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HI-FI CHOICE
BEST BUY

HI-FI CHOICE

THE FINEST HI-FI MAGAZINE IN THE WORLD

BEST BUY 96

HI-FI MAGAZINE
OF THE
YEAR

CD PLAYERS ● AMPS ● SPEAKERS ● TAPE DECKS
TUNERS ● TURNTABLES ● SYSTEMS ● AV KIT & MORE!

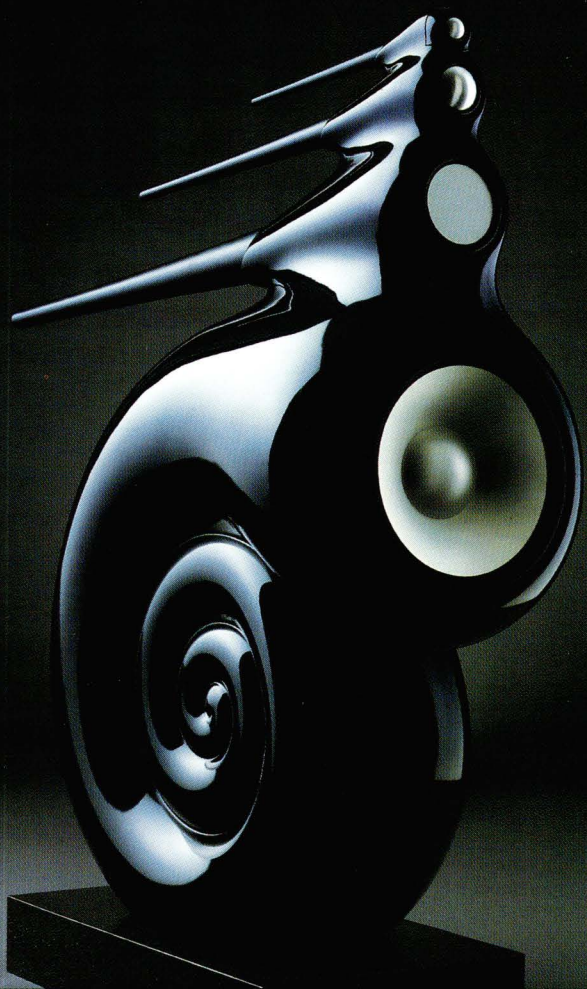
**Buyer's
Guide**

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WINTER 1996 £2.99



The B&W Nautilus is absolutely the most ideal speaker I have ever heard. It can be only limited or coloured by the sources, amplifiers and cables, without any coloration of its own. This is the best loudspeaker that money can buy
– Hi-Fi Review Japan

Special awards for component of the year
– Stereo Sound Japan

Special award for Grand Prix component of the year
– Radio Gijutsu Japan

At B&W, music is our very reason for being. In our search for the perfect music reproduction, the B&W Nautilus, has pioneered technologies such as the hollow pole magnet drivers and the transmission pipe principle, which will shape the direction of the audio industry well into the next millennium.

It symbolises all the innovation, dedication and love of music which have inspired B&W engineers ever since the company was established 30 years ago.

In the search for transparency of sound, the Nautilus represents a true audio miracle. It can only be limited or coloured by the source, amplifiers and cables, without any colouration of its own.

Hailed as 'the best loudspeaker that money can buy', the Nautilus enables the listener to hear nuances and subtle dynamics hitherto unattainable, offering a level of sonic accuracy unmatched by any other speaker.

The Nautilus offers a unique chance to hear music exactly as recorded – detailed, vibrantly alive, full of power and unhindered by driver distortion or cabinet diffraction.

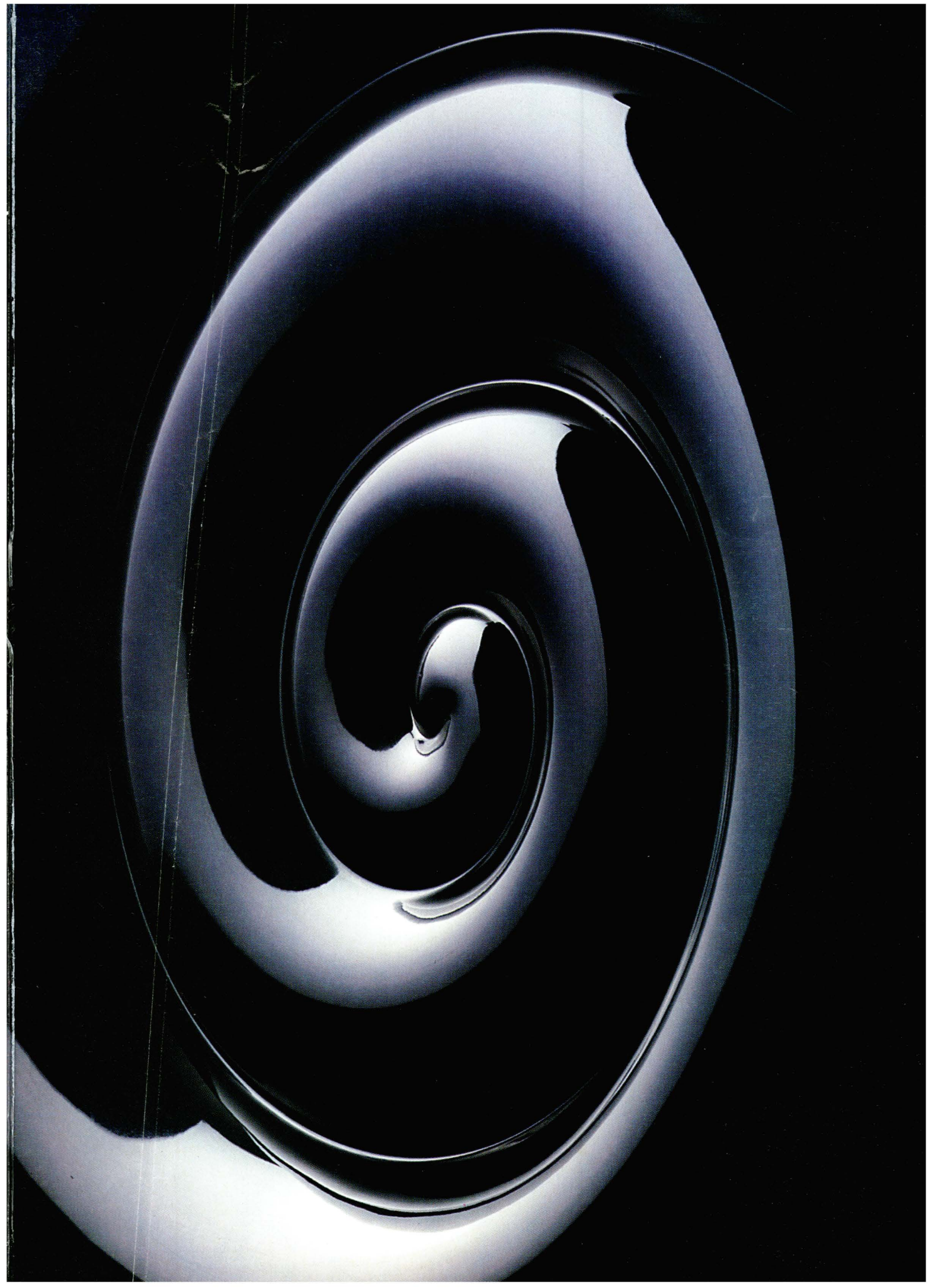
Listen and you'll see!

B&W

A word in your shell-like...



L I S T E N A N D Y O U ' L L S E E





DM#601



"The 601s sound like the voice coils of God."



CDM1



"For a domestic loudspeaker that knows how to groove, our European Award is an honestly-bestowed plaudit."



P4



"Fast, weighty, superbly balanced sound: gorgeous range of real wood finishes. These floorstanders are among the best in their price band."

B&W's patented method of using Kevlar for loudspeaker cones, has been a major factor in reducing unwanted standing waves. Kevlar's unique woven fibres along with further 'doping' by B&W provide a remarkably near perfect solution to this problem.







prism system

The result for the problem of resonances inside budget speaker cabinets is B&W's Prism construction. The solution involves a series of tapered wedges on the rear panel. Sound waves reflect off these wedges in a random fashion, reducing the build up of resonances and so contributes to clearer, uncoloured sound.



DM#302



European loudspeaker of the year 1996/97

HI-FI CHOICE

"Probably the best balanced miniature currently around. The 302 is an undoubted success and bound to become a leading contender for the best seller slot."

B&W

Listen and you'll see



For more information please contact
B&W Loudspeakers (UK) Ltd on: +44 (0)1903 750 750 <http://www.bwspeakers.com>

Concert



**The Jamo Concert Series.
HEAR...SEE...RELAX & ENJOY...**

Advanced technology, innovative design and refined workmanship is not always the perfect recipe for success, we believe a little more is required.

The Concert series has enabled Jamo to produce a range of loudspeakers which will reproduce music that is clean and neutral. The dynamic range transparency and sound stage are all raised to a higher dimension.

The successes attained by the Jamo development team is the result of efforts to design high-quality loudspeaker components which are critically matched to one another.

It is an honour for us to introduce this new generation of loudspeakers to you...

... **Jamo Concert 11, Jamo Concert 8 and Jamo Concert Center.**

THE SOUND OF EXCELLENCE - Made in Denmark.

Jamo® "THE
SOUND
OF
EXCEL-
LENCE"

Editor's Notebook

Stan Vincent welcomes new readers, and enlarges on the mystical links between music and hi-fi. . .



If you're in the market to buy hi-fi equipment, this magazine is the only one you need. It contains reports on all the best hi-fi equipment we have reviewed this year, from CD players to cables, from amplifiers to AV, from speakers to systems. This issue is jam-packed full of kit.

You'll find the full story on all of our favourite products from 1996, plus the best hi-fi buying guide in the UK, which is crammed with details of over 4,000 new products, plus our summaries of hundreds more.

Just turn the page and our contents listing will take you straight to the products you're interested in. There you'll also see, however, that there are loads more articles about setting up your hi-fi, answer to your hi-fi queries, and even a bit of heart-felt opinion thrown in for good measure.

I hope you enjoy this issue as much as we enjoyed putting it together. I hope also that some new readers will be scanning these words and wondering: "what is all this hi-fi business about?" If that's the case, I've penned a few words, to try and explain the passion for hi-fi felt by so many readers and writers of this magazine.

Arguments for hi-fi

Hi-fi is not a minority pursuit for people who never go out. In my book, pure and simple, it is a means for music lovers to gain greater pleasure from their record collections. If, at the same time as enjoying great sound quality, these connoisseurs can gain pleasure by using equipment that is good to look at and well engineered, so much the better. Hi-fi equipment is among those rare technological commodities that are more than just tools for a job. Pundits often consider hi-fi in the same light as a fine watch or exclusive car. I think it is a more rarefied pleasure, however, simply because the enjoyment of music is so sublime and hard to quantify.

Hi-fi, like music, is something to spend a lifetime growing into.

Before a listener can comprehend the meaning of hi-fi, it

is necessary first to understand not just the rhythms and tones of music, but also the subtle characteristics that make it such an emotive force. What does an orchestra, jazz band or acoustic instrument really sound like? Only regular attendance at concerts can answer this question.

It all begins with music

For my own part, I was lucky enough to attend a night at this year's Proms, on which Messiaen's stupendous *Turangalila Symphony* was performed. This piece is a crashing, quixotic *tour de force*, and a reminder that even the most monstrous rock bands can't match a fully-fledged orchestra for sheer dynamic range and emotional power. By contrast, a more recent gathering was the occasion for a cerebral performance by the European Union Baroque Orchestra, in which small details of instrumental timbre massaged the senses. At the end of each performance I wondered how many people in the audience would realise that they could repeat the pleasure of this music in their own homes, if only they had a good hi-fi system.

The first step on the road to hi-fi awareness is to understand what separates the sound of a live performance from a recording. The brain is not fooled by rhythms and musical tones alone; even a cheap clock radio will mimic some of those. The point of hi-fi is to reproduce subtle nuances of recorded music, and in doing so, to arouse not just recognition in the mind of the listener, but passion.

Hi-fi, higher-fi

Hi-fi is a tool. Its essential purpose is to reproduce recorded music so that a convincing facsimile of live performance results. Fortunately, there are now numerous hi-fi components available at reasonable cost, which, though prosaic in appearance, fulfil their essential purpose consummately. These are the Best Buys and Recommended products that this issue has been written to display.

Like a Caterham sports car, most affordable high-performers have their development budgets spent on engineering, not elegance. However, for the music connoisseur who seeks luxury, it is as readily available in hi-fi as it is in cars and watches. The sky's the limit for those who seek to combine the finest sound with stunning looks and battleship build-quality; the finest equipment available today

is hand-built by craftsmen to fulfil the highest standards of workmanship. The finest hi-fi serves both as a tool of the utmost performance, and as a piece of technological sculpture in which even the most discerning consumers can take pride of ownership.

So you see, investing in hi-fi, and thereby investing in music, is a thoroughly modern and worthwhile thing to do. Discover hi-fi and discover a new pleasure in life!

Congratulations!

Paul Miller, our Technical Editor, was voted 'Test Innovator of the Year' for his Jitter Analyser and ISA (Interpretative Spectrum Analysis) software, which was initially developed for use in *Hi-Fi Choice* lab tests. The award, which was presented at the prestigious Test 96 Awards ceremony in October, was made by an expert panel of judges drawn from the measurement industry, and chaired by the editor of *Test Magazine*, David Evans. Well done, Paul!

Erratum

In last month's *Update* pages we printed the wrong number for Aura, the electronics-manufacturing offshoot of B&W Loudspeakers. The correct number is (01903) 750750.

As this issue was going to press, we learned that the manufacturer of Audiolab products, Cambridge Systems Technology, has a new 'phone number: (01480) 415600. In some instances we had already printed the old number, for which we apologise.



We were honoured to be voted Hi-Fi Magazine Of The Year at the CETI Industry Awards, Harrogate, May 1996.



We have Marantz to thank for this chucklesome collision of old styling and new technology. This dinky miniature CD player, the ED-3 Edison, comes complete with built-in stereo amps and, ahem, 'horn-loaded' speakers. An instant hit when shown on the company's stand at October's Connect show, the ED-3 will soon be in the shops. See *Prestige Prezzies* (p. 18) for details!



12 Aeon Acoustics Signet — featured in Best Of Sessions



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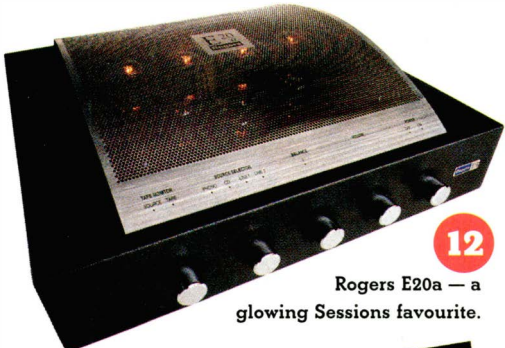


Read all about this year's British Hi-Fi Awards winners.



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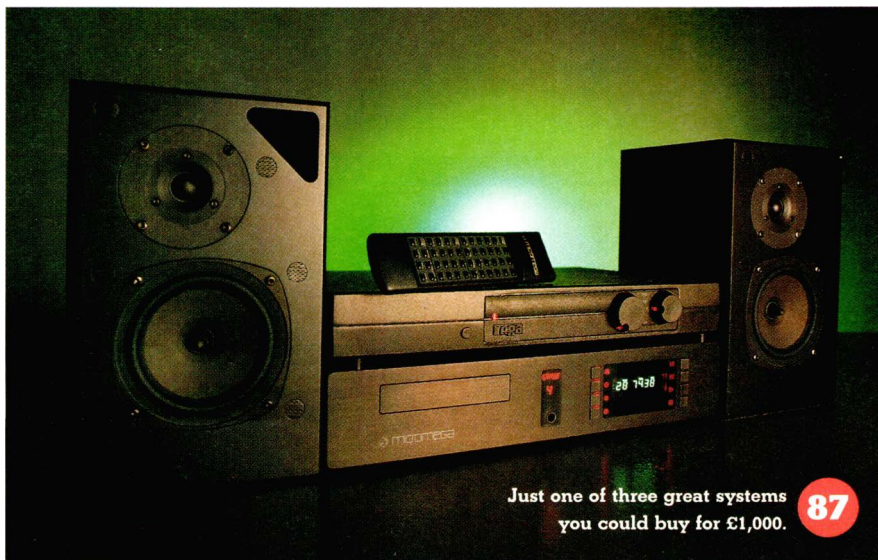
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Look no further for the most comprehensive hi-fi listing on Earth! Over 4,000 new products and hundreds of test summaries.



Just one of three great systems you could buy for £1,000. **87**



Shahinian's amazing Compass loudspeaker — another favourite from '96. **12**

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95 British Hi-Fi Awards Winners

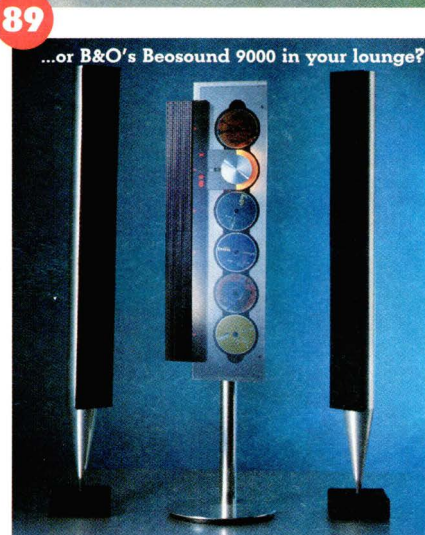
We reveal the most popular hi-fi in Britain this year, as voted for by hi-fi readers and buyers.



33 Systemdek 2X2 — a preferred phonograph.



Would you prefer the Bose Lifestyle 20...



...or B&O's Beosound 9000 in your lounge?

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Best of Sessions

HERE ARE SOME OF THE BEST PRODUCTS WE'VE REVIEWED THIS YEAR IN OUR 'FIRST TEST' FEATURE.

To summarise a year's worth of *Choice Sessions* (40-something pages), in a four-page overview, is a daunting task. *Sessions* has provided a first chance to get acquainted with important new components, but also featured a number of complete system packages prior to our *Instant Systems* features getting under-way. The former have been incorporated into summaries from pages 83 to 89 of this issue.

For this feature we've tried to pick out the highlights of *Sessions'* other rôles — to seek out and examine the rather more oddball products which don't fit neatly into our mainstream group reviews; and to pick up the key components which are still waiting to be included in our formal reviews.

MARCH

Blue Room Minipod Loudspeaker

£400

The most outrageous-looking loudspeaker from a major manufacturer (B&W), ever to go into volume production? This miniature limbless Michelin-man-lookalike has no audiophile pretensions. These speakers are strictly for fun, but just happen to combine some promising ingredients in the £400 mix. The unusually-shaped GRP enclosure has certain inherent advantages, especially for mid and top frequencies, which prob-



Blue Room MiniPods — the plastic fantastic!

ably explains the *MiniPods'* disconcerting ability to pull apart recordings and reveal what the producer was up to. Bass was rather inconsistent and less predictable, but the *Pods'* vivacity still managed to raise a smile.

Blue Room/B&W ☎ (01903) 750750

APRIL

AVI S2000MI Integrated Amp

£899

A few years ago you'd be lucky to find a specialist hi-fi integrated stereo amp costing more than £500.

Now there's quite a selection, including the small, powerful and decidedly civilised £899 S2000MI from AVI. It has remote control, looks very attractive in a classi-

cally demure way, and can be used with a matching tuner and CD player (but not vinyl). Total price: £2,747.

The amp packs a serious 100 Watts-per-channel punch, and sounds lively and powerful with lots of energy and attack, but reasonably clean and refined at the same time. Over extended listening there were times when it seemed a little too dynamic and up-front, but that's as likely to be a function of taste and the system partnered with it. This is one gutsy specialist amp that kicks like a mule, but with classy styling and the operational convenience of a mini system. AVI ☎ (01453) 752656

Meridian 518 Digital Audio Processor

£925

It's a good sign when a product arrives for test, and after a few days we wonder how we ever managed to live without it. Meridian's £925 518

AVI S2000MI — a beefy integrated amp that's really easy to use.



Meridian 518 — clever digits.



is a digital audio processor with a wide range of potential applications, several of which help improve the sound from a CD transport/DAC combination player. The 518 sits between the two, de-jittering the signal and allowing a number of digital-domain enhancements to be performed, including the introduction of different forms of noise shaping. The 518 proved rather effective, especially on low-level material with plenty of harmonic content, but it is rather music and disc dependent, so you need to experiment to get the best results.

Meridian ☎ (01480) 434334

Castle Isis — real-wood speaker whose sound is a peach.

JUNE

Aeon Acoustics Signet Loudspeaker

£850

Aeon Acoustics' £850 Signet loudspeaker is seriously radical in several aspects, the most obvious of which is a spiral zig-zag tube incorporated into the cones of the main drivers. Signet uses two of these in a very elegant and compact floorstander — only two-foot tall, and very slim front-to-back, too. It's a very clean-sounding speaker, best suited to free space siting, with many of the hallmarks of a high-class miniature, equalling



established favourites for detail and transparency, if not dynamics.

