Dem)	Magnum Dynalab Signal Sleuth 205 (£250)	£165

AMPLIFICATION

MINT S/H	Audio Research LS2 Preamplifier	£1495
S/H	Krell KRS1 Reference Preamplifier (£8350)	£3350
S/H	Rogers Ravensbourne Teak (Boxed)	£75
S/H	Krell KMA 200 Mono Block poweramps (£8500)	£3500
S/H	Cambridge P110 Int amp	£95
S/H	Metaxas Marquis preamp (£2500)	£1050
S/H	Quad 33 Preamp	£50
(Ex Dem)	Audio Research LS1.5 preamp	£2500
(Ex Dem)	Selection of Quad valve preamps - tuners	
(Ex Dem)	Alchemist Forsetti Mk2 Integrated (£995)	£750
(Ex Dem)	OCM 55 preamp (Line) (£1700)	£1250
(Ex Dem)	(200 watt) OCM 300 Power amp (Ex Dem) (£2800)	£1995
(Ex Dem)	Alchemist Kraiken Mk2 Pre (new boxed) (£549)	£450
(Ex Dem)	Alchemist Kraiken Mk2 Pwr (new boxed) (£549)	£450
S/H	Exposure 4 Power Amplifier (Dual Power Supply)	
S/H	9 preamp power supply 7 preamp	£1450
S/H	Quad 33.303 FM3 (Teak Sleaved)	£175
(Ex Dem)	Teac ABX10 (Remarkable) integrated (£999)	£775

hi-fi world

Trade Ads

Special internet offer
see page 130 for details

Desktop mail out available in the Private Classified section.
Monthly commercial insertions will be considered trade advertising.
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Tannoy, Lowther, Parmeko, Voigt, Vitavox, RCA WE etc
TURNTABLES
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STUDER A80 Vu-Bridge stereo £600. Studer B67 30ips stereo £750. PR99 mono £100. EMT 950 £600. EMT 948 £400. Revox G36 mint £500. Tannoy PA speakers £45. Technics SP10 £150. Technics SLP1200 CD £300. Tel: 0113 243 5649 or 0831 311 009 (Apr/I)

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ROGERS LS3/5A, Rogers AB1 sub woofers, Harbeth Special Edition LS3/5A and AB1 combo in rosewood, special prices from £450 dependant on finish. Very limited quantities left! Call Mitcham Loudspeakers 0181 648 0743 or 01344 873 943 (24hr answerphone) (Mar/I)

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EMT 950 £850, 948 £500, Studer A80 £800, B67 £750, A710 £550, A810 £850, A807 £650, Technics SP10 II £280, SLP1200 £550, Sony DTC1000ES £500! Tel: 01246 275 479, Fax: 01246 550 421 (Mar/I)

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HORSHAM HI-FI Offer: Ruark Equinox II loudspeakers £995. World Audio KLP-1 pre-amplifier £225. Linn LP12, Alphason Xenon. Ortofon MC30 Super £395. Musical Fidelity F22 pre-amp £595. Castle Severn II £395. Musical Fidelity X-A50 monoblocs £350. Tel: 01403 272 931 (Mar/I)

ALCHEMIST FORSETTI amplifier (£1249) £899. Kraken two box CD (£1249) £799. Heybrook Heylos £259. Neat Petite Mk3 £649. MVL A2 £749. All X/display. Tel: Audiofile Objective 01992 478 666 Hi-Fi Purchased For Cash. (Mar/I)

AUDIO RESEARCH LS15, 4 months old, boxed, as new, RRP £3500, £2400 ono. Teac VRDS25 CD, boxed, immaculate (RRP £1400) £750. DPA Enlightenment drive plus DAC, new 24 Bit, 96kHz technology, guaranteed 2 years £1300. Krell KSA 50 MkII power amp £1150. Tara Labs Reference balanced interconnect, 1 metre £650 new, accept £250 ono. Marston Silhouette CD player, brand new £400. Musical Fidelity X-Ray CD player, unused, brand new £680. Denon DRM 500 cassette deck, boxed, manual £40. Oracle CD player, brand new, RRP £9400, £6200 ono. Krell KPS 30i CD player, mint condition £2300 ono. Transparent balanced interconnect RRP £300, accept £130 ono. Tel: Jules 01792 280 061 (Mar/I)

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Maximum length per advert is 30 words, each additional word is 50p extra.

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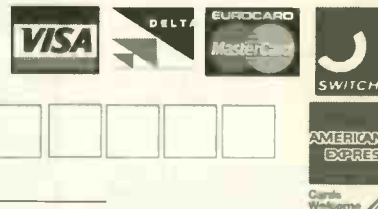
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