Aeon Acoustics ☎ (01765) 604288

Aeon Acoustics' Signet — tubular belles!

Trichord Genesis CD Player

£549

After three years of modifying customers' existing CD players with its Clock 2 'heart transplant', which aims to produce a much more accurate master-clock signal to reduce jitter, Trichord has bitten the bullet and launched its own CD player, the £550 Genesis. Cosworth-style, it's based on a mass-market player, the Pioneer PD-S503/4, but includes modifications to the analogue output stage and power supply, as well as the clocking tweak.

There's still some Pioneer left in the sound of course, but there's also Trichord's characteristically generous soundstage, a jaunty musical sensitivity, and analogue-style homogeneity. Anyone shortlisting £500-ish CD players would be foolish not to hear this remarkable machine.

Trichord Research ☎ (01684) 573524

Trichord Genesis — the Ford Cosworth of CD players.



MAY

Castle Isis Speaker

£230

Replacing the Trent, the Isis costs £230 (or £270 in yew). Either way, you get a classy, real-wood, bookshelf-size two-way, which sounds a peach. It quickly gets expressive, the full upper bass giving colourful tonality, the lower bass tight and firm. Above all it gives a surprisingly big, dynamic, room-filling sound from a remarkably compact enclosure.

Castle ☎ (01756) 795333





NAD's 312 — another budget bargain for minimalists everywhere.

B&W's P4 — an award-winning speaker with luxury looks and widespread appeal.

NAD 312 Integrated Amp

£200

The £200 NAD 312 can trace its lineage right back to the original 'budget audiophile' 3020 nearly twenty years ago. The price hasn't increased by nearly as much as the intervening inflation, and you still get a very-well-equipped amp, lacking only remote control. It delivers a gutsy, open sound, which is a little messy by absolute standards, but pretty good for a £200 product. We enjoyed its enthusiasm, but worried it could get a bit much when driving small speakers quite hard. Stick to sensitive and conservatively balanced boxes and you should get a good blend of energy and listenability.

NAD ☎ (0181) 343 3240

JULY/AUGUST

B&W P4 Speaker

£675

Despite winning one of this year's British Hi-Fi Awards, B&W's £675 compact floorstanding P4 has yet to participate in our formal reviews. It's a simple-but-classy ported, two-way, real-wood-veneered-and-Kevlar-coned device in the B&W tradition. The tweeter took an age to loosen up properly, but eventually delivered treble worthy of the deep, tidy bass and uncoloured midband. It strikes a nice balance between studio monitor-type sound and bass-filled crowd-pleaser. The hi-fi buff will like the way it digs into recordings and reveals system nuances; the party animal the way it eats power and goes louder and louder without struggle. As a speaker that's all things to all people, the P4 deserves a long close look. Little wonder it won that award.

B&W ☎ (01903) 750750

Rogers E20a Integrated amplifier

£1,090

Only those of a certain age will remember the days when Rogers was first and foremost an amplifier manufacturer, and speakers were something of a sideline. It so happens that Rogers designer Andy Whittle is a valve-amp enthusiast, and approached Audio Note UK to help get the E20a project under way. The result is an integrated amp (with MM vinyl stage) delivering 18W of valve power per channel, at a price of £1,090. The result is that right-to-the-heart-of-the-music character that turns tube users into fanatics. The E20a is an organic and musical amp that does more than merely compensate for a relative lack of power. Its transparency just lets you get on and enjoy the music.

Rogers ☎ (0181) 683 2101

OCTOBER

Shahinian Compass Loudspeaker

£1,295

Dick Shahinian places the drivers on his speakers at strange angles, creating omni-directional effects that have been getting all manner of audiophiles excited. They're not for everyone, or for every room, but they're decidedly different and definitely deserve a hearing.

At first sight the £1,295 Compass starts off like a floorstanding box, but the drivers are mounted on the top panel, which is slanted at 45 degrees, while the boxes stand edge-on towards the listener, who sees the baf-



Find your musical bearings with the Shahinian Compass.

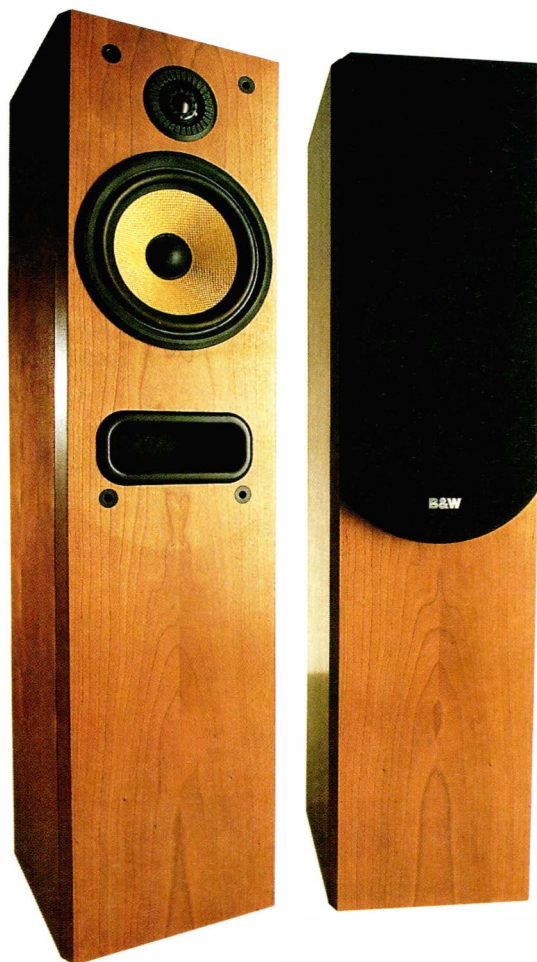
file as a tilted diamond shape.

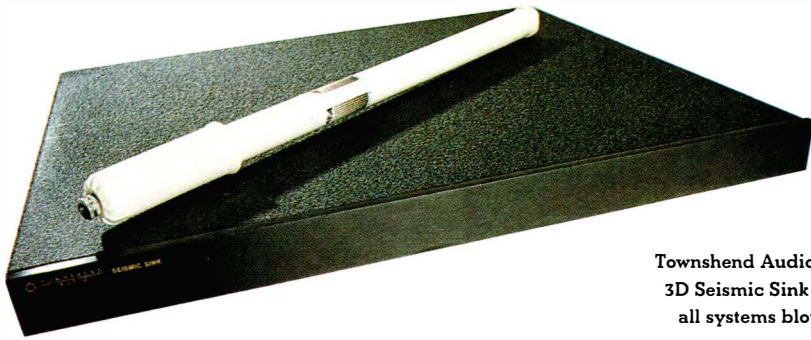
According to your perspective, the Compass will seem oddly diffuse or spectacularly natural. Comparison with normal speakers is pointless. It doesn't match the bigger models in the range, but still likes being played loud. If you don't try the Compass, you'll miss hearing one of the few genuinely 'different'-sounding speakers that is still consummately musical.

Pear Audio ☎ (01665) 830862



Rogers E20a — valvular value for money.





Townshend Audio's
3D Seismic Sink —
all systems blow!

NOVEMBER

Mission 753 Freedom Speaker

£798

The Mission 753 put the over-£500 luxury floorstander on the hi-fi map, commercially speaking. There were plenty of viable alternatives, but that imposing row of four main drivers caught the customers' imaginations and credit card numbers in real abundance. The £798 *Freedom* variation updates the established favourite, fitting a silk-dome tweeter and making some quite radical internal cabinet improvements. They work well with a variety of amps, really singing with the Pioneer A-300R *Precision*. Their bass is well extended and solid, while the midband is just a little veiled, which in turn means that they like to be played loud. They'll never shout at you the way some speakers can, and always remain in control of the situation.

Mission ☎ (01480) 451777

Townshend Audio 3D Seismic Sink

£400

The latest and most expensive in Townshend Audio's range of isolation platforms, the *3D Seismic Sink* costs £400 and adds a third-dimensional freedom of movement to the 2D original. A pump is supplied to keep

the air isolation intact between the damped steel top and bottom plates. An LED indicator helps you to maintain the prescribed pressure. Placed beneath a Trichord *Genesis* CD player and on top of a Mana stack, the *3DSS* brought considerable improvements in bass extension, power, focus and coherence. It's an expensive platform, but in the context of a decent system it's also great value.

Townshend Audio ☎ (0181) 979 2155

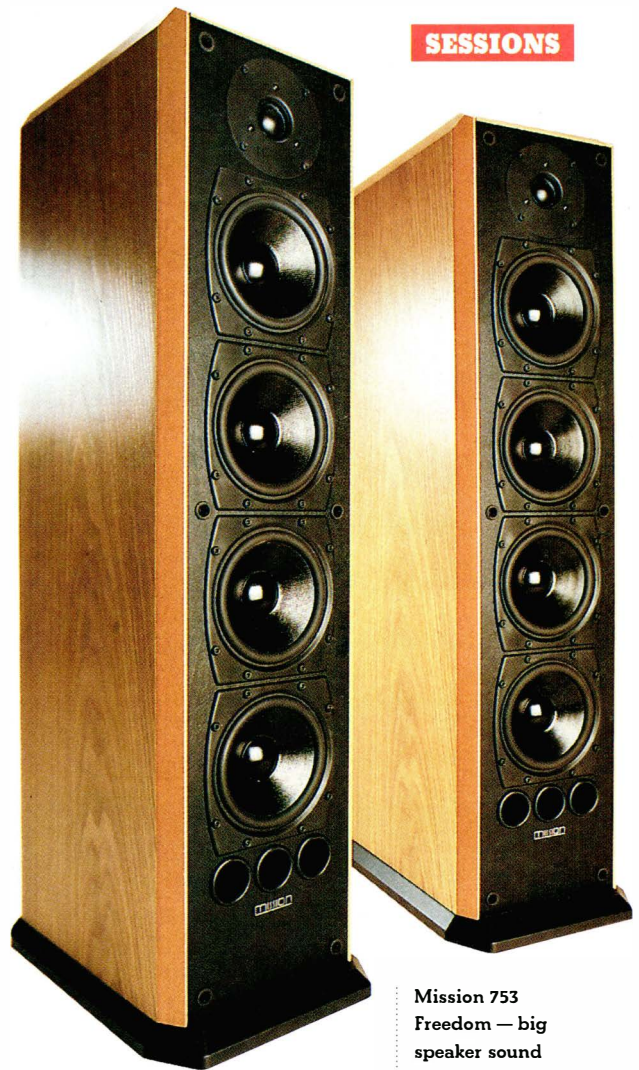
Pioneer A-300R Precision Integrated Amp

£400

This amplifier started out as a £200 A-300R, a fairly minimalist and rather lightweight affair blessed with a remote volume control. Trichord engineer Tom Evans then persuaded Pioneer to try a package of modifications he'd devised. The results were so successful that the project has come to the market as the A-300R *Precision*, priced at £400 and destined to blow away much of the competition, especially with its ability to create a full-scale three-dimensional soundstage.

With the A-300R *Precision* Pioneer has an amp worthy of the mantle left by the A-400. If you want to hear real stereo this could be the place to start.

Pioneer ☎ (01753) 789789



Mission 753
Freedom — big
speaker sound
you're obliged
to enjoy.

DECEMBER

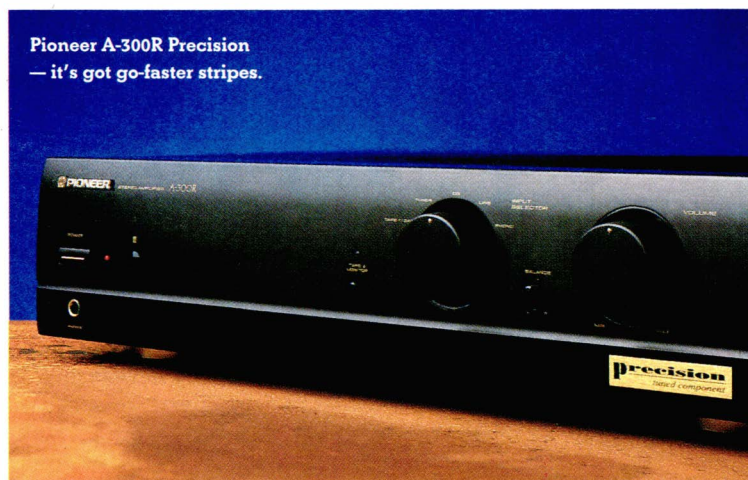
Sony MDS-JE500 MiniDisc Recorder

£300

MiniDisc is back, and this time it means business. The demise of DCC and the Japanese success of MD seem to be spurring the big name manufacturers to increase their efforts to get this neat medium established in Europe and the US. The £300 *MDS JE-500* is a full-width recorder with a plethora of features and an enormous handset. We found that commercial software came across with adequate bandwidth and reasonable sound quality. Recording was a straightforward and sonically rewarding process, and the package is the nearest thing you'll find to a home-recording suite in a single box. If you're not looking for the last word in audiophile sound quality, this could be a handy piece of kit to have around the house.

Sony ☎ (0181) 784 1144

Sony's MDS-
JE500 — the
original home
studio in a box!



Pioneer A-300R Precision
— it's got go-faster stripes.



"It's a rare combination of superb sound, and terrific value"

WHAT HI-FI?

and only available from these authorised dealers...

ABERDEEN Sevenoaks Hi-Fi 01224 587070 ACCRINGTON Cryers 01254 391440 ALDERLEY EDGE Aston Audio 01625 582704 AYLESBURY Northwood Audio II 01296 28790 BANBURY Blinkhorns 01295 259859 BANGOR I & H Griffiths 01248 370655 BARKING Hyper-Fi 0181 591 6961 BARNSTAPLE J & A Video Centre 01271 24384 BARROW-IN-FURNESS Sevenoaks Hi-Fi 01229 838757 BASINGSTOKE Audio T 01256 24311 BATH Moss of Bath 01225 465085 Paul Green Hi-Fi 01225 316197 BECKENHAM Musical Images 0181 663 3777 BEDFORD Richard's A.V. 01234 365165 Sevenoaks Hi-Fi 01234 272779 BELFAST Audio Times 01232 249117 Richer Sounds 01232 321332 BIDFORD J & A Cameras 01237 421791 BIRMINGHAM Music Matters 0121 429 2811 Music Matters 0121 742 0254 Norman H. Field 0121 622 2323 Richer Sounds 0121 643 1516 Sevenoaks Hi-Fi 0121 233 2977 Superfi 0121 631 2875 BISHOP'S STORTFORD Chew & Osborne 01279 656401 The Audio File 01279 506576	BLACKBURN Cryers 01245 51842 Practical Hi-Fi 01254 691104 Romers Hi-Fi 01254 887799 BLACKPOOL Practical Hi-Fi 01253 300599 BLOXWICH Sound Academy 01922 473499 BOLTON Practical Hi-Fi 01204 395789 BOURNEMOUTH Movement Audio 01202 529988 Suttons 01202 555512 BRACKNELL B&B Hi-Fi 01344 424556 BRENTWOOD Hi-Spek Electronics 01271 226303 BRIGHTON Richer Sounds 01273 673333 Audio T 01256 24311 BATH The Powerplant 01273 775978 BRISTOL Richer Sounds 0117 973 4397 V'audio 0117 968 6005 BROMBOROUGH CROSS Peter's Hi-Fi 0151 344 1874 BURTON UPON TRENT Grange Hi-Fi 01283 533655 BURY ST. 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1995



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GIFT IDEAS

Musical Fidelity X-10D 'CD Enhancer'

The audiophile's ideal stocking filler. When connected between CD player and amplifier this valve-powered widget ensures that CD players are not overtaxed by the low-impedance inputs of today's amps. Works best with CD players possessing high-impedance outputs and low RF emissions, including many Philips, Pioneer and Teac models. Also worth trying between pre and power amps!

£99

Musical Fidelity ☎ (0181) 900 2866

Marantz ED-3 Edison CD Player

Want to give your missus the horn this Christmas? Give her two with this super-kitsch CD outfit from Marantz's Design Series. Underneath one of the gramophone-style horns sits a CD mechanism featuring a one-bit DAC and six-Watt amplifier; under the other there's a receptacle for your loved one's jewellery and trinkets. Measuring just 172mm square, the ED-3 is an ideal dressing-table accessory!

approx £350 (price to be confirmed)

Marantz HiFi UK Ltd ☎ (01753) 680868



Prestige

Here's our annual round-up of great gifts for hi-fi fans!

Habitat Molton Sofa

To enjoy your hi-fi system to the full, you need somewhere comfortable to sit. And this sofa from Habitat, just one in their extensive range, is an ideal posterior-platform. Shown here in Cherry finish, it has machine-washable covers, feather-filled

seat and scatter cushions, and removable legs. It measures 185 x 72 x 98cm, and is also available as a sofabed.

£999 (sofa); £1,349 (sofabed)

Habitat UK Ltd ☎ (0171) 255 2545



A Sheffield Christmas Collection

Having the neighbours round for drinks this Christmas? Here's one way to impress them with both your system and your seasonal choice of music. This collection of Yuletide favourites from US audiophile label Sheffield Lab is weighted heavily towards piano-led light instrumentals, but the sound has all of the company's usual 'Live Studio Recordings' fairy-dust.

£12 - special Christmas offer until Feb '97.
Wollaton Audio ☎ (0115) 928 4147



CD Projects CD Storage

What marks out this extensive new range is the patented two-pocket DoubleSleeve, which allows you to store four CDs and booklets in the space taken up by one jewel case. Made from non-stick, heat-resistant polypropylene for maximum kindness to your discs, each DoubleSleeve has a clip to allow easy swapping between a home storage unit and portable carry case. Available from stores like MVC or by post from the UK distributor, who will also supply details of other models available.

RDC-25 home storage unit (illustrated) £12.99
CC-24 carry case (illustrated) £9.99

Bib Ltd ☎ (01442) 233233



Prezzies

Lexicon 500T System Controller

In essence, a 'programmable touch-screen computer' that controls every facet of a complex hi-fi or AV system. Masking high-tech innards behind a user-friendly graphical interface, the 500T can learn and transmit as many as 24 commands on the press of a single button, thanks to multi-step macro commands. Up to three days operation available from the built-in ni-cad battery pack!

£2,000

Harman Audio ☎ (0181) 207 5050



Hi-Fi Choice Polo Shirt

Be the envy of the neighbourhood with one of these superb *Hi-Fi Choice* polo shirts. Tailored from 100 per cent cotton, in British Racing Green with a discreet logo, this garment will get you served quicker at the pub, win you new friends and make your hi-fi system sound fantastic. Probably. Available only in flattering XL size.

£8.95 inc. p&p

Order form on page 102 of this issue.



The Perfect Connection

Dirty or oxidised signal connections are a common cause of substandard hi-fi system performance. *The Perfect Connection* (TPC) wipes aim to banish grot-related hi-fi blues. Impregnated with a special contact-enhancing solution, each TPC wipe should last long enough to give your whole system the once-over. Available from XLO dealers throughout Britain.

£1.50 each

Wollaton Audio ☎ (0115) 928 4147



BEST BUYYS 1996



Magazines come and go month by month, their contents often forgotten soon after the next edition appears. Hi-Fi Choice's Best Buy Special gives you the chance to catch up on a whole year's worth of accumulated knowledge, wisdom and opinion.

The core is, of course, the in-depth comparative review techniques which have made Choice respected around the world. Since last January these have generated some **38 Best Buy awards, plus 64 Recommended flags.** To cover all of these – and much more besides – requires dextrous slight-of-hand and the application of a gigantic shoehorn. Best Buy reviews have been summarised into about a third of their usual space, and Recommended

products précised in one or two paragraphs.

For more information on the products, why not use our unique FactsBack service? (Page 136.) This will fax you a copy of many reviews we have printed in the past few months.

While some 25 pages are devoted to the formal review summaries, another 25 reprise other highlights of the magazine's year. There were two major Awards ceremonies: one voted for by the British public, the other by a convocation of European specialist journalists. Then we have condensed versions of numerous systems features printed this year, together with a four-page distillation of the myriad components encountered in our Sessions reviews. That you'll find on page 12, while the rest rolls out from this page onwards. Have fun!

Loudspeakers

The large number of Best Buy and Recommended speakers is partly a reflection of the many speaker tests we've carried out this year, but also that one large group test concentrated on the key budget miniature sector, during which we re-tested a number of already-established Best Buys alongside the latest contenders.

It also reflects the fact that loudspeakers are much more diverse than other components — they come in many different sizes, and with all manner of assorted tonal balances too.

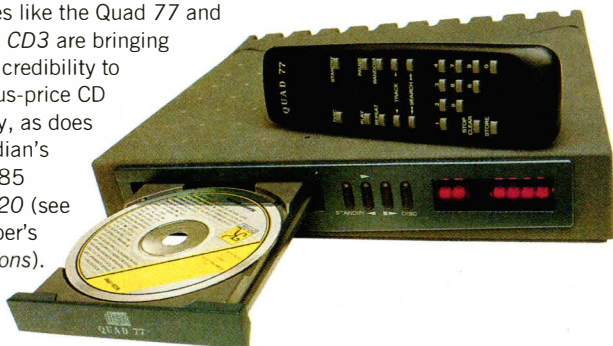
Manufacturers often achieve good consistency across their ranges, but every manufacturer's idea of the 'correct' tonal balance is different, and there's no way the reviewer can say one is 'right' and the others 'wrong'. It's partly a matter of taste, partly a matter of how loud you want to play your music (loud music usually prefers less treble energy), and what formats you favour (CD sounds brighter than vinyl, FM radio or TV). And consequently loudspeaker diversity remains firmly on the agenda!



CD Players

CD players are still the fastest-changing category of components in hi-fi. Of the six models to receive Best Buy ratings throughout the year, only five remain in current production today.

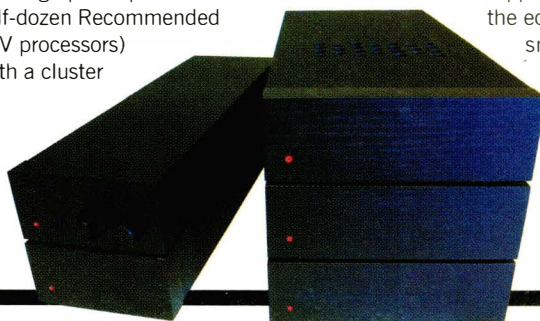
The extant Best Buys tend to be dominated by low-cost players, but a rich variety of Recommended models provide plenty of interesting alternatives. The latest mid-price Harman/Kardon models look like very strong contenders, and more upmarket entries like the Quad 77 and Naim CD3 are bringing fresh credibility to serious-price CD replay, as does Meridian's £1,685 508.20 (see October's *Sessions*).



Amplifiers

Many are called but few are chosen. From a total of 21 reviews, just three received the full Best Buy accolade — one budget, one mid-price integrated, plus one separate pre-/power combo — compared to six during 1995. Boosting the numbers a bit, we've included the findings of our April test on A/V processors. Not strictly speaking amplifiers (though they do contain amplification), these are the devices you use to convert a stereo hi-fi system into Dolby Pro-Logic surround kit, without messing up hi-fi performance.

Happily, once again the half-dozen Recommended models (plus a couple more A/V processors) add some welcome variety, with a cluster of interesting mid-price and upmarket contenders from Audiolab, Densen, Naim, Cyrus and Creek.

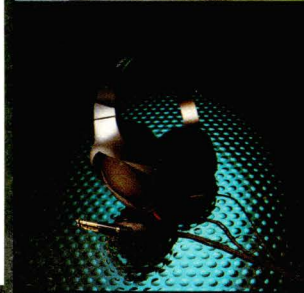
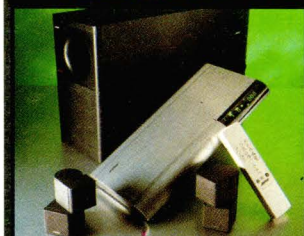


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And the rest

Speakers, CD players and amplifiers might represent the core of the modern hi-fi system, but lots of other bits and pieces are necessary to get it to sing. There are also alternative sources like radio tuners, vinyl discs, or tape (and disc) recorders. In today's high resolution systems, the connecting cables which link everything together make an important contribution, as does the support furniture for both the equipment and smaller speakers.

Subwoofers and headphones too have their roles to play, and we've checked all of them out for you, over the next few pages.



CD Players

PHILIPS

CD721 £130

Look very hard and you might find a few CD players with remote control that undercut this £130 CD721 from Philips. In most cases, however, they will be discontinued, about to be discontinued, or of a brand far less respected than the Dutch multinational. The Philips name might not have quite the CD cachet of a few years back, as the company has left the quality hi-fi sector to its Marantz subsidiary. But it's Philips technology that drives Marantz players and a sizeable number from other sources too, at all price levels.

The CD721 is closely based on its popular 720 predecessor, but now sports resilient feet hidden within non-functional shiny surrounds. It also has quite a lot in common with the Marantz CD46, sharing the Bitcheck DAC and CDM12 linear-tracking

mechanism. The back panel is stripped to the bare essentials, with a mains lead alongside a captive signal lead terminated in a phono pair.

The front panel is practical and attractive, with fine fit and finish, an excellent display and niceties like a variable-level headphone socket. The track skip and scan keys are shared, with a timer determining which function operates; irritatingly, the scan mutes when it reaches its higher speed. Note that a still cheaper sister model, the £120 CD711, is also available, the key difference being that it lacks remote control (and could in consequence sound slightly better).

Lab performance was generally below average, with a fair sprinkling of unwanted spurious around, though the jitter result was well above average.



Sound quality rated average, which is a fine result from a picky panel for a player that cost way below the group average. The sound itself is a bit limited, both in bandwidth and dynamic terms, but this player still retrieves masses of coherent detail, and is expressive enough to be an enjoyable experience.

The CD721 may not be the most scintillating and

communicative player around, but it is essentially natural and relaxing, performing an only slightly limited task very well indeed. It sounds articulate and open, with few obvious coloration effects. At the price it's a glaringly obvious Best Buy.

Philips ☎ (0181) 689 4444
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 159

KENWOOD

DP-3080 £170

Second cheapest in a five-strong series of DP models, the well equipped 3080 from the house of Kenwood costs £170. This full-width player is fairly bulky, though the structure is quite flimsy, making no concessions to microphony, and few unnecessary resources appear

to have been expended inside.

Aesthetics are not a strong suit. The display characters are small even though they occupy a large window, and the controls are a mish-mash of styles cramped into the central section of the fascia, while the right-hand end is mostly blank. In feature terms there are few hostages to fortune. Edit facilities allow tapes to be collated, with peak-level

search, and there are repeat, random and search modes.

The business bits include a one-bit NPC 5864 converter and 5841 digital filter, along with Kenwood's recent *Advanced High Precision Master Clock* jitter reduction circuit, and DRIVE (Dynamic Resolution Intensive Vector Enhancement, no less). Notwithstanding the name, the latter is an adaptive low-pass digital filter designed to reduce distortion on low level/frequency signals. Lab test performance wasn't spectacular, the saving grace being the lowest level of jitter among the group of under-£300 players.

Good panel test results found our listeners in broad agreement about a strong, dynamic and up-front presentation. It came close to exposing the dynamic and spatial heart of the music, as well as reproducing much of the detail from discs, too. "Some real bass at least," said one lis-

tener, while another praised the bright but articulate midrange and treble, and the strong sense of transient attack.

However, some suggested the Kenwood might not wear too well. One felt that while it was immediately exciting, it might prove a little fatiguing in the long run. "This player can party — but even parties have to come to an end some time. You can have too much of a good thing." Not the best match for an aggressive system, it was difficult to trip up in the hands-on sessions, delivering a broad range of material with bold, vivid contrasts.

Here is a £170 player with a £250-£300 sound — a real surprise given its modest build quality. An obvious Best Buy, though this player is better suited to smooth, well controlled systems than those with a bright, edgy character.

Kenwood ☎ (01923) 816444
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 159



CD Players

CAMBRIDGE AUDIO

CD6 £300

The Cambridge Audio brand is now owned by the manufacturing arm of the Richer Sounds group, and while its products are nominally available through any retailer via the group's Hi-Fi Direct operation, in practice you're more likely to find them at a Richer store.

This £300 CD6 CD player conceals its true nature behind a bland fascia. The graphical disc-remaining indicator in an otherwise ordinary back-lit LCD display adds a touch of originality, but the CD6 is more notable for the basic set of controls on the player itself. The usual twiddly bits can of course be accessed via the remote handset.

Attributed to the design pen of John Westlake (formerly of Pink Triangle), this is an ambitiously specified player, constructed internally as separate analogue and digital sections,

with extensive mutual screening and a jitter lock between them. Highly sophisticated power supply arrangements include three separate transformers and no less than 14 regulated sections. A dual-differential D/A converter is built around the Philips TDA1305, with good quality wiring. Around the back it's a surprise to find full balanced AES/EBU outputs in addition to the conventional analogue phonos, plus a digital electrical output (on BNC).

The internal engineering is very similar to that used in the Cambridge *DacMagic II* out-board D/A converter, only here there's the additional disc drive and control mechanism. Lab performance was decent enough across the board (in the context of a low-cost group of players), though some noise modulation and the particular jitter characteristic might help explain the bright and slightly over-hyped sound.

Although the CD6 was thought 'scrawny' at times, most of the comments on this player were positive, sometimes very much so. "Rhythmic and bouncy, with a very strong sense of togetherness. It actually sounds like a band playing together", according to one panellist. Another described it as: "the only player so far that makes musical sense".

In the hands-on work I found the CD6 taut and crackling with energy, bringing music to life in a way that eluded most of the others in the under-£350 group. But it needs a good system to give its best, and can sound a bit raucous in the wrong company. Ignore the boring styling. This is a thoroughbred CD player that's well-honed, highly capable, and more important still, very enjoyable. With a price tag of just £300, it's worth seeking out. Audio Partnership ☎ (0171) 586 5977 Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159



SONY

CDP-XE500 £160

Two up from the bottom of a six-strong range, the £160 CDP-XE500 is equipped with a one-bit H-Pulse D/A converter, and features a 'jog dial' control — a small ratcheted rotary switch for rapid track selection.

The player has an impressive roster of gadgets, including programme edit, shuffle play, peak search, and more. The minor control layout is a bit anarchic, and the display is too fussy. The player has sleek lines and the controls are a peach. Headphones are only fed a fixed-level signal, but an optical digital output is fitted.

The insides of this player have been through Sony's finishing school, but the team was so happy with the original factory samples that few changes were made. Our jitter measurement looks poor, but is largely a func-

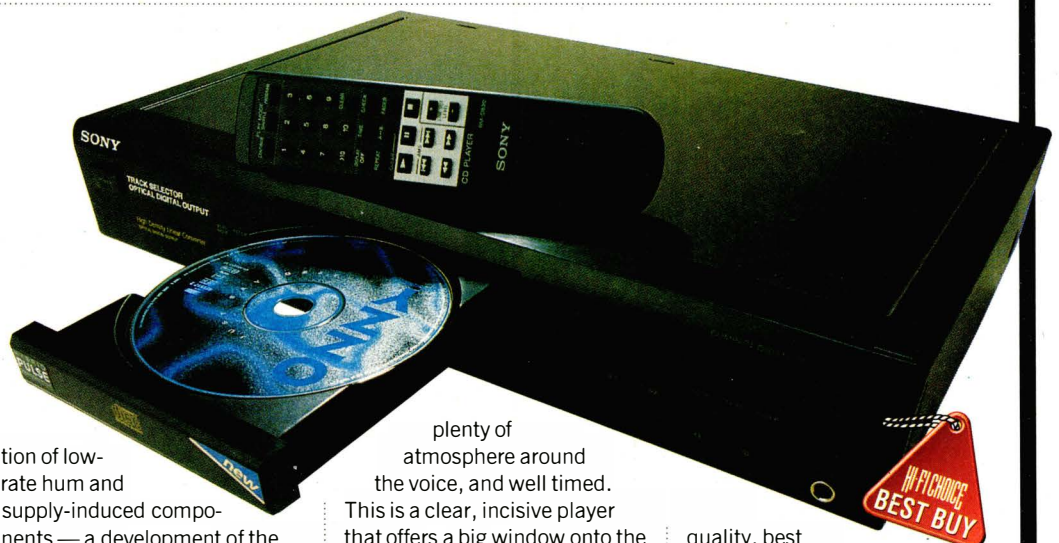
tion of low-rate hum and supply-induced components — a development of the power supply would bring improvement.

Ironically, this near-budget Sony model out-scored its more upmarket XE900E sibling in the blind listening tests, and individual panellists showed agreement. The following quotes are typical: "Good vocals with

plenty of atmosphere around the voice, and well timed. This is a clear, incisive player that offers a big window onto the music." "Very impressive at capturing the scale and drama of a performance and the tension of a large-scale piece."

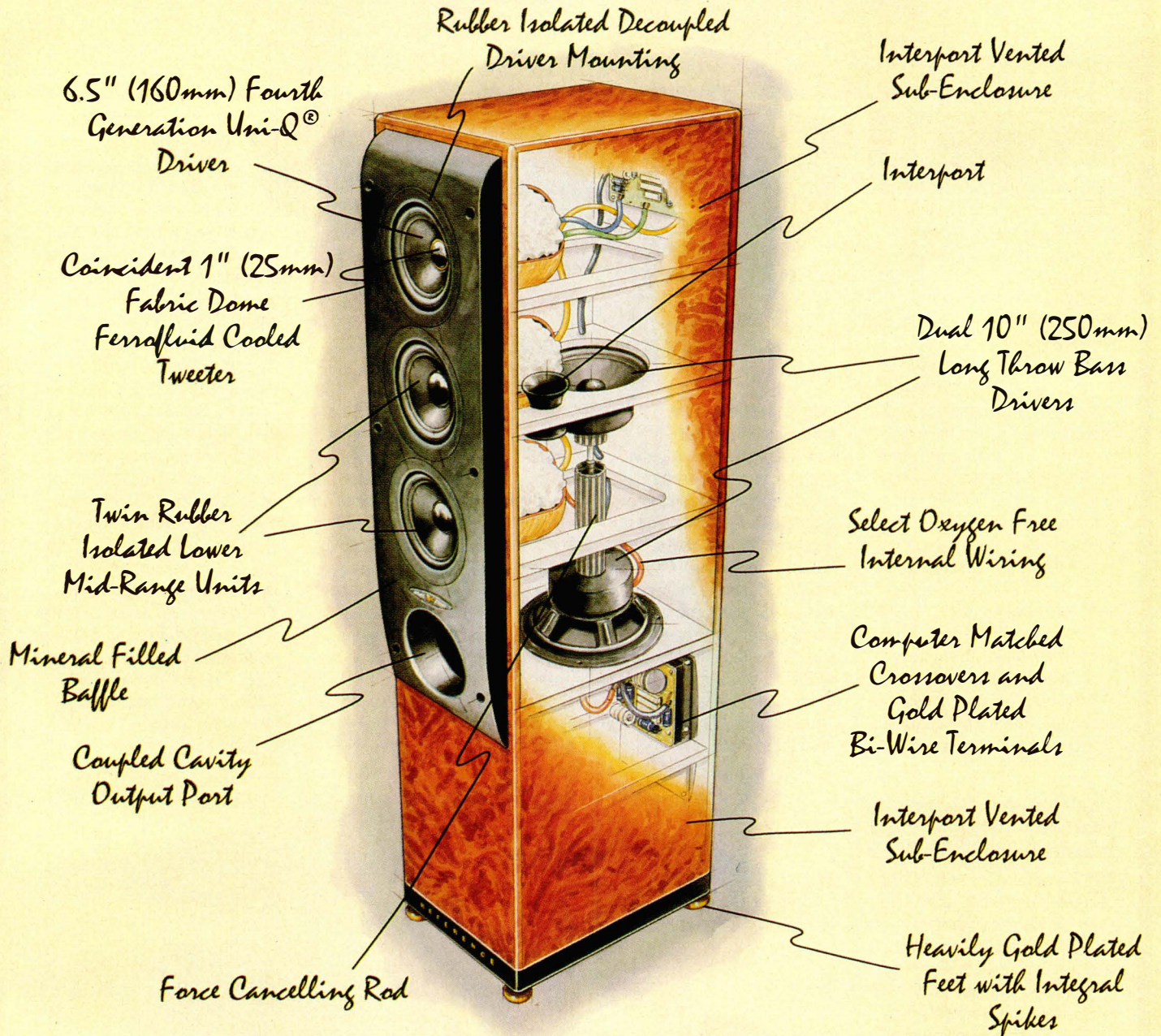
There was criticism of a 'wall of sound' tendency and a 'hi-fi-ish' quality. Our separate hands-on work, though, suggested that this Sony has a constrained

quality, best suited to systems of average capability and resolving power. With a combination of good resolution and respectable dynamics, the CDP-XE500 brings good audio manners to this sector of the market. Sony ☎ (0181) 784 1144 Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159



KEF REFERENCE SERIES MODEL FOUR

The Inside Story



Look inside the new KEF Reference Series Model Four and you'll understand why it has been hailed as one of the finest loudspeakers in the world. You'll find brilliantly innovative design, bristling with advanced features found on no other speaker. No wonder it has met with such critical acclaim.

"...KEF's best yet, showing that musicality and neutral balance can result from the high-tech and deeply researched designs that KEF is famous for..."

"...It'll play loud throughout the range, holding onto its fundamental inner balance, one which is recognisably truthful to the programme input..."

"...This speaker has a degree of slam and overall dynamic range associated with the best at two or three times the price..."

Martin Colloms, Hi-Fi News



The experience of sound

CD Players



NAD
514 £370

NAD's 'no compromise' CD player, the £370 514, is a fundamentally simple machine with the familiar grey but slightly dated-looking fascia. Measurements showed some differences from previous NADs, but were entirely satisfactory. Its

sound quality was very well received by the panel, for making every kind of music accessible while still conveying the fun factor. This spacious and invigorating performance is a more than fair recompense for limited features and dour styling. *NAD* ☎ (0181) 343 3240 *Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 151 Factsback 1639*



SONY
CDP-XA2ES £350

Derived from a number of very highly regarded predecessors, the £350 CDP-XA2ES blends old and new chips into a bulky but handsome centre-load, full-feature-count player. First class technical performance combines with audiophile sonics to give a true heavy-

weight sound quality, sparkling with detail and confidently handling the most brutal dynamic contrasts. However, despite the objective excellence and confidence of the sound, there also seemed to be a slight lack of romance in the way the music was portrayed. *Sony* ☎ (0181) 784 1144 *Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 151 Factsback 1642*



MARANTZ
CD-17 £800

This upmarket player is actually a simplified version of the flagship CD-15, featuring high-class components and luxury build in a slim but unusually wide case. Lab performance was impressive in everything but digital image suppression. Sound

quality was well liked, attracting only minor criticisms but not the most fulsome praise — 'quite' and 'fairly' often cropped up. The CD-17 has obvious musical talents, and promises consistently good results with a wide range of systems and musical tastes. *Marantz* ☎ (01753) 680868 *Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 155 Factsback 1763*

JVC
XL-Z674 £300

Currently representing the pinnacle of JVC's CD aspirations here in the UK, the £300 XL-Z674 is a fully-featured machine with a whole load of inner technical refinements as well. These include the K2 optical interface and the latest PEM (pulse edge modulation) DAC.

On test, the excellence of this technology was confirmed by a top-notch lab-test performance. The sound is unfailingly smooth and even-handed, though sometimes the detail, delicacy and passion of the musical experience become a little diluted along the way. *JVC* ☎ (0181) 450 3282 *Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 151 Factsback 1637*



NAIM AUDIO
CD3 £978

One of the more idiosyncratic and characterful CD players you can buy, Naim's £978 CD3 is the least expensive of the company's range. It looks slim and smart, and features a manually-operated hinged-drawer loading tray, in which a magnetic puck secures the disc. The CD3 is also unusual for using a 'classic' 16-

bit four-times oversampling DAC. The sound quality was found to be favourable, and is characteristically Naim, with powerful bass, almost aggressive timing and coherent but slightly coloured midband. Recommended, but it needs to be matched carefully to individual systems. *Naim* ☎ (01722) 332266 *Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 155 Factsback 1765*

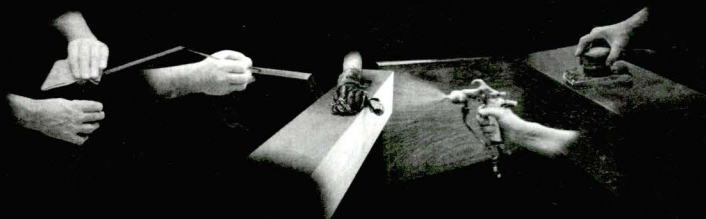




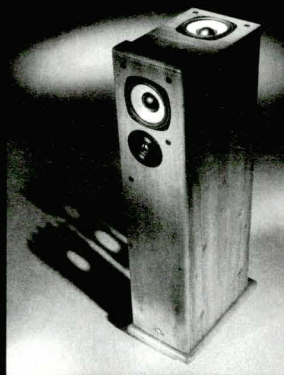
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CD Players

QUAD

77 £900

The 77 is priced at £900 as a complete standalone player, but purchasers of Quad 77 amps can opt for a bus-only version — and save £200. This is a slim, compact package, smartly finished in a very attractive textured grey, but with control ergonomics varying from the excellent to the odd. The Crystal

4328 Delta Sigma convertor chip turns in a pretty satisfactory lab performance, and sound quality was better still, thanks mainly to a particularly seductive midrange and the organic way it tackled complex material. That said, with really dense, complicated music, a touch of congestion began to become apparent.

Quad ☎ (01480) 451777
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 155



SONY

CDP-XE900E £300

This key model in Sony's recently-introduced CDP range features the unique 'fixed laser' disc drive and has also undergone an extensive programme of 40 modifications — some quite extensive — to widen its UK audiophile appeal. Lab performance was excellent,

but the listening tests brought disappointing and inconsistent results. It turned out that the 48-hour warm-up period had not really been enough, and the Sony continued to show lower coloration and greater subtlety over the next several days — enough to merit Recommendation. Sony ☎ (0181) 784 1144
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159



HARMAN/KARDON

FL8300 £300

This £300 FL8300 CD multi-player uses a large carousel-type loading mechanism, which makes it very easy to identify and change four of the five discs it holds. The player feels suitably solid, and sounds that way too,

with clean, tuneful bass and an open, deep soundstage.

The treble sounds sweet and natural too, and if the midband sometimes seems a little tired, this is still a very acceptable-sounding multiplayer at an affordable price.

Harman/Kardon ☎ (01908) 317707
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156



SHERWOOD

CD-4030R £140

Imported by a Richer Sounds subsidiary, the £140 Sherwood CD-4030R looks rather old-fashioned with a very fussy front panel, although the range of facilities on offer is not unusually wide. There's nothing particularly unusual either about the combination of Yamaha digital filter and Philips bitstream

converter, and while the lab measurements were unexceptional, they do indicate a palatable sound quality. This was very much the case in practice, for while the 4030R failed to greatly excite listeners, it never offended either, delivering a relaxing, easy-on-the-ear, very satisfactory presentation. Hi-Fi Direct ☎ (0171) 586 5977
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159

NAD

515 £350

It's cheap at £350, but NAD's 515 carousel-type CD multi-player nevertheless managed to combine serious listening pleasure with multi-disc convenience. Soundstaging is not its strongest point, but rigorous attention to detail is combined with considerable musical competence to make a great companion for music lovers. A

mature sounding multiplayer, the NAD firmly deserves Recommended status. NAD ☎ (0181) 343 3240
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156



Amplifiers

Orelle
Audiophile
Component

HI-FI CHOICE
BEST BUY

Power SA-100
Integrated Amplifier

-/+

Aux 2 Aux 1 Video

Tape

Volume

Input

ORELLE

SA100

£450

Orelle is a relatively new brand on the scene, but has rapidly built itself a reputation for equipment capable of mixing it with the high end, at prices that are considerably more affordable. This £450 SA100 integrated amplifier isn't the only Orelle to have picked up a Best Buy flag in *Choice* this year: the CD-100SE CD player received a similar accolade in issue 155, though sadly, that component is no longer available.

This SA100 is a 50W integrated design, which promotes simplicity as a virtue, even to the point of ignoring vinyl disc replay. The slim front panel sets the tone, with just volume, on/off, input selection and tape monitoring. Internally, it's direct coupled throughout, with no capacitors in the signal path. Power comes via a 200VA transformer, and is delivered through a MOSFET output stage. The whole amp is mounted on a single PCB, with no messy extraneous wiring.

Lab performance is generally competent or better, though distortion does rise a little towards high frequencies, and power delivery is somewhat constrained into very low impedance loads. The high-frequency distortion is at least consistent, while channel balance is excellent, with low noise and only mild susceptibility to RF interference.

A clear favourite in the listening tests, the SA100

was not only liked by all panellists, it also elicited good agreement from the various individuals over its characteristics, including: "musically rewarding", "tight", and "tidy". All commented on the clarity, humanity and diction of voices, and the way it was possible to distinguish exactly how many backing singers were on a track. Furthermore, the voices never wavered, regardless of the musical complexity.

The only quibble was a touch of coarseness in the upper mid/lower treble, which is unlikely to be a problem unless other components in the system share the same characteristic. It comes across as a slight brittleness on voices, with a touch of glare and lack of body. There was a great sense of orchestral scale, good detail and control, and fine, neutral, extended and weighty bass.

Orelle has made one hugely enjoyable amp, which will keep everything musical in order.

Orelle ☎ (0181) 810 9388

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 154

Factsback 1749

MOTH

THIRTY SERIES £1,228

This amp was reviewed subjectively as one in a four-strong group of pre-/power amp combos clustered around the £1,000 mark. All gave good accounts of themselves, but the Moth stood ahead of the group in sound-for-your-pound terms, and set a rare example of discreet, compact packaging.

The test amplifier consisted of five separately-cased modules, all quite deep at 34cm, but very slim and narrow with it. The £349 preamp and its outboard 100 VA power supply are only ten-cm wide and six-cm high. The £879 stereo power amplifier section consists of two monoblok amps plus a third module containing a shared

power supply; again these are only six-cm high but, this time, 15-cm wide.

As well as being strikingly compact, the preamp is also noticeably minimalist. Three unlabelled controls (volume, input selector and tape monitor) and an illuminated dot are the only adornments on the facia. The pre handles four line inputs (on phono sockets) plus an in/out tape recorder connection — on a DIN this time, because there isn't enough room for four more phonos! Vinyl users will be pleased to find they're not ignored, though the additional preamp module you need does cost extra.

The appearance might be downright unassuming, but the *Thirty Series'* performance will make you sit up and take notice.

HI-FI CHOICE
BEST BUY

Amplifiers



From these modest cases emerged a big, bold presentation that was immediately involving. For instance, on Doctor John's *I Know What I've Got*, the piano rang out and resonated magnificently, exciting the air in the room with uncommon authority. The brass section pierced the mix with gusto but without unnatural stridency, while bass and drums laid a solid foundation for the band to build upon. And in the middle of all this bigness and boldness, the Moths still managed to extract subtle detail and nuance.

They certainly didn't falter when asked to rock 'n' roll, conveying the varied rhythms and feels on a Black Grape album with ease and determination. Whatever the music, the strength of the *Thirty Series* amplifiers seemed to be a finely judged balance rather than excellence in specific areas. Across-the-board competence and groove-ability enabled them to portray myriad genres with aplomb. All in all, a most worthy Best Buy.

Moth ☎ (01234) 741152

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 155

ROTEL

RA-920AX £120

Tested with other amps costing up to £350, this Rotel sells for £120, which was way below the group average, right down in the true budget sector — a typical contender in the 'my first amplifier' stakes.

Rotel has been very successful over the years, with both low-budget 'starter' amps and more audiophile-oriented variations thereof. The company's models have UK design input in the selection of sound-quality oriented components in critical parts of the signal path, and in earthing arrangements.

The 920AX isn't as minimalist as some Rotels, but neither is it overburdened with frills and features. There are tone controls here, but these are claimed to provide 'sensible' rather than extreme response tuning.

Besides the volume, balance and input selector, there's a

headphone socket and a tape monitor switch. Inputs are available for vinyl record players (moving-magnet cartridges), three line-level sources, and a tape recorder in/out set. A single set of loudspeaker binding posts lurks round the back.

Lab tests confirmed that power output is significantly less than that available from, say, Rotel's 930AX, but there's still around 50 Watts per channel, with sufficient current in reserve to handle difficult loudspeaker loads. Distortion rises somewhat towards high frequencies, but overall this is solid engineering at a very attractive price. The listening panel gave the 920AX a warm reception, but perhaps lukewarm is a better description of their 'good enough but safe' reactions. In one panelist's words: "It's an amp that does everything right but in a safe and sometimes unexciting manner." Nonetheless, it was one of the few models in the group that

tapped into the emotional content of our classical selections.

It also sounded good with a small-scale acoustic recording, giving an accurate and well balanced portrayal of voices and guitar accompaniment. With feisty rock material, opinion was a little more divided, as the bass sounded just a little 'fat' and could have been tighter and faster, though it remained fundamentally tuneful.

At this very modest price, it's very impressive that the 920AX managed to sound coherent and reasonably well detailed most of the time. It lost the plot slightly in some complex passages, and could sound a little veiled compared to top-flight models, but soldiered on and maintained a good perspective on whatever music was played. Basically, the 920AX is a real hi-fi amp, and at £120 it represents a Best Buy.

Gamepath ☎ (01908) 317707

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 157

Factsback 1808

RECOMMENDED

AUDIOLAB

8000S £700

Effectively an update of the ever-popular 8000A concept, the £700 8000S costs

more, and ditches the vinyl disc input (available separately as the 8000PPA) and tone controls. However, it adds a remote handset and microprocessor control, plus considerable future-proofing

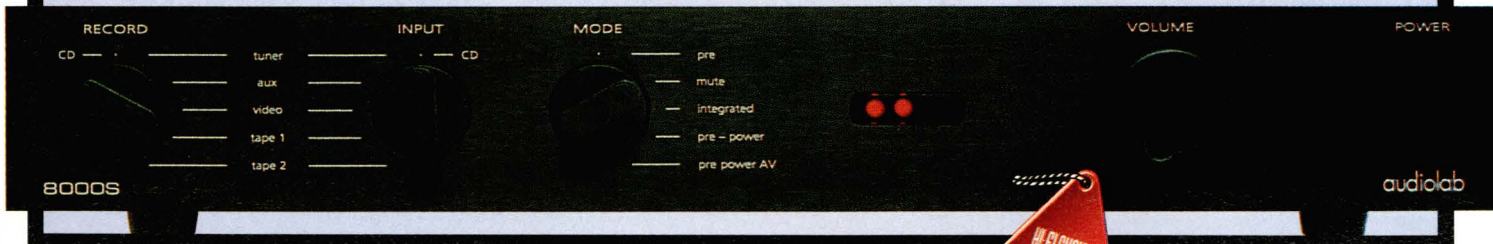
flexibility via a mode selector. Lab performance is pretty good all round, with more than 70 Watts available into eight Ohm loads. The sound quality is a good all-round compromise,

with fine tonal neutrality and detail retrieval, even if does sound a little staid and sober at times.

Audiolab ☎ (01480) 52521

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 154

Factsback 1740



Amplifiers



CREEK
P42/A42 £335 (EACH)

Versatility is a key feature of this conventionally-attired, full-width Creek combo. Our subjective review was based on a minimalist P42 preamp (vinyl included), plus two A42 stereo power amps (50 Watts per channel) in bridged-mono mode. Configured thus they give two times 150 Watts; four times 50

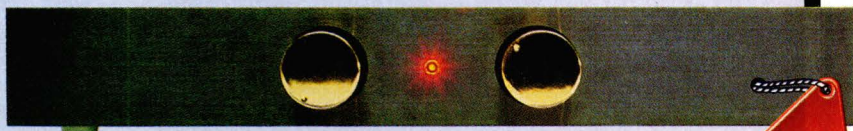
Watts bi-amped is another option. This amp proved very sensitive to connecting cables. It really started working well with DNM reson, giving a coherent performance that was full of life and delicate detail, yet proved quite capable of reaching thoroughly unhealthy sound pressure levels without sacrificing control.

Creek ☎ (0181) 361 4133
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 155

DENSEN
BEAT B-100 £600

A solid and hefty integrated amp, in a sharply-tailored alloy case adorned with just two large gold knobs, the £600 Beat B-100 follows the British trend towards amplifier

minimalism, but is, in fact, of Danish origin. Lab performance was respectable enough, rating 60 Watts into eight Ohms, while the sound quality seemed to get better and better as the sessions progressed, suc-



ceeding through tight control and subtlety rather than creating a strong initial impression.

Densen ☎ (01582) 561227
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 154
Factsback 1742



CYRUS
PRE/POWER £1,150

With gorgeous 'half width' cast-alloy casework, plus a full system remote control straight out of Star Wars, this Cyrus combo certainly heads the style council. The £650 Pre and £500 Power give two times 50 Watts' power, but extra £300 PSX-R power supplies can be

added to improve quality. Micro-processor control adds a slickness rare in audiophile products, but the three-mm speaker sockets were a bit of a pain with fat cables. The sound could be more muscular, but is punchy enough to perk up laid-back speakers, yet has the grip and refinement not to sound too effusive.

Cyrus ☎ (01480) 451777
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 155

NAD
314 £260

Still echoing styling cues first established 20-odd years ago, the £260 314 looks austere and purposeful, yet retains a fair quota of features. It's rated at only two times 35 Watts, yet we managed to get over 50 Watts in the lab, and very short

bursts of up to 180 Watts are available under transient conditions. "Not exactly neutral, but neither is it neutered," was a typical comment on an amp that might be a little too colourful for some. Ultimately and more importantly, though, it made listening to music a lot of fun. NAD ☎ (0181) 343 3240
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 157



NAIM
NAIT 3 £550

Ultra-slimline casework and green illumination distinguish Naim's only integrated amp. The £550 Nait 3 is rated at a modest 30 Watts per channel, and delivered a rather quirky lab performance. Performance may be upgraded by adding the Flat Cap power supply. Vinyl-

ready and remote control (£725) versions are available.

The sound *per se* may lack strict neutrality, but the Nait's very superior control of musical tempi comfortably convinced the panel that it is inherently superior to most of the competition.

Naim ☎ (01722) 332266
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 154
Factsback 1748



Tuners

HARMAN/KARDON

TU950 £200

Priced a little above the true budget sector, Harman/Kardon's *TU950* rings up a fairly modest £200 on the cash register, and provides plenty of features to sweeten the pill. RDS provides useful station identification, while a total of 30 presets can store FM, MW and LW stations.

The styling is resolutely mainstream, but a dimmable display

is a very worthwhile bonus.

Manual and automatic (scan) tuning are both available, though the latter proved reluctant to stop at important stations with strong signals. Perhaps this was because the H/K's scan rate was faster than most of its rivals'.

Once properly locked in, the *TU950* quickly made up for its auto-scan petulance. It lacked the rich tonal balance of more expensive and refined models, but didn't exhibit the wasted,

bleached textures often found in budget tuners. Voices, for instance, were articulate, free from sibilant emphasis and of reasonable depth.

A live Radio Three orchestral broadcast portrayed musical contrasts with appropriate detail and muscle. And if the strings on a Classic FM broadcast sounded steely and forward, checking against references showed it was the broadcaster's fault. Nonetheless, the *TU950* avoided sounding art-

less, even on poor broadcasts, while clearly reflecting the quality of better broadcast material. Rock was carried along on a weighty bass with lively but controlled treble, convincingly conveying the power of rhythm sections.

Technical tests revealed high sensitivity coupled with good immunity from adjacent channels, FM image stations and AM spurious. Harmonic distortion levels were below average.

Like most inexpensive tuners, the *TU950* became less comfortable as the playback volume increased, but it still managed better than most.

Therefore, despite the limitations inherent in a sub-£200 tuner, the overall competence and easy-going sound quality of the H/K *TU950* clearly merit a Best Buy rating.

Harman/Kardon ☎ (01908) 317707
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 157
Factsback 1254



RECOMMENDED

MICROMEGA

TUNER/DAC £700/£750

Though it is prosaic in both name and appearance, this tuner's internal architecture is most unusual. It's more truly digital than the ubiquitous 'digital synthesis' models, thanks to an internal analogue-to-digital converter (ADC), which takes the demodulated (analogue) audio signal and digitises it. This process removes the pilot and subcarrier tones at 19kHz and 38kHz: the digital encoding process effectively acts as an elaborate but very efficient filter.

The *Tuner* has its own built-in D-to-A, to convert the post-filtered audio signal back into the analogue signals that amplifiers and speakers recognise. However, a digital output is also available

allowing an external DAC to be used as an option. Micromega's matching DAC costs £750.

Lab tested performance was rather unimpressive considering the £700/£750 price-tag, but

The *Tuner* really came into its own in the listening room, where it delivered a delightful sound, refreshingly free of reminders that the source was FM radio, and with a particularly appealing open midband. The addi-

tion of DAC made a slight further improvement, worthwhile for the serious enthusiast. Micromega ☎ (0181) 502 1416
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 157
Factsback 1810



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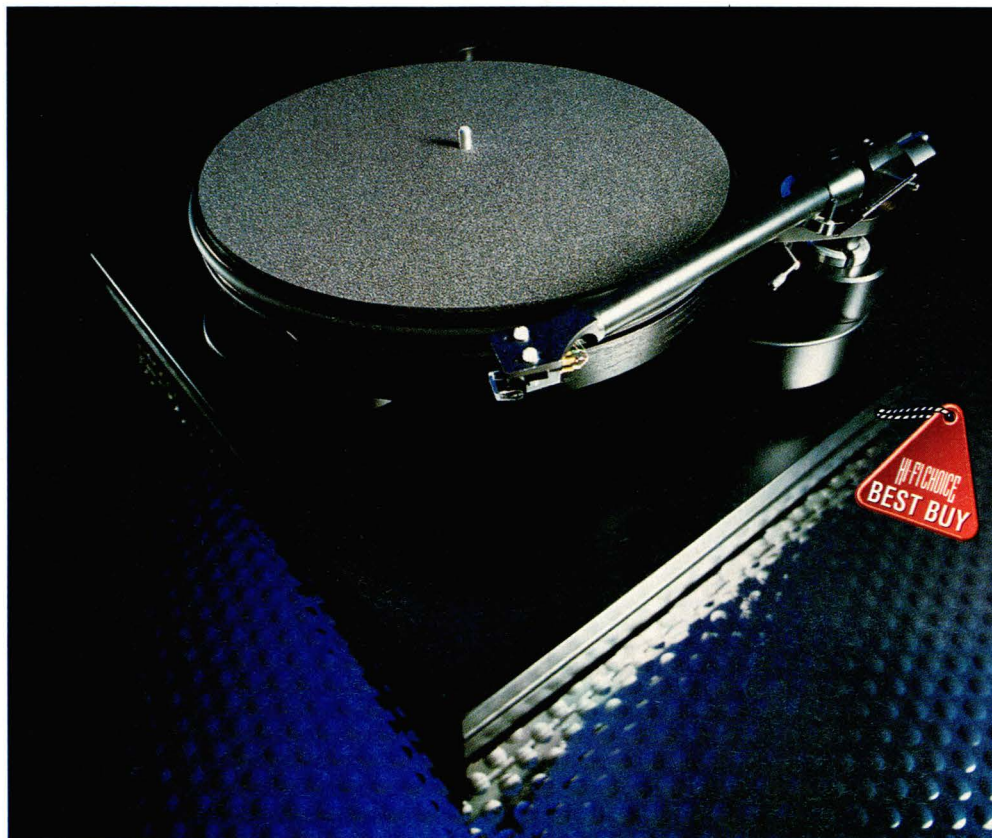
NOTTINGHAM ANALOGUE

SPACEDECK £1,425

The bluff appearance gives some hint to the battleship engineering underlying the £750 Nottingham Analogue *Spacedeck* — tested with the £450 *Space* tonearm and the £225 *Tracer II* cartridge as a £1,425 package, which increased in price shortly after our original review.

This deck does away with any form of suspension, and features a high mass platter driven by a low power motor. An integral outrigger supports the unipivot tonearm — built like a tank, but more shapely — while everything sits on a marble effect plinth. The *Tracer II* is a tweaked Len Gregory moving magnet cartridge, and that's it. There are no fancy power supplies or other tweaks, and if you want a dust cover, find a sheet of foam.

Spacedeck by name and also by nature, as the reproduced music is given stunning amounts of air, in a soundstage that goes way beyond mere holography. The bass sounds controlled and 'right', yet plumbs depths few suspended decks can reach, and above all



there's the downright honesty and freedom from artifice — it's enough to tempt you to blowtorch your CD collection.

The seven nominated test discs came and went, followed

by one of those extensive trawls through the entire vinyl collection, in which all manner of cherished discs are exhumed and replayed.

How does it sound? It just

sounds like music. If you're dead serious about vinyl, the Best Buy *Spacedeck* is one of the first real ports of call.

Nottingham Analogue ☎ (01773) 762947
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159

RECOMMENDED

ROKSAN

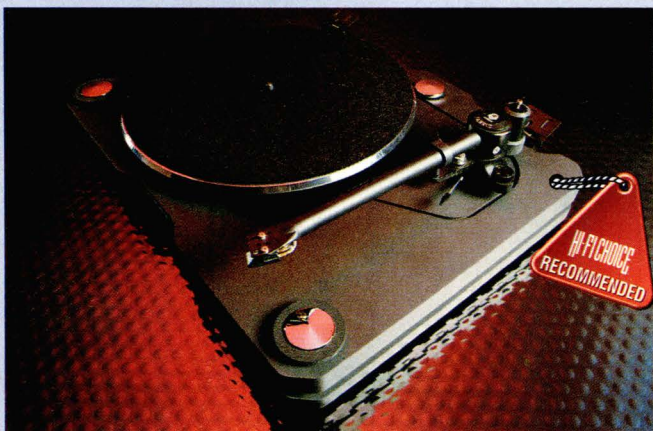
RADIUS 3 £1,170

Recently upgraded to mk3 status, the £470 *Radius 3* combines with the £420 *Tabriz-Zi* tonearm, £130 *Corus Black* moving magnet cartridge and *RokDSU* power supply to create a stylish £1,170 record player. It achieves a most successful balance between convenience and sound quality. Tidy, fast, ordered bass, with excellent definition and pace, underpins a forward, detailed but

slightly cramped midband.

This deck pushed the soundstage forward, making music immediate and exciting. Combine the *Radius 3* with a forward sounding amp and speakers, however, and you may end up with too much zing. On the other hand the balance comes quite close to a typical CD player's presentation, so the fresh, crisp delivery might prove ideal for those struggling to get the best out of both formats.

Roksan ☎ (01480) 451777
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159



77 Carbon



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1936
QUAD
7996

Turntables

RESON

RS1

£675

Only the unenlightened would fail to spot the similarities between the Reson RS1 (£675 inc arm and cartridge) and a certain turntable from Systemdek. Reson is a Swiss distributor/manufacturer/tweaker, and the turntable part of the RS1 started out as a Systemdek 1, prior to undergoing Karlev Audio modifications. These include fitting a DNM Rota motor, driven by an external plug-top power supply, an expensive smoothing capacitor, and a special, white, 'budget Ringmat' platter mat. The loose-fitting double-decoupled tonearm here is codenamed Mita, and is based on the Rega RB250 design, while the Aciore cartridge is derived from a Goldring moving-coil design. Everything comes already set up (with great precision).

The RS1 might defy most established turntable thinking — but it triumphs almost every time! No other deck in our five-strong group could match its detailed midband, which was first class. Away from the midband the sound was less impressive: bass was tight but dropped away early, and high frequen-

cies sounded ragged at times.

As a result the RS1 sounded stunning on some discs and with some instruments, but less so on others. It's capable of delivering one of the most authentic violin sounds around, but the introduction of a synthesiser can make it as sharp as lemon juice. Using a DNM table in place of

our usual Mana made the sound less bassy, but faster and better focussed in the upper bass — a classic example of system synergy, in the way the DNM and Reson components worked towards the same goal.

This only goes to show that the RS1 is no ordinary record player. Its presentation is too

individualistic and idiosyncratic to suit every buyer, but for those who are on the same sonic wavelength, it's something to get truly passionate about.

Given the affordable price tag, a Best Buy rating seemed mandatory.

Virtual Reality ☎ (01277) 227355
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 159



RECOMMENDED

SYSTEMDEK

2X2

£500

Systemdek's £500 2X2 is based on the longstanding IIX, but with acrylic inner and outer platters added to an easily-adjusted suspension system and a new plinth. No specific arms and cartridges are offered, and a Roksan Tabriz arm took the stage for our tests, but the deck has been designed to be used with anything from a Moth to an SME. The expressive and refreshingly open

sound was characterised by unfettered dynamics. Slightly favouring classical and acoustic material, it always sounded comfortably neutral, and delivered fine stereo soundstaging with great stability as music became more complex. It's capable of superb soundstaging, and makes the most of recordings with real depth. When neutrality and resolution combine in this way, Recommendation is a must!

Systemdek ☎ (01294) 271251
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 159



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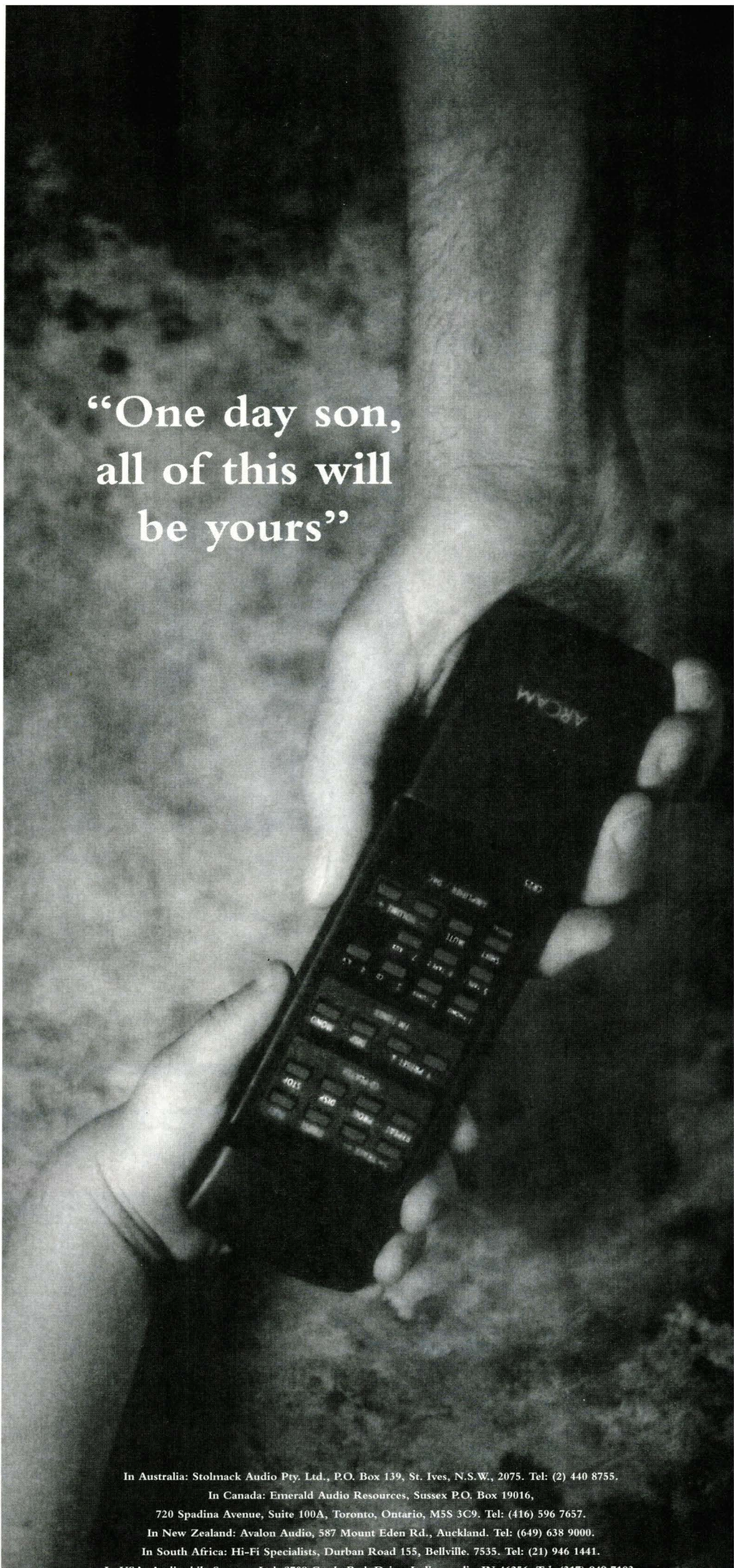
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In New Zealand: Avalon Audio, 587 Mount Eden Rd., Auckland. Tel: (649) 638 9000.

In South Africa: Hi-Fi Specialists, Durban Road 155, Bellville. 7535. Tel: (21) 946 1441.

In USA: Audiophile Systems Ltd, 8709 Castle Park Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46256. Tel: (317) 849 7103

Tape decks

DENON

DRM-550

£160

Successor to the Award-winning DRM-540, the DRM-550 shares a £160 price and generous feature count, including Dolbys B, C and HX Pro, plus headphone volume control and a timer standby switch.

Styling has been cleaned up and cams have replaced solenoids in the tape transport (this can still be a bit clunky, however). There's even an infra-red remote control receiver! Measured performance and sound quality were both below average, but then so was its

price in the group context — the 550 rather suffered by comparison with more expensive models. It didn't give of its best with Type IV (metal) tapes, but seemed well matched to Type II (chrome) software, with good midband analysis. It worked best of all with pre-recorded

material. You're bound to run into some performance limitations in any £160 cassette deck, but the Denon has an essential spark of musical integrity which transcends its problems and justifies the Best Buy rating.

Denon ☎ (01753) 888447
Reviewed
Hi-Fi Choice, issue 158



TECHNICS

RS-AZ7

£300

As a relatively up-market deck at £300, Technics's RS-AZ7 justifies its price tag with several high-tech features, including a Virtual Battery power supply. The most interesting is a completely new replay-head approach, using an amorphous-Z thin-film head and magneto-resistive technology.

Good lab-test results, except at extreme high frequencies,

tape type, and seemed happiest with good quality ferrics. Sound quality was rated 'pleasant but bland', with no serious criticisms, but some preference for Dolby B over Dolby C. Assuming our errant first sample was atypical, this deck offers performance commensurate with its price, even without considering the auto-reverse capability. The undoubted value of the latter elevates it to Best Buy status.

JVC ☎ (0181) 450 3282
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 158

were accompanied by exceptional listening test findings. "Doesn't sound like a cassette deck" was one apposite quote. The hands-on work confirmed superior bass and midband performance, and general lack of cassette waffle and bloom delivered by this new 'thin-film' approach. This confirms the Technics as an unreserved Best Buy.

Technics ☎ (0990) 357357
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 158



JVC

TD-R472

£200

Most high-quality cassette decks are uni-directional, but JVC's £200 TD-R472 is a serious attempt to combine high quality performance with an auto-reverse capability.

All the usual features are present, but this deck is distinguished by an higher than average record-bias frequency. Lab testing showed no serious weaknesses, though performance varied somewhat according to



SONY

TC-KE600S

£300

The high-class TC-KE600S includes a number of advanced technological features, and has undergone Sony UK's component optimisation

programme, all in the name of maximum sound quality. Despite some speed instability and auto set-up alignment problems, this three-head Dolby S deck still managed to sound rather good.

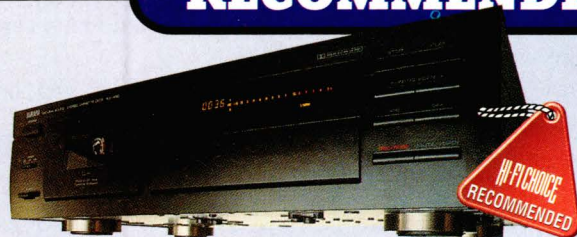
Sony ☎ (0181) 784 1144
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 158

YAMAHA
KX-490 £200

The KX-490 puts quality before quantity with its basic two-head mechanism, though remote control is a

worthwhile bonus. Even though our sample was somewhat compromised by slight flutter, sound quality is fundamentally good, offering a clean, open style of music-making.

Yamaha ☎ (01923) 233166
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice issue 158





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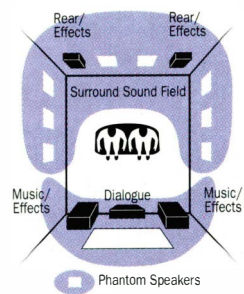
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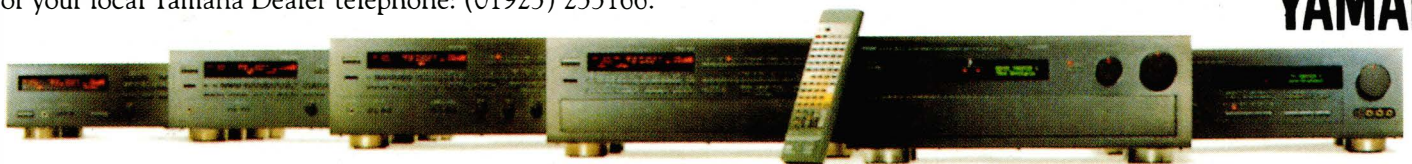
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Supports

MANA

SOUND TABLE/FIVE LEVEL AMPLIFIER STAND £600

Mana Acoustics *Sound Tables* in various forms have long been favourites with *Choice* people. They may not have been the first to demonstrate that equipment supports matter, but they were the first to show how important they can be.

This £600 five-tier *Amplifier Stand* is a representative example of an almost infinitely flexible system, combining glass and laminate shelves with hardened steel spikes and open metal framework to give all manner of upgrade paths. The prices are high, set-up is fiddly and time consuming, and the kit is only available direct from the manufacturer, but Mana customers



keep going back for more. The secret is the way these supports seem to improve the sound of every component placed on them, and making for an altogether more vivid and entertaining experience.

Mana ☎ (0181) 429 0118

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 151
Factsback 1633

QUADRASPIRE

Q4 £200

A simple and elegant modular support system, the four-shelf *Q4* costs £200, and further shelves are available at £50 each. Cherry-wood-veneered MDF shelves confer high domestic acceptability, and are supported and spaced by four aluminium rods, normally 140mm long, but also available in 100mm and 180mm lengths.

Set-up is easy enough, and in use this stand delivered a sound which was essentially neutral, avoiding undue emphasis of any part of the spectrum. Bass was full-blooded and articulate, the mid-range clear and balanced, and the treble clean and well ordered. If it lacks the ultimate incisiveness of the

Mana experience, it's easy to set-up and less likely to expose the limitations of your system, and therefore an obvious Best Buy at £200.

Quadraspire ☎ (01634) 296615
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 151
Factsback 1633



RECOMMENDED

AUDIOPHILE FURNITURE

BASE £460

Top prize for ease of set-up! The *Base* is a tripod-based modular affair, using *Base 01* isolation platforms on top of each shelf. Our four-level stack came to a total of £460. But the sound quality is well up near the front of the pack, managing to sound both lively yet easy going at the same time. Rhythm and timing were spot on and the balance essentially neutral too.

Audiophile Furniture ☎ (01342) 826262
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 151
Factsback 1633



SOUNDSTYLE

SELECT X6105 £300

A striking-looking piece of furniture, this new £300 five-shelf *Select* model from Soundstyle uses four large tubular legs, one at each corner, with rectangular cross-members supporting the glass shelves. A lustrous paint finish is available in a selection of colours. Set-up is simple and the end result reassuringly stable. The sound is slightly bright and lacking in fine resolution but has good timing and overall balance.

Soundstyle ☎ (01284) 701101
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 151
Factsback 1633

SOUND ORGANISATION

Z028 £135

A back-to-basics model from the brand which introduced the whole idea of equipment table 'sound', this five-tier package costs a very inexpensive £135. Assembly is straightforward, and sound quality is on the lively side of neutral, with some loss of bandwidth extremes. But it's good value nonetheless, and well suited to modest equipment.

Sound Organisation ☎ (01284) 701101
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 151
Factsback 1633



TARGET

B5 £185

A available in several variations, the standard *B5* comes in regulation black with wooden shelves at £185, though our sample had the deluxe finish and glass shelves at £224. Sound quality is impressive too, with good grip, plenty of weight; it's clean at the top end and realistically dynamic.

Target ☎ (01582) 401244
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 151
Factsback 1633

Speakers



B&W
DM302 £130

In the company's first 'budget miniature' for some years, B&W has come up with a very clever way of using plastics moulding technology to engineer a performance advantage for this £130 DM302. 'Prism' is the name given to a rear-panel moulding, which looks like the interior of an anechoic chamber (from inside the box, that is), with large intruding wedges. The idea is to break up, distribute and disperse the 'first reflection' sound-waves from the back of the main driver cone.

Although not everyone's favourite by any means, the 302 attracted little serious criticism, and therefore emerged as one of the most notable successes of the blind listening tests. Voices do sound just a little shut in, but a close-to-ideal overall balance is a major bonus for starters.

There are, however, limitations to what such low-cost engineering can achieve. For instance, the tweeter could sound sweeter, dynamics could be more expressive, and although the bass is quite even, it has a tendency to plod along.

Once again, the balance was the key factor in a good result with the budget system, though the top end did seem a trifle insistent here. And although the speaker could be driven pretty hard without obvious distress, it did show some congestion and hardening.

Probably the best-balanced miniature currently around, if not the most involving, the 302 is an undoubted success and bound to become a leading contender for the best-seller slot. Do note, however, that the amp load is very demanding. *B&W* ☎ (01903) 750750
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 156
Factsback 1778

CASTLE
HARLECH £850

Castle's *Harlech* might be relatively pricey at £850, but it's still exceptional value, with a fine wood-veneer finish, a large and complex floorstanding cabinet, and two classy cast-frame drivers.

Although it operates as a two-way design, an extra main driver is mounted on the top pointing upwards, which does much to increase the spaciousness of the sound. The drivers operate under 'quarter wave' loading, which has some similarities to horn loading. The (two) waves are terminated in a narrow but precise slot between plinth and enclosure, partly augmenting the bass but also providing superior diaphragm control.

The in-room balance is mostly very positive. The bottom end is a bit detached and lumpy, and the speaker needs to be sited clear of walls, but the midband is impressively flat, smooth and

well judged, and the treble is well integrated, too.

The *Harlech* came out as the overall favourite in the listening sessions, near or at the top of most individual lists. The sound is big and generous in the way it fills the room, yet also delicate and light on its feet, with fine dynamic range and tension, bringing through a convincing acoustic with appropriate recordings.

Superior bottom-end control makes the bass tuneful with good timing, even if it is a bit uneven and lacking in sheer power and authority. The balance might be a bit forward and up-front for some tastes, and the treble a bit exposed for some CD players, but the whole is much greater than the parts here.

Above all, the *Harlech* is an exceptionally entertaining and enjoyable musical experience at a very realistic price, and an obvious Best Buy.

Castle ☎ (01756) 795333
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 160



Speakers



to the cast-frame, Kevlar-cone driver, bringing extra tension to the musical experience.
 B&W ☎ (01903) 750750
 Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 152
 Factsback 1654

MORDAUNT-SHORT

MS30I **£275**

A largish vinyl-finished stand-mount, the £275 MS30i is unusual in using sealed-box loading. This gives a dry but well-extended bass and indicates that the speakers should be placed fairly close to walls.

The slightly forward balance projects detail well, and the 30i was well liked



by the listening panel, delivering fine scale and weight from a compact enclosure.

Mordaunt-Short ☎ (01705) 407722
 Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 152
 Factsback 1662

B&W

DM602 **£300**

A largish stand-mount speaker with a very classy main driver, the £300 DM602 is best suited to free-space siting. The balance leaves voices sounding a little 'shut in', and the bass might have been smoother, too. However, dynamics are reproduced with a conviction and enthusiasm rare among budget speakers, perhaps attributable

ORIGIN LIVE

OL2A **£470**

In contrast to its predecessor of the same name, this good-looking £470 compact floorstander is an altogether more exciting and invigorating performer, thanks to different drive units. Even though bass is limited and the top end a little too retiring and cautious, the fine midband and good communication skills more than justify this Recommendation.

Origin Live ☎ (01703) 442183
 Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 152
 Factsback 1664



DALI

104B **£370**

Presentation is strictly utilitarian, but this compact floorstander is impressive material value for money, with twin main drivers to give plenty of urge. It needs to be sited well clear of walls.

Sonically, the 104B is a real party animal. Truly impressive dynamics putting this high sensitivity model ahead of the pack here, though midband coloration lets it down a little, and the top end is also a little restrained.

Dali ☎ (0181) 343 3240
 Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 152
 Factsback 1657



MUSICAL TECHNOLOGY

HARRIER **£400**

The Musical Technology uses metal diaphragm drivers, in cunningly triangulated compact floorstanding enclosures — to very good effect.

Best kept clear of walls to give the most open soundstage and superior image precision, the £400 Harrier sounds just a little on the thin side of neutral, and dynamically a little undernourished. However, it's very smooth and natural in overall balance.

Mission ☎ (01480) 451777
 Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 152
 Factsback 1663



MISSION

734 **£500**

A good-size floorstander that has two main drivers, one ported, the other sealed-box-loaded, the 734 is plenty of speaker for £500.

Plenty of loudness is on the agenda, too, though dynamics are not its forte and the top end isn't the sweetest around. However, the balance is superbly well judged, and fine styling makes a big box look more elegant than most rivals.

Mission ☎ (01480) 451777
 Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 152
 Factsback 1660





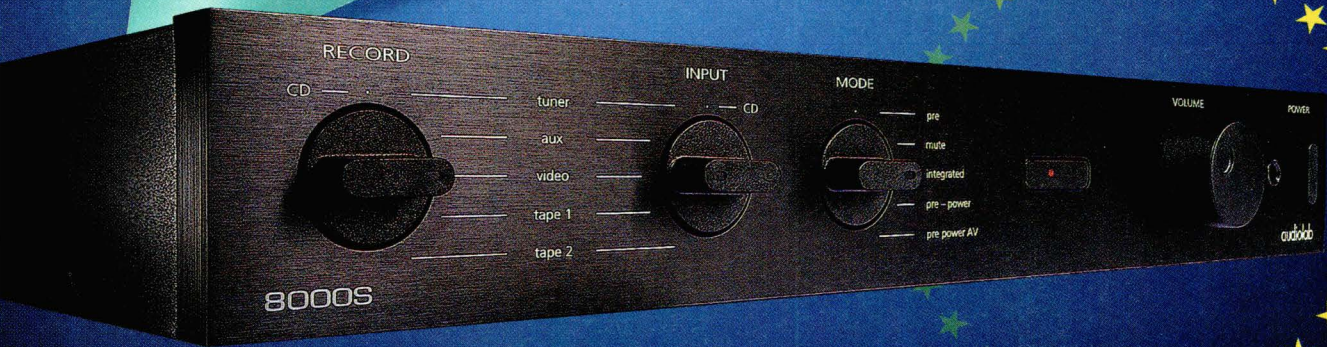
- Audiolab 8000DAC
- Audiolab 8000CDM
- Audiolab 8000C
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Speakers

JPW

MINI MONITOR £60

They don't come any cheaper than the JPW *Mini Monitor* at £60, but since you still get two drive units and a crossover network all screwed into a little box, why pay more?

The box is traditional chipboard, covered in woodprint vinyl. Design is not a word that springs to mind, but for functional cost-effectiveness, it's hard to beat. By opting for sealed-box loading, JPW is

sacrificing midbass output in the interests of a tighter balance. Such a speaker is less likely to sound boomy, but close-to-wall siting is essential to reinforce the midbass region. That, in turn, introduces some midband coloration.

The *MM* came out well in the blind listening tests. The tight, dry bass may lack some dynamic expression, but it times well and keeps rhythms under good control. Elsewhere the balance is a bit bright and scrappy, lending a rather thin overall character.

With our budget front end, the *MM* performed capably enough, though the sound was a bit small, lacking in air.

The *MM* isn't the prettiest around, but it's no slouch either, and an artful balance cleverly disguises its limitations.

Richer Sounds ☎ (0171) 586 5977
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156
Factsback 1781

JPW

GOLD MONITOR £80

The JPW *Gold Monitor* (£80 from Richer Sounds) shares the same box as the *Mini Monitor*; more costly drive units account for the £20 price premium. It's not quite as big or as interesting looking as the big sellers around £130 either, but the money saved will go a long way towards buying a pair of stands.

The ingredients are inevitably very common denominators. The sealed-box construction consists of woodprint vinyl-wrapped 12mm chipboard. The sealed-box loading provides a more extended but drier bass alignment, making close-to-wall siting mandatory.

Well liked by half the listening panel, it was praised for its open and coherent delivery. The other half raised doubts over a lack of 'body' and richness, and the thin and slightly 'fizzy' top end. The treble quality is pretty good, but

the quantity proved a bit strong for some tastes, and became a little wearing over the long haul. Dynamics are not really on the agenda, so the end result somehow lacks scale, despite audibly good bass extension. The fatigue factor became that much more obvious with a 'budget' CD player and amp; the 'in yer face' quality tended to highlight the limitations of the sources.

Good value for money: the only caveat is that it might be too revealing to make an ideal match with low-cost components.

Richer Sounds ☎ (0171) 586 5977
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156
Factsback 1782



RECOMMENDED

CASTLE

SEVERN £540

A compact floorstander, with separate plinth and quality real-wood veneer at £540, has got to be good basic value. A conventional front-ported two-way, which is best kept clear of walls, the *Severn* has an open and bright balance (perhaps too much so sometimes) and limited bass weight, but the midband is very clear, coherent and communicative.

Castle ☎ (01756) 795333
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 152
Factsback 1655

MONITOR AUDIO

MA700PMC £600

Exquisite real-wood veneer is one justification for the £600 price-tag attached to this beautiful stand-mount. Another is MA's new metal-cone main driver, which has an excellent midband. The bass is rather less impressive, however, and while the top end is sweet, it's also a bit restrained.

Monitor Audio ☎ (01223) 242898
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 152
Factsback 1661



MISSION

731 £130

Improved since early production, the 731 installs the main driver onto the back panel, providing some mechanical isolation for the tweeter and front panel.

A good-looking and compact speaker with 'inverted' drivers, the restrained treble is well suited to budget systems, while the bass encourages loud playing.

Mission ☎ (01480) 451777
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156

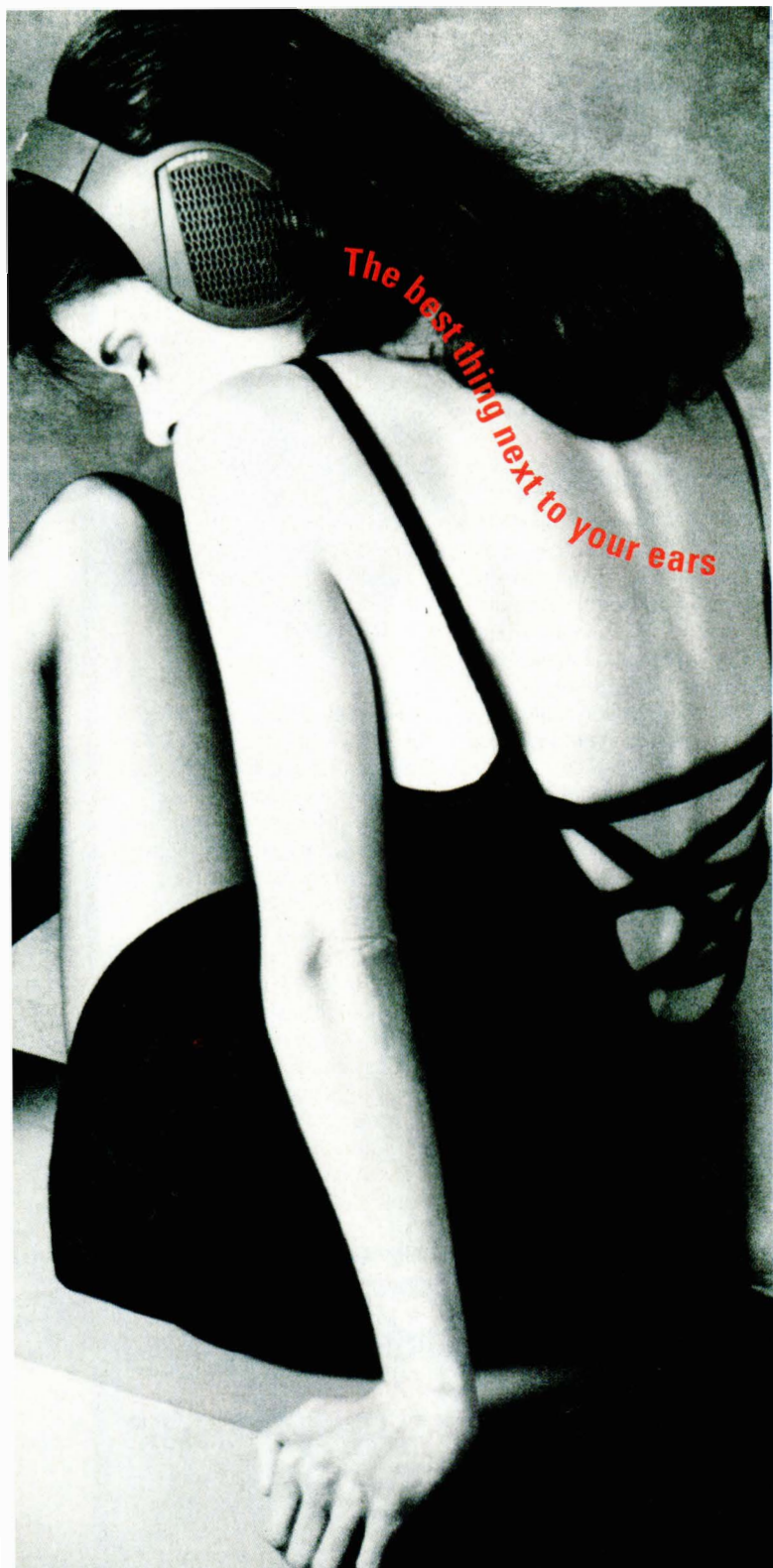
KEF

CODA 7 £130

This market leader has been relegated from the Best Buy ranks due to some reservations over the build and bass quality. However, it still deserves a Recommendation, as there's plenty of quantity for the price. The front panel is functional as well as attractive, while the fine open voicing remains a vital strength.

KEF ☎ (01622) 672261
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156
Factsback 1783





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Speakers

MORDAUNT-SHORT

MS10i £140

The new £140 *MS10i* is neatly detailed and finished, in an essentially conservative and restrained way, and the whole thing feels exceptionally solid. The box wrap is only about 11mm thick, but the front baffle arrangements are a masterpiece of mechanical integrity. A moulded plastic front with integral main driver frame is held by four massive woodscrews to a substantial (15mm) inset vertical brace. The bass/mid driver has a 90mm plastic cone, a protuberant phase compensating pole-piece extension, an open frame, and decent-size magnet.

The sound has a most attractive overall balance, which manages to sound up-front and open without suffering from undue harshness. There's no really deep bass here, but that seems much less important than the lively and tuneful qualities of what bass



there is. It can sound a bit boxy when driven hard, but at least it keeps up to speed. More surprising, perhaps, is that such a small speaker can deliver such a good sense of scale. The top end is quite sweet and very well judged in relative level, and if it does get a bit edgy when hammered hard, things still hold together well. It worked well with our 'budget' system components, too — just a little up-front for some tastes.

This may well be MS' best miniature since the top-selling 3.10 in the late Eighties.

Mordaunt-Short ☎ (01705) 407722
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156
Factsback 1789

PMC

TB1 £410

A stand-mount speaker using a variation on the 'transmission line theme' enclosure, the *TB1*'s presentation is attractive enough in a rather sober way, with real-wood veneer around the wrap, and a textured grey front and back. A large transmission-line-type port is set into the back, with (optional) bi-wire connection. The main driver has a cast frame and doped paper cone 125mm in diameter.

Room measurements tend to favour free-space siting, but under these conditions the mid-band (250Hz-1kHz) is rather prominent. Close-to-wall positioning helps match up the bass and midrange a little better, but correspondingly leaves the treble looking obviously depleted.

Rather ambivalent panel listening test results were disappointing, but quite explicable in the context of a very 'laid back' balance. Adjusting to the *TB1*'s

character and getting it correctly placed proved well worth the effort. The end result remains determinedly laid back and understated, and may not have quite enough impact for some tastes, but it has a rare ability to create a well ordered and precisely layered soundstage, with fine top-to-bottom coherence and a wide, clean and consistent dynamic range.

The *TB1* is an obvious Best Buy. Play it loud and Enjoy.

PMC ☎ (01707) 393002

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160



RECOMMENDED

B&W

DM601 £200

A decent-size stand-mount speaker, complete with cast-frame driver and high-tech Kevlar cone has historically cost significantly more than the £200 B&W is asking for this *DM601*. The result is not quite as even-handed as the baby *DM302*, but has a lot more going for it in terms of punch and dynamic drive. Generous loudness is available, while the stereo image filled the end of the room in a thoroughly impressive way.

B&W ☎ (01903) 750750

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156
Factsback 1779



MISSION

733 £330

Rated a Best Buy in our original review (issue 139), the samples of this floorstander received for issue 156 differed in one small but crucial respect: the relative treble output was down around 1.5dB, which dulled the balance sufficiently to put the listening panel off.

The *733* is still good for the price, but check it doesn't sound too dull in your system context.

Mission ☎ (01480) 451777

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156
Factsback 1786



KEF

CODA 8 £190

The *Coda 8* is a slightly bigger brother to the *Coda 7*. It has much in common with its range mate, including a moulded front panel, this time with a larger main driver. KEF has opted to use this to increase bass extension rather than sensitivity, the end result having open voicing but greater weight and scale. Again, though, the fairly lightweight build does compromise bass discrimination.

KEF ☎ (01622) 672261

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156
Factsback 1784



MISSION

751 £350

The *751* is tiny but very tough, and exquisitely presented with heavy-edge chamfering and rosewood side panels. Bass quality is particularly good, giving a surprising sense of scale, even if quantity and extension are limited. The midband suited our budget system well, but the extreme treble is a bit exposed.

Mission ☎ (01480) 451777

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156

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Speakers



REVOLVER

BERETTA

£100

A standard two-driver, rear-ported miniature, the £100 *Beretta* sticks closely to the stereotype that's dominated the UK scene for the past decade. Finish is plastic rosewood or mahogany, with the emphasis on the plastic. The box is solidly built from chipboard, with a little post-formed elegance around the front panel. The drivers are simply wood-screwed flat against the front, with no rebating to smooth the profile, and the grille doesn't look helpful either.

The main driver has a modest magnet and pressed frame with 95mm doped-paper cone, while the tweeter is a small annulus/dome affair. Everything is hard-wired internally, via a simple crossover, which is fitted inside the terminal block.

The *Beretta* came through the blind tests with very decent overall results for the price. How-

ever, there's a certain crudeness about the mid and top, and the presence (voice) band sounds a little shut in. But the bass is a real strength, sounding firmer, less congested and more informative than most competitors. Things were less satisfactory when using a budget CD player and amp, with a rather relentless top end and heavy overall effect.

Although not the prettiest or most techno-credible miniature around, the *Beretta* does make a largely successful attempt to deliver a better bang than most.

Revolver ☎ (0161) 973 0505

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156
Factsback 1790



ROYD

DOUBLET

£450

The slightly curious shape might look odd at first sight, but the fact that it's so slim brings a measure of elegance to this compact floorstander. Two of Royd's tiny but classy main drivers are mounted above and below a high-quality soft-dome tweeter. The inside of the box is divided to create a separate ported seven-litre chamber for each driver. The whole thing sits on a chunky laminated MDF plinth, fitted with three even hunkier (M8) spikes. Build is exceptional throughout, and real-wood finishes are an optional extra.

The *Doublet* should be kept clear of walls, whereupon it delivers a decent overall balance. The balance is not, however, particularly smooth, peaking up around one o 15kHz. Relative treble level is higher than average.

Voted a joint 'best of the day', its sonic performance is a little

uneven, and the mixture will never win universal acclaim, but the pluses outweigh the minuses. The bass end is mostly impressive, with fine timing, differentiation and power, but some unevenness and limited genuine weight. Dynamic range is good, and the sound is free from clogging, giving fine resolution of musical textures. Voices are a bit coloured and the brightness is not always welcome, but the whole thing remains lively, informative and busy, and deserves its Best Buy rating.

Royd ☎ (01952) 290700

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160

RECOMMENDED

B&W

CDM1

£600

Truly original speaker designs are rare, and this B&W approach, mounting an external tweeter on a slanted section of the baffle, is particularly clever,

being functional as

well as attractively different. High-class real-wood veneer and B&W's

high-tech drive units

all help create a luxury stand-mount of some refinement. It has very impressive bass for the size, decent sensitivity and some transparency, even though the balance is a little cautious and restrained.

B&W ☎ (01903) 750750

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160



MONITOR AUDIO

703PMC

£800

Similar in many ways to the stand-mount *700PMC*, this £800 *703PMC* effectively combines similar drive units into a luxury compact floorstanding enclosure. The veneer work is particularly attractive, though the price premium seems rather substantial. It's well suited to smaller rooms and free-space siting, and if the bass is a little lacking in weight, the slightly 'shiny' sound has fine up-front coherence and clear, well-projected detail.

Monitor Audio

☎ (01223) 242898

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160



NEAT

MYSTIQUE

£575

A most elegant compact floorstander (available from £575), which looks very tasty in its £650 real-wood clothes, and comes with a separate plinth. Best kept clear of walls, it's an easy speaker to like, with fine voice reproduction and a natural, relaxing musicality. However, it's an over-achiever. Sensitivity is quite modest, and dynamics seem a little constrained, but bass extension is pretty good for the enclosure volume.

Neat ☎ (01833) 631021

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160



QLN

QUBIC 222

£400

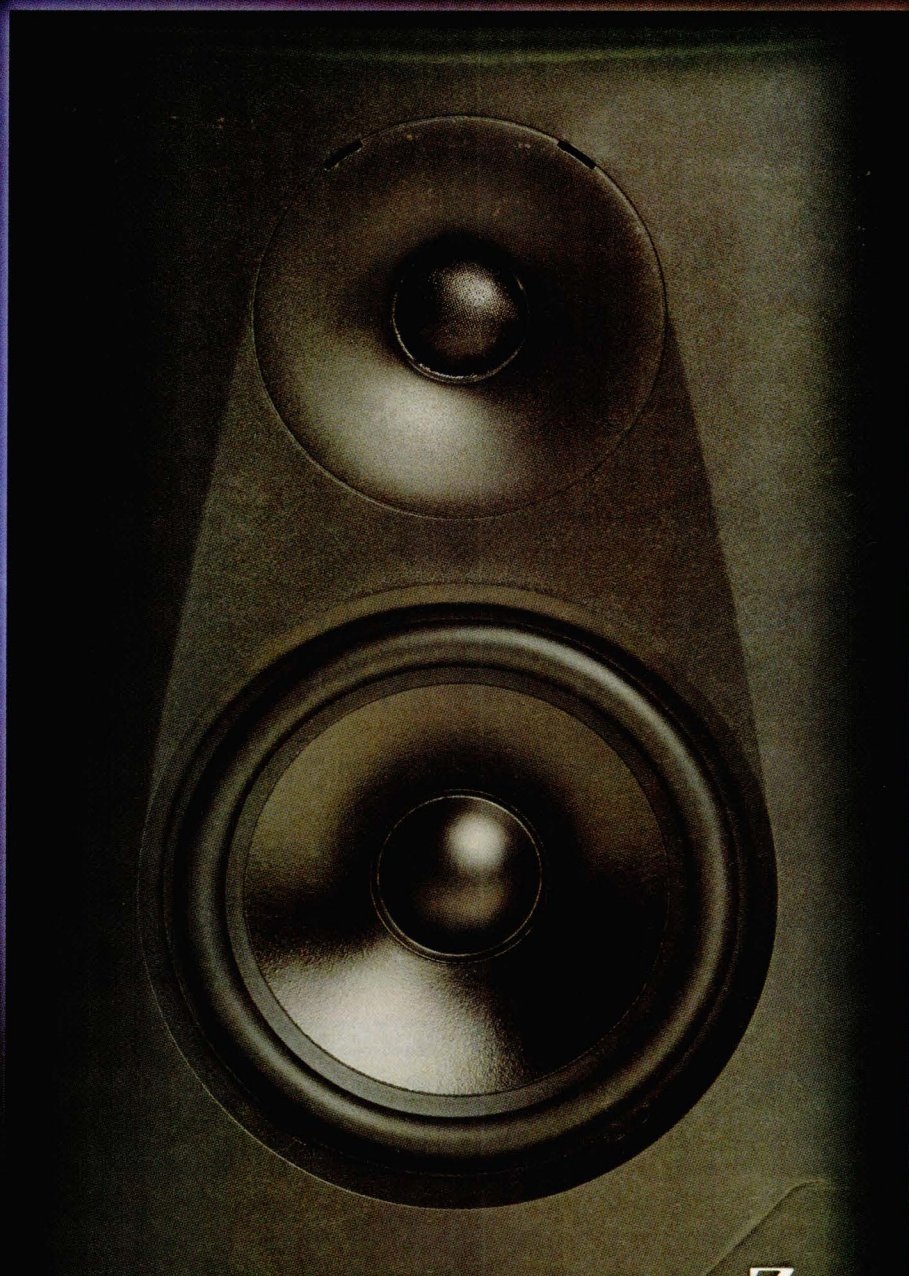
The £400 *Qubic 222* might be disappointingly dull in appearance and presentation, but nevertheless represents a lot of very competent loudspeaker for the price. Its heavy bass output may be better suited to larger rooms than the typical lounge, and free-space siting is mandatory. It goes loud with aplomb and the sound is basically very well behaved, if not terribly exciting.

QLN ☎ (01352) 730251

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160



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Speakers

TANNOY

631SE
£170

The standard 631 was rated Best Buy back in April '95 (issue 141), and Tannoy has now come up with this £170 Special Edition version.

A standard port-loaded two-way with inverted drivers (main above tweeter), it feels a pretty lightweight affair. It's constructed in the current Tannoy idiom by forming a wrap for the sides, front and back (made from 15mm vinyl wood print chipboard), and sandwiching this between plastic top and base mouldings. However, one important tweak is a beefing-up of the top surface by means of an MDF insert.



Small but rather classy with it, the 631SE recorded pretty good listening test results, albeit with the occasional voice of dissent. Bass isn't its main strength, but at least it is competent in a modest way, and there's also welcome freedom from the sort of boxy quality that seems to afflict many small speakers.

Don't expect much in the way of authority and punch. Midband refinement is what this speaker is all about, being one of the best-judged balances around, giving a very natural, just slightly laid-back effect, with sufficient coherence and dynamic range to keep the interest and involvement high. It succeeds through subtlety, with a hear-through midband clarity that stays unforced yet continues to inform well down into the mix.

The most impressive result came with our 'budget' components, which the 631SE managed to make sound subtle and smooth, with a firm, dry bass and an open, unforced character.

Tannoy ☎ (01236) 420199

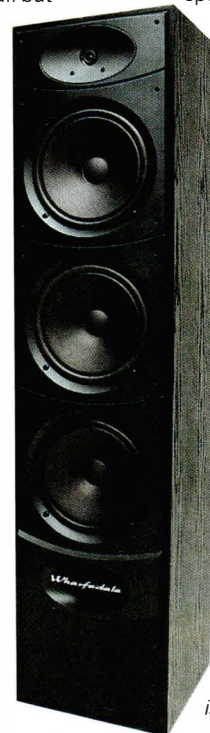
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 156

Factsback 1791

WHARFEDALE

VALDUS 500
£300

Reviewed in a six-strong group of speakers, chosen for their potential ability to Rock with a capital R, this tall but far from costly *Valdus* turned out to be the hardest guy on the block. £300 isn't a lot for any floorstander, never mind one with no fewer than four drive units. Three of these units appear to be identical cone devices in decent-size 200mm frames. In fact, though, the top one concentrates on midrange duties and is loaded by the top part of the cabinet, while the lower two with front port and larger box volume supply the bass urge. The tweeter is a ferrofluid-cooled 28mm diaphragm with some horn-loading. The front panel is covered



with plastic mouldings, black vinyl woodprint covering up the rest. No floor-coupling spikes are supplied, so cones will be needed.

Given the large driver surface area, it's no surprise to find these speakers are very efficient, going fiercely loud with only modest amplification, yet still able to soak up and use the Watts when needed. The impression these speakers offer is simple: it's large. Where other systems needed some real level to fill the room, the 500 didn't need far less voltage from the amp.

The tweeters are pretty quick, if not as good sounding as some, and while the *Valdus 500* goes amazingly loud, it doesn't go down as deeply as some of the competition. Still, in sound-for-pound terms, it's a Best Buy.

Wharfedale ☎ (01132) 601222

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 155 Factsback 1758

RECOMMENDED

SPENDOR

2030
£600

The £600 2030 is unusual in two key respects. It uses an elliptical main driver to help keep its front panel narrow, and comes in a matt-textured grey finish, the better to match the majority of other electronics. A separate plinth provides firm support, and if the balance is a little dark and restrained, the gentle transitions are easy on the ears. The speaker has fine underlying transparency and the ultimate sound is unquestionably musical and communicative.

Spendor ☎ (01323) 843474

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 160



TANNOY

635
£450

A good-size main driver — complete with Tannoy's dual-concentric co-axial tweeter arrangement — is mounted in a low-slung but capacious floorstanding enclosure, with a Profile shape for improved acoustic performance.

There's plenty of welly on offer, at a very sharp £450, from the 635 speaker. And although the sound does lack clarity and sweetness somewhat, it's very 'up-front' and immediate, thus earning its Recommended tag.

Tannoy ☎ (01236) 420199

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 160

CELESTION

IMPACT 25
£400

Well regarded among a group test of rock-oriented speakers, the £400 *Impact 25* is a simple two-way box. The main driver is loaded by a generous, front-ported floorstanding enclosure. Absolute deep bass extension falls short of the ideal, but the bass proper is enthusiastic and controlled, while the treble is sweet and unfatiguing.

Celestion ☎ (01473) 322222

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 155 Factsback 1758



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new Mini
separates?
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competitors
would.*

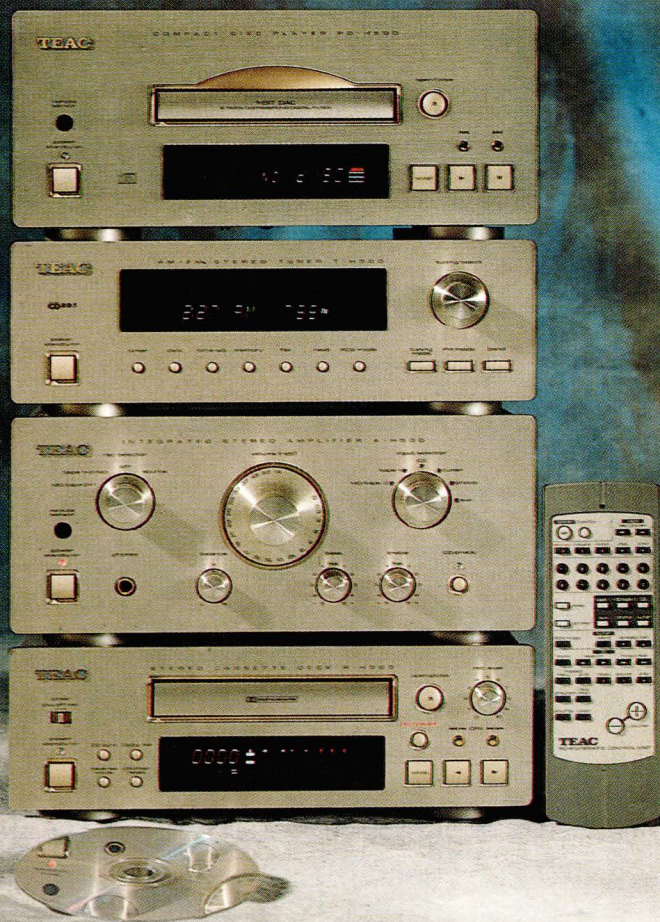
Why? Simply because our new *Reference 500* mini separates sound every bit as stunning as they look.

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Tel: 01923 819630

Speaker Stands

KUDOS

S50 £100

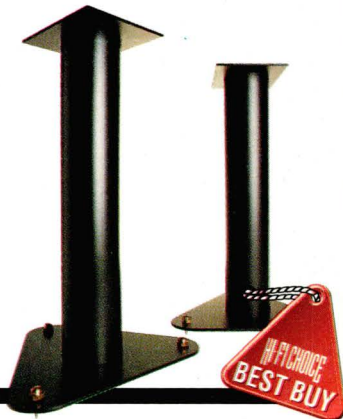
Slightly modified since our original Best Buy review (Sept '95), the £100 Kudos S50 is now normally supplied as a flat pack. The only option left to the user here is to add some mass/damping ballast to the single large-diameter steel pipe.

The two-dimensional base is less than ideal, aesthetically as well as functionally, but it's good and thick, fitted with sturdy spikes, and most effectively decorated by large brass lock-nuts. Tripods are easy to level and automatically provide the same downward pressure through each spike, while a large footprint makes this stand more stable than most quadrupeds. The top plate is quite thick and a sensible shape, but entirely imper-

forate — use cones or Blu-Tak.

Sound quality doesn't match that of the S100 by any means, but the S50 is still a class act for its price. The midband might be a bit shut in, but the best bass I've heard from a low cost stand is ample reason to continue the Best Buy rating.

Kudos ☎ (01903) 750750
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159



SOUNDSTYLE

X124 £100

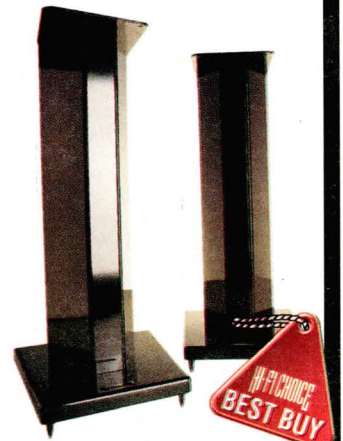
Soundstyle's £100 X124 follows the 'truncated triangle' pillar arrangement (popularised by the Atacama SE24), combining exceptional stiffness with relatively simple fabrication and an acoustic 'shadow' below the speaker. The high price is due to the gloss black finish, but heavy baseplate engineering and eight-mm floor-spikes are strengths.

Assembly was straightforward, apart from the usual ballast hassle. The top plate is arguably small for average bookshelf speakers, and not very thick either, but it does have four tapped holes for fitting the supplied top-spikes.

The X124 not only looks very smart, it sounds good too. It's altogether more capable than the SE24, and while it can't

match the similarly-priced *Kudos* in bass performance, it definitely has the edge on midband projection and focus. A little bright for some tastes and systems, perhaps, but many will find it invigorating and very entertaining.

Soundstyle ☎ (01284) 701101
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159



RECOMMENDED

ATACAMA

BD21 £55

Atacama's £70 SE24 has been our Best Buy budget speaker stand over the past few years, but those on a tight budget might well be tempted by the £55 BD21 self-assembly alternative. The single central pillar is a 100mm diameter steel pipe, topped by a small steel plate. It's a decent enough performer for the price, but doesn't have the smoothness of its bigger brother. Good value for money, but the SE24 lines up ahead on the grid.

Atacama ☎ (01455) 283251
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159

KUDOS

S100 £280

The Kudos S100 looks similar to the S50, but has a polymer composite base and a £280 price tag. The S100 comes fully assembled, an inner tube clamping the main column between top plate and base under a pre-set tension. The more we played the S100, the more we liked its firm, deep bass, wide range and extended bandwidth.

There's an element of compromise involved in all stands, but the S100 is the best all-round performer we've yet encountered.

Kudos ☎ (01903) 750750
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159

REVOLVER

RS1 £70

Both top and bottom plates are flat steel sheets, and the trio-column arrangement gives a pillar footprint as large as the truncated triangle, without the same dense visual impact. Sonically it proved to be a capable performer. Being quite low it makes the sound a little warm and rich, but the bottom end sounds firm and controlled, and broad midband hangs together very well without obvious coloration, even if the top end is a bit coarse and shut in.

Revolver ☎ (0161) 973 0505
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159

STANDS UNIQUE

TUNED SUPPORT £220

Solid cherry wood is a welcome alternative to steel, albeit at a price. Available as a basic stand for £160, this £220 high performance version adds a stressed steel tube as the main mechanical link, with a tensioned carbon fibre upgrade for an extra £120. With steel it betters the budget stands sonically, though the margin isn't dramatic. Carbon fibre makes a big difference; it sounds quieter, but also cleaner and smoother, with more coherent voice reproduction.

Stands Unique ☎ (01933) 461058
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159

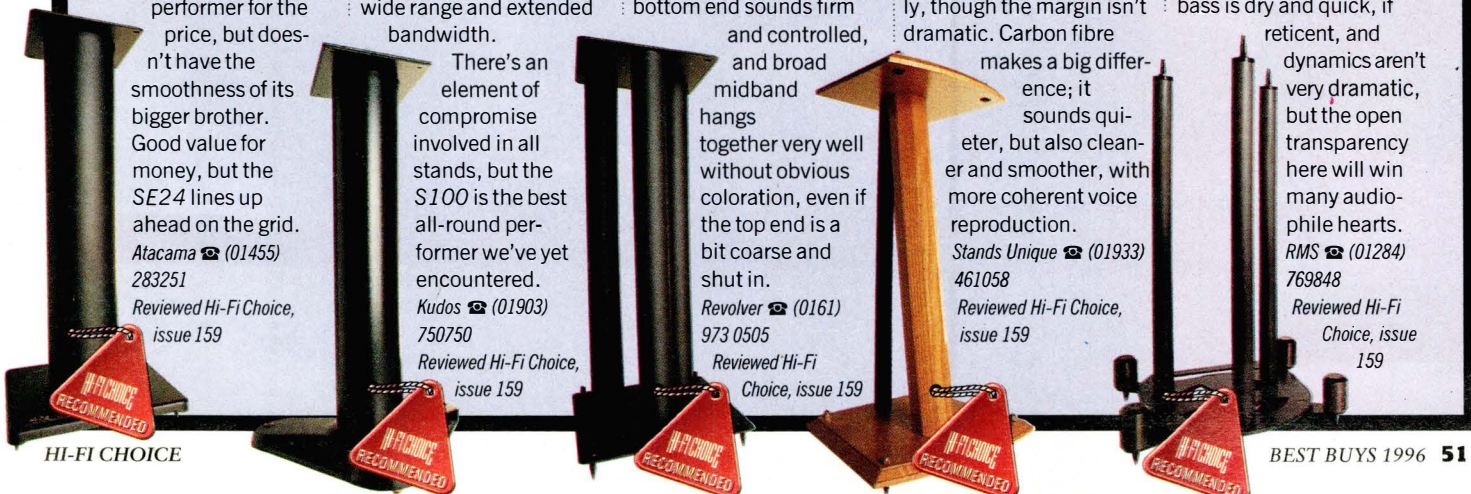
RMS

VIVAS FROM £550

Reviewed as a prototype, the £550 Vivas is probably unique in using steel-tensioned carbon fibre rods between base and speaker. Sounding different from a steel stand, it seems to lack any definable sonic character of its own, though the speaker delivers a much more upfront presentation. The bass is dry and quick, if

reticent, and dynamics aren't very dramatic, but the open transparency here will win many audiophile hearts.

RMS ☎ (01284) 769848
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 159



Authorised Cyrus Centres

Midlands, North & Scotland

Aberdeen

Holburn Hi Fi 01224 585713

Alderley Edge

Aston Audio 01625 582704

Barrow

Sevenoaks Hi Fi 01229 838757

Belfast

Lyric Hi Fi 01232 381296

Bury St Edmunds

Sevenoaks Hi Fi 01229 838757

Cambridge

The Audiofile 01223 68305

University Audio 01223 354237

Carlisle

Practical Hi Fi 01228 44792

Coventry

Frank Harvey Hi Fi 01203 525200

Darlington

Hi Fi Experience 01325 481418

Edgbaston

Music Matters 0121 429 2811

Edinburgh

Hi Fi Corner 0131 2201535

Falkirk

Hi Fi Corner 01324 629011

Gateshead

Lintone Audio 0191 4774167

Metro Ctr. Lintone Audio 0191 4600999

Glasgow

Glasgow Audio 0141 3324707

Hi Fi Corner 0141 2482840

Guildford

PJ Hi Fi 01483 504801

Halifax

Halifax Hi Fi 01422 366832

Huddersfield

Huddersfield Hi Fi 01484 544668

Kings Lynn

Martins Hi Fi 01553 761683

Kilmarnock

Laser Audio 01563 540292

Leeds

Image Hi Fi 0113 2789374

Leicester

Leicester Hi Fi 0116 2539753

Manchester

The Hi Fi Room 0161 8351366

Norwich

Martins Hi Fi 01603 627010

Nottingham

Nottingham Hi Fi 0115 9786919

Peterborough

The Hi Fi Company 01733 341755

Preston

Audio Excellence 01772 253057

Rishton

Romers of Rishton 01254 887799

Rotherham

Moorgate Acoustics 01709 370666

Sheffield

Moorgate Acoustics 0114 2756048

Shrewsbury

Creative Audio 01743 241924

Solihull

Music Matters 0121 7420254

Stourbridge

Music Matters 01384 444184

Stratford

Stratford Hi Fi 01789 414533

Wakefield

Image Hi Fi 01924 200272

Warrington

Practical Hi Fi 01925 632179

Worcester

Sevenoaks Hi Fi 01905 612929

York

Vickers Hi Fi 01904 629659

The logo for Cyrus, featuring the word "CYRUS" in a stylized, bold, sans-serif font. The letters are white and set against a dark background. The "Y" and "R" have a distinctive double-stroke design.

Mission Group Huntingdon, PE18 6ED England

Tel:+44 (0)1480 451777

Fax:+44 (0)1480 432777

email: info@mission-cyrus.com

http://www.mission-cyrus.com

Subwoofers

THE CAST LIST

B&W AS6	£500
Jamo SW600	£530
KEF Model 30B	£499
M&K VX-7B	£450
REL Q-BASS	£375
REL Strata	£575

A group test of half a dozen subwoofers (issue 154) was written as a compare-and-contrast feature rather than individual reviews. Formal Best Buy and Recommended ratings were not awarded; a star-ranking system assessed each model under a variety of headings.

Furthermore, REL has made several changes since our test: the *Strata* has now become a *Strata II* (untested, but probably an improvement). The 40 Watts *Q-Bass* is now only available in 'recycled' form (at £300), using amps returned by those making the £75 upgrade to the new and more powerful *Q-50* (50 Watts, £375). There's also a 100 Watts *Q-100* (£475), recently reviewed in our sister magazine *Home Entertainment* (see boxout).

STYLE

B&W AS6	3
Jamo SW600	4
KEF Model 30B	5
M&K VX-7B	5
REL Q-BASS	2
REL Strata	2

Compactness has got to carry off the prizes here, so top marks go to the discreet little 'bookshelf'-size M&K. But the KEF is pretty small too, and beats the rest handsomely in the fine detailing. Bonus points too for Jamo, for hiding all the gubbins underneath.

FLEXIBILITY

B&W AS6	4
Jamo SW600	2
KEF Model 30B	2
M&K VX-7B	2
REL Q-BASS	5
REL Strata	5

Flexibility should firstly be about the ability of the subwoofer to operate alongside a wide range

of main speakers. Here, REL sets an example which others would do well to follow. *Strata* is good, but *Q-BASS* is even better. M&K gets pretty close, too. However, the B&W, Jamo and especially the KEF all generate plenty of midbass output, so they're better suited to tiny satellite main speakers and home cinema than music reproduction. The RELs, however, don't offer the bass-filtered output signal, which can protect small satellites from bass overload.

HOW LOW?

B&W AS6	4
Jamo SW600	2
KEF Model 30B	2
M&K VX-7B	5
REL Q-BASS	5
REL Strata	5

It may be no coincidence that the three models that deliver really deep bass are those made by the subwoofer specialists (the two RELs and the M&K). Of the others, the B&W makes the better fist, whereas KEF and Jamo give no greater extension than many a pair of modest bookshelf speakers — neither justify the label subwoofer.

SOUND

B&W AS6	3
Jamo SW600	2
KEF Model 30B	2
M&K VX-7B	4
REL Q-BASS	5
REL Strata	5

Assessing the sound quality of woofers can never be absolute, because of specific interactions with the main speakers. Here, only the RELs and the M&K deliver really deep bass, setting them a class apart from the rest. The baby M&K is a little thick and congested, without quite the dynamic openness of the bigger RELs. However, it's remarkable that such a small box can deliver such deep bass, in sufficient quantities to keep up with a typical pair of miniature speakers. While *Q-BASS* is a most

effective device for the price, *Strata* is a classier act, being less obvious in its activity and more transparent in supplying the weight. The KEF proved commendably discreet, with a good sense of timing, though its bandwidth contribution was limited. The B&W has more weight and the promise of massive reserve headroom. The Jamo suffered from the coincidence of its main output frequency with a major room mode, resulting in 'one-note' tendencies under our conditions, but again, dynamics and headroom were impressive.

OVERALL

B&W AS6	4
Jamo SW600	2
KEF Model 30B	2
M&K VX-7B	4
REL Q-BASS	5
REL Strata	5

The B&W AS6 is good material value for money and delivers a fair amount of low bass, alongside flexible rolloff filtering, fine dynamic headroom and considerable loudness capability. The Jamo SW600 matches the B&W in value and has some neat styling touches, including a remote control unit, but deep bass is limited and output rather heavily concentrated around 50-60Hz. KEF's 30B is the prettiest and also quite compact, but limited ultimate extension and filter flexibility suggest it's best suited to sub-miniature satellites.

The tiny M&K VX-7B delivers deep bass in sufficient quantity for music applications at least. The REL 'recycled amp' *Q-BASS* is quite an achievement at £300, especially as it works very well, though the *Strata* (and *Q-100*, see box) do justify their extra cost on sound quality grounds. For telephone numbers, turn to the *Manufacturer's List* on page 137



B&W's AS6



Jamo's SW600



KEF's model 30B



M&K's VX-7B



REL's Strata

REL Q-100

"If you want fine sub-bass at a very competitive price, the *Q-100* has no equal." This up-line from the five-star Best Buy review in *Home Entertainment* (issue 40) sort of says it all. It's not so much the extra power as such, rather the tighter grip and wider dynamic contrast and headroom, which is even more beneficial with music than movie material.

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And the box it
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The Faraday ring may look insignificant. But it's this tiny component that gives the A Series its huge dynamic range.

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The Faraday ring is just one of many small, but vitally important components that make the new A Series so special. And there's only one place good enough for it. The beautiful box we put it in.



Speaker Cables

GALE

XL315

£2/M

From a brand which is part of Richer Sounds' manufacturing division The Audio Partnership, Gale's XL315 is a very traditional, heavyweight, multi-strand cable, with transparent insulation that shows off its shiny copper stands to good effect. The widely spaced parallel geometry gives a relatively high inductance which might slightly reduce treble output if

used in long runs.

Despite the very modest £2/m price there was little to fault about the sound quality, save for a slight lack of ultimate detail. Image depth perspectives were exceptionally well reproduced, the treble was open and clean, and voices were vibrant and expressive. A great performer at any price, at £2/m Gale's XL315 is a steal.

Audio Partnership ☎ (0171) 586 5977
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 157
Factsback 1800



HI-FI CHOICE
BEST BUY

RECOMMENDED

SONIC LINK

AST50

£1.95/M

An unusual cable using a pair of 16x0.2mm tinned copper conductors, covered with a silicone rubber insulation, the £1.95/m AST50 has higher than average resistance so is best restricted to fairly short runs (below 3m). The sound has delicacy and subtlety, and is essen-

tially even-handed; if the bass was a little detached, it was also powerful. Rhythm is handled well, and while better sound-staging can be found at higher prices, the AST50 delivers a fine all round performance at the price.

Sonic Link ☎ (01332) 674929
reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 157
Factsback 1800



HI-FI CHOICE
RECOMMENDED

BANDRIDGE

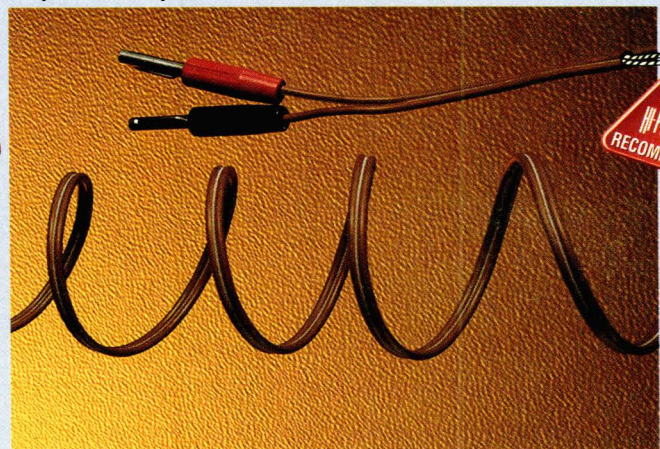
LC7409

£4/M

Major accessory specialist Bandridge has a number of speaker cables in its catalogue, including this LC7409, which uses very fine oxygen-free copper strands (1050x 0.07mm) in a PVC sheath, with traditional figure-eight

geometry and a very low resistance. The sound is detailed and up-beat, if a little steely with classical strings. It works best with rock material and is well suited to good-quality components with sweet treble delivery.

Bandridge ☎ (0181) 543 3633
reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 157
Factsback 1800



HI-FI CHOICE
RECOMMENDED



HI-FI CHOICE
RECOMMENDED

GALE

XL160-2

£3/M

Thinner, flatter and more car-pet-friendly than XL315, Gale's XL160-2 comprises four separate conductors and can therefore be used in bi-wire as

well as mono-wire mode. The sound is bouncy and rhythmic, albeit with some blurring of vocal intonation and loss of expression.

Audio Partnership ☎ (0171) 586 5977
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 157
Factsback 1800



Is it intelligent to sit here?



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The lead guitarist of 'Mission Aborted' is about to smash his axe over your head. Don't worry, it won't hurt a bit. You see you're listening on a Sharp SRS 3D Surround Sound system, so it sounds so real you feel like you're actually there. Using the revolutionary 'Sound Retrieval System', the audio system engulfs the room with vivid, 3D Surround Sound from just two speakers. And because you get the same effect wherever you are in the room, you can get up and rock around to your hearts content. There are 4 audio systems with SRS available. Each one provides a more affordable alternative to normal multi speaker systems. So do the intelligent thing. Surround yourself with sound, not speakers. Ask for a demo at any leading electrical store or call 0800 262 958 quoting SRS/HE/R for further information.

SHARP
INTELLIGENT THINKING



Interconnects

SONIC LINK SILVER PINK £35/1M

Despite an average showing in its first presentation, the Sonic Link Silver Pink turned out to be the best of the test. It was initially considered a bit bright, forward and lacking in weight, but nicely analytical and detailed. On subsequent sittings the forward brightness fell away, leaving a dynamically sensitive sound with a superb sense of timing.

It was also praised for an

admirably low 'muddle factor'; not blurring instruments together, even with the comparative complexity of Rachmaninov's *Third Symphony* in full swing. That it was the best-sounding cable in the test would have been enough for a Best Buy on its own, but when you consider that it's also one of the cheaper examples, the aptly named *Silver Pink* is a true star — so why does it look like it's covered in melted-down Action Man?

Audiokits ☎ (01332) 674929
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160



RECOMMENDED



CAMBRIDGE AUDIO STUDIO REFERENCE £40

Despite our built-in prejudice against products that use the terms 'Studio' and 'Reference' in their names, this is one mighty fine £40 cable — one of very few that seemed to find the right path between sounding too exuberant and too refined. It was also one of the only cables to have a dynamic range to match the electronics. Only the slightest loss of detail and a minute amount of veiling kept a Best Buy at bay. In fact, if more studios used this cable as a reference, recording quality would just keep getting better and better.

Audio Partnership ☎ (0171) 586 5977
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160

VAN DEN HUL SOURCE HB £49.99/0.8M

Praised for being a good all-round cable, the hybrid *Source HB* has a smooth, natural presentation, like a scaled-down version of the exclusively carbon-fibre *The First*. It's laid-back but not rolled-off; airy, yet well controlled. VdH's cheapest venture into carbon-fibre technology to date has much of the high-end sophistication of the more up-market cables at a fraction of the cost. It won't out-perform *The First*, of course, but has a damn good try. Highly Recommended.

van den Hul ☎ (0181) 810 9388
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160



CABLE TALK STUDIO 2 £64.95/1M

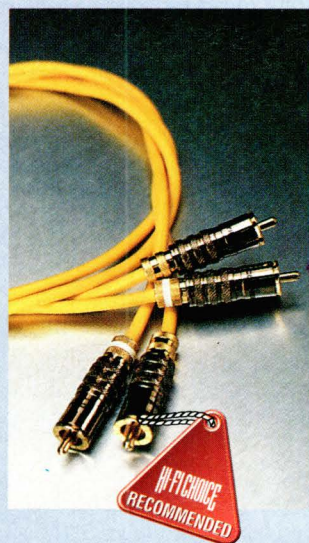
Cable Talk has a winner on its hands with the £65 *Studio 2* interconnect. There is little it doesn't do well. Excellent rhythm is here in abundance, but so is dynamic shading. Dynamic scale and detail retrieval are excellent, with plenty of ambience and a first-rate soundstage. *Studio 2* is excellent value for money and comes very highly Recommended.

Cable Talk ☎ (01483) 750667
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160

CONNECTIONS UK MIDAS HD £39

The vivid yellow £39 *Midas HD* comes complete with an excellent variation on the locking WBT plug — good value, almost without regard to the sound. Fortunately, it acquits itself sonically rather well, too, with a bright, breezy and open sound which is more dry and dynamic than most. Only a rather minor lack of musical coherence, caused in part by a touch of glare, held this cable back from the very best of the bunch.

Connections ☎ (01487) 832424
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160



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Headphones

BEYER

DT331

£82

Beyer has a strong following in both professional and domestic markets, and the £82 DT331 is clearly aimed at the hi-fi user. This is a large open-back design in which the ear pieces house speaker diaphragms of respectable size, and are fitted with large, circular, felt-covered foam ear-cushions. It also has a 'double' type headband, with a flexible inner band for location, the result is very comfortable, despite a 210g weight which is higher than much of the competition. Impedance is a modest

40 Ohms, there's no microphony from the lead, and the 3.5mm plug comes with a 6.3mm adaptor.

Bright, light and agile, the DT331 is perhaps a little thin and bass-shy in quantitative terms, but the treble sounds superb, uncluttered by the resonances and colorations often found elsewhere. As a result the sound is clear and incisive almost to a fault, while deftly avoiding fatiguing effects. It's a highly articulate, clean and coherent headphone which makes recordings sound believable and sets them in a spacious, slightly dry acoustic.



Those who seek the heavy, plodding bass lines associated with sealed-back headphones might find them inadequate, but for the music lover they're pure class.

Beyerdynamic ☎ (01444) 258258
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 157

VIVANCO

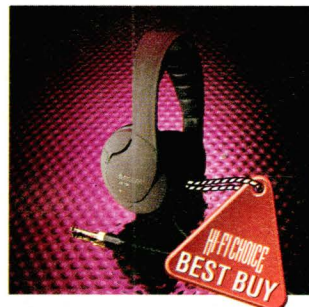
SR 750

£60

Looking similar to the cheaper SR 650, closer scrutiny of the £60 SR 750 reveals that it is heavier at 188g. It justifies the higher price, no longer suffering from the treble resonance which afflicted its stablemate. Cable microphony introduces a minor demerit, but ear capsules are acoustically inert, despite semi-sealed construction.

The sound is lazy dynamically, and shows a hint of lower-mid overhang, so the sound isn't as open as some. But the treble is sweet, timing is good and the sound as a whole is clean, with good detail resolution and a fine sense of acoustic scale and space — a steal at £60.

Vivanco ☎ (01442) 231616
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 157

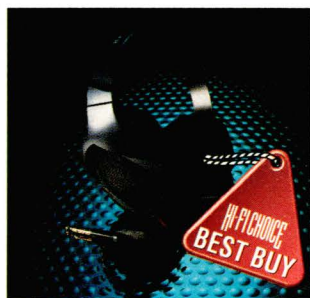


SENNHEISER

HD 565

£150

A design from the top of Sennheiser's Ovation series, the £150 HD 565 is relatively heavy at 255g, but is extremely comfortable. It's an open-back design, and is more acoustically transparent than most. Modular construction adds to long-term serviceability, enabling leads (or ear pieces) to be easily replaced. Physically it's a rugged design and should survive tough duty with few scratches. The con-



necting cable had low microphony, while the ear pieces incorporate powerful, small rare-earth magnets and laminated Mylar diaphragms and aluminium

voice coils. Impedance is 150 Ohms.

Sound quality is exceptionally good, responding with lacry to transient stimuli and delivering an exceptionally fluid and neutral midband. And if the treble seems a little muted, the overall qualitative excellence is beyond doubt, extending out to both frequency extremes. All of which adds up to the best all-round model in our under-£150 group, and an obvious Best Buy.

Sennheiser ☎ (01494) 551551
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 157

RECOMMENDED

SENNHEISER

HD 455

£55

Sennheiser's £55 455 is a snappy dresser with sharply defined lines and natty red foam inserts. The design is well built, modular, light and comfortable for long periods, with a good sound quality. It's not particularly clear, detailed or expressive, but the absence of obvious resonances brings a smoothness which is arguably preferable for extended use. No sonic over-achiever but fine construction and a sharp price



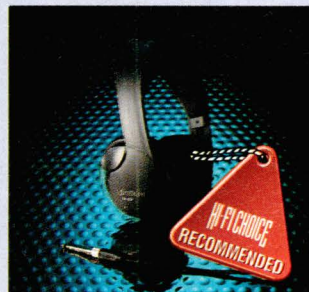
both point towards a Recommended flag.
Sennheiser ☎ (01494) 551551
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 157

VIVANCO

SR 650

£50

Described as a 'half-open' design, the £50 SR 650 is a 175g lightweight and is very comfortable to wear, thanks to a twin-headband arrangement and soft cushioning. The bass sounds even and well-extended, and there's plenty of treble too, but this has a sharp and aggressive edge, unlike its £10 dearer stablemate. Treble resonance tends to detract attention from the midband, and can become a little wearing with extended lis-



tening, though the level of detail and overall coherence as well as physical comfort at a reasonable price still imply Recommendation.
Vivanco ☎ (01442) 231616
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 157



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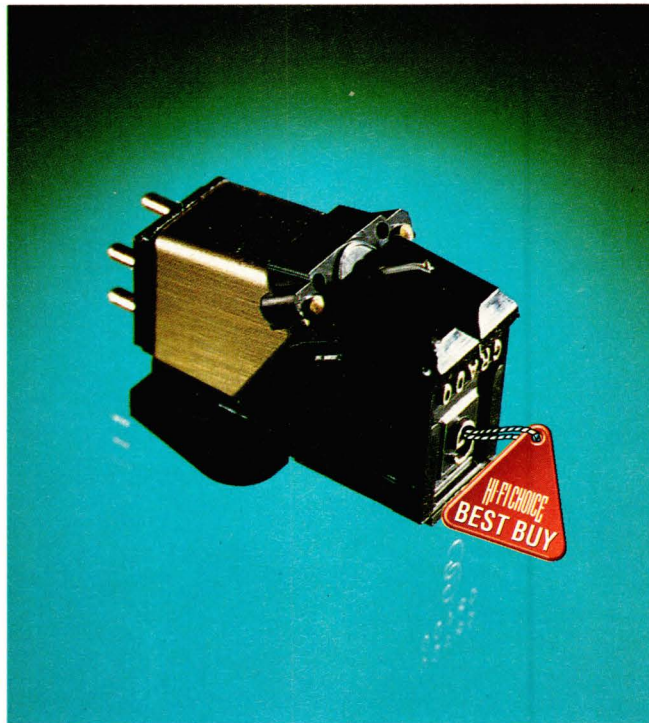
Cartridges

GRADO

PRESTIGE GOLD £149

Grado is one of the oldest hi-fi brands around. Back in the days when the vinyl pickup cartridge was king, the company had a much lower UK profile than bigger rivals like Shure and ADC, but its individual approach still managed to build a strong cult following. The range went from some of the cheapest up to the most expensive cartridges around — yet top to bottom they looked almost identical, featuring a replaceable stylus assembly that was so securely fitted that a tool was supplied for its removal.

An upmarket cartridge by any normal standards, the £149 *Prestige Gold* looks exactly the same as those predecessors. It's a high output moving magnet (MM) design, the technology being a moving-iron variation on the MM theme, incorporating Grado's 'flux bridger' generator principle which needs fewer coil turns than most MM systems. This in turn reduces the coil inductance and renders the output unaffected by the varying capacitance loadings of different



tonearm cables and amplifier inputs. You can't 'tune' the top end of a Grado like some moving magnet designs, but you don't have the unwelcome sonic repercussion of a tuned resonance to contend with, either.

Grado's approach to upmar-

ket cartridges has always been based on the careful selection of individual samples. The *Prestige Gold* models represent the top ten per cent culled from the already highly-specified *Prestige Silver* (£119) production.

The sound of high-output moving magnet cartridges never quite seems to match the sweetness or refinement of the better moving-coil types, but the *Prestige Gold* came a lot closer than most. It was lively and detailed but never edged on vocal sibilants, and didn't over-emphasise acoustic guitar leading edges. Voices were expressive and involving, tonal balance seemed even, and there was a sense of substance often lacking in MM types. Although not as scrupulously detailed as the best moving-coils, it still wrested plenty of information from the groove and imparted a proper feel to the music.

The Grado's presentation was extremely easy to live with, and comfortably communicative. It didn't ram feisty music in the face but did maintain a lively character. It will probably gel well in a great many systems, and since it managed to keep its head high in much more expensive company, the £149 price seems positively reasonable, therefore the *Prestige Gold* is a definite Best Buy.

Grado ☎ (01284) 701101

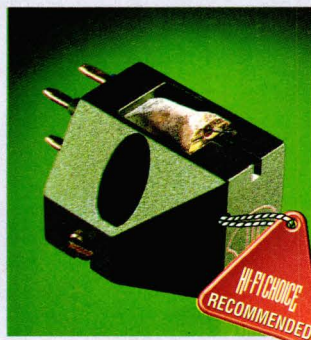
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 158

RECOMMENDED

LYRA

LYDIAN £649

To a long-standing fan of Lyra's upmarket *Clavis DC*, the arrival of this 'entry level' £649 *Lydian* provoked plenty of recognition cues, leading to immediate (careful) removal of the (green) bodywork, and consequent sound quality improvement. The *Lydian* comes close to its more expensive brother in all the most important sonic and musical respects, just losing out a bit in bandwidth and speed. Which means it's more than a match for anything else around,



extracting bags of information but keeping it tightly knit into the music as a whole.

Lyra ☎ (01494) 441736

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 158

WILSON-BENESCH

MATRIX £689

Sheffield-based Wilson-Benesch are big fans of carbon fibre, using the material extensively throughout their range, including the 'bodywork' of this £689 *Matrix* cartridge. Said 'bodywork' is entirely vestigial, leaving the high output moving-coil generator exposed and the longish boron cantilever looking very vulnerable indeed. Not for the ham-fisted, this one. But eminently forgivable in view of the excellent sound quality, and the effortless way it lets the



music take over — delightfully clean and neutral, yet fast, dynamic and powerful too.

Wilson-benesch ☎ (0114) 285 2656

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 158

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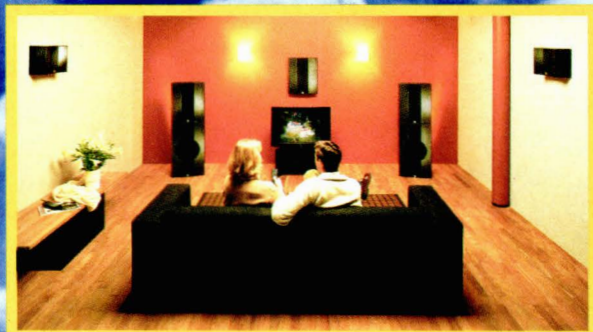
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AV Processors

TECHNICS

SH-AV500

£280

Not so much an amplifier, more its second cousin, the AV processor is for those interested in adding a movie-watching dimension to an existing hi-fi system. There are various possible ways of making such a transition, as Dolby Pro-Logic processors are built into a whole variety of components — TV sets, amplifiers, receivers, mini systems, even satellite receivers.

For anyone who puts hi-fi performance at the top of the priority list, however, the add-on processor is unquestionably the way to go. You can opt for the convenience of using the remote-control processor to switch all audio and AV sources, or stick to the purist route by using the processor just for the video components, and running a single connection back to the hi-fi amp.

The £280 SH-AV500 is a pretty chunky component, with a useful operation/status display, Pro-Logic and simulated surround modes, plus the extra power amps needed for centre-front (50 Watts) and surround sound (two x 16 Watts). Although the latter might have been more generous, in other respects the lab performance is very good, with low-amplifier distortion, fine channel separation and steering logic, wide dynamic range, good overload margins, and extended frequency responses even on the surround channel.

This promising engineering performance translates into a very subtle, well-balanced and smooth sound, which remains clear and lucid without sounding too bright or losing its grip on important detail. The nauti-

cal sound effects spread from the front to the surround with a marvellous and surprising sense of integration.

Loud sound effects in one channel do not tug the image to one side; the processor maintaining discipline over both bold and subtle details together. A slight overall mildness helps achieve an air of authority and composure, and the musical soundtrack came through with genuine commitment and emotion. Moreover, the sense of balance and subtlety

was maintained at low levels, too, keeping up the level of involvement and attention where lesser models lose tension and become less effectual.

Despite its modest 'entry level' price, this Technics AV processor takes an evenhanded and highly competent approach to its surround sound duties. However, it also deserves the epithet 'hi-fi' for the degree of atmosphere and level of tension it brings to movie soundtracks.

Technics ☎ (0990) 357357

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 153



HI-FI CHOICE
BEST BUY

RECOMMENDED

ARCAM

XETA 2

£650

A relatively upmarket AV processor at £650, Arcam's Xeta 2 is distinctive in a number of respects, and offers a very British approach to the art of AV processing, shared only by its amplifier stablemate Xeta 1.

The Xeta 2 is a neat, slim unit with no on-board display; instead a built-in character generator displays the necessary information

on the TV screen. Simplicity and future upgradability are preferred to an abundance of frilly features. The lab performance checked out very well, with a hefty 65 Watts plus 2 x 53 Watts of power available. The sound is vivid and robust, building drama most effectively with full-scale blockbuster movies, though more delicate soundtracks were a little less successful.

Arcam ☎ (01223) 440964

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 153

PIONEER

VSP 200

£250

This £250 VSP 200 from Pioneer has quite a history. It was the stand-out bargain in a group of AV processors way back in December '94 (issue 137). It then managed to repeat the trick in our sister publication, *Home Entertainment*, in the summer of '95. It would have done the same again this year had it not come up against the similarly priced Technics

SH-AV500, which definitely has the sonic edge.

With a combination of 50 Watts plus two x 24 Watts power available for the extra AV channels, the VSP 200 remains a very lively and entertaining performer, with a real flair for the dramatic.

Maybe it doesn't provide the cleanest sound around, but it still thoroughly deserves this Recommendation rating.

Pioneer ☎ (01753) 789789

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 153

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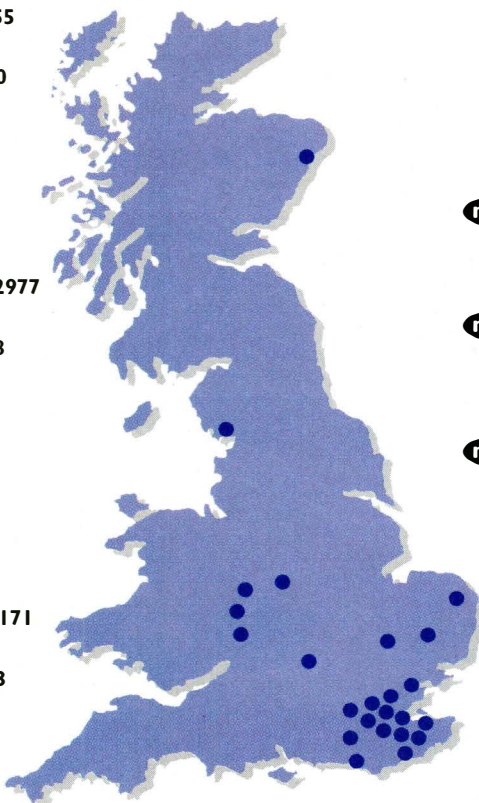
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Buying great equipment is just the beginning. Unless it is set up and adjusted properly, the sound it produces may disappoint. And it's almost impossible to get good sound if your electrical connections aren't clean and tight. So always begin your set-up routine by checking that plugs and sockets are free from tarnish. Next, make sure all connections are firm and that contacts are solid.

In an ideal world, wires should be soldered to plugs, though a tightly-crimped connection can be just as satisfactory. Don't just check out signal cables; mains wiring is every bit as important. Always disconnect equipment from the mains and seek expert advice before investigating things in detail!

Avoid mains plugs and distribution boards that have neon power lamps, as these can lead to a grainy sound. Also, consider replacing stranded mains cabling with solid-core-type where appropriate. Again, you should get a cleaner, less grainy sound.

If your equipment has a

detachable mains lead using the popular three-pin IEC plug, it's possible to buy ready-made solid-core replacement cables from DNM [☎ (01277) 227355]. The company also offers a special solid-core-wired 13amp mains distribution board for audio use.

Where your hi-fi sits can significantly alter the way it sounds, so don't overlook this vital aspect of installation. There are many brands of audio support available, but most consist of a rigid-steel frame with spiked feet and shelves.

Realising that a good support platform could noticeably alter the perceived sound of a system led to the use of a lightweight suspended shelf that would not store energy. It was left to London dealer The Sound Organisation to market a purpose-designed support stand — primarily intended for Linn's LP12 turntable.

Ideally, loudspeakers should be placed so that their tweeters are at ear height. However, placing the boxes near the ceiling, facing down, can give good results too!



Keep your plugs clean for sound that's pristine!

However, it soon became clear that other components, like amplifiers and cassette decks, also gave improved sound when placed on such a platform. The improvement was so noticeable, it made sense to site the whole system on purpose-built supports. Mana Acoustics has taken the concept to its logical conclusion with highly rigid stands.

It must be hard for sceptics to accept that equipment stands can have anything more than a subtle influence on sound quality. But once you experience the cumulative effect of multi-tier Manatables, you'll beg to differ!

Stands are crucially impor-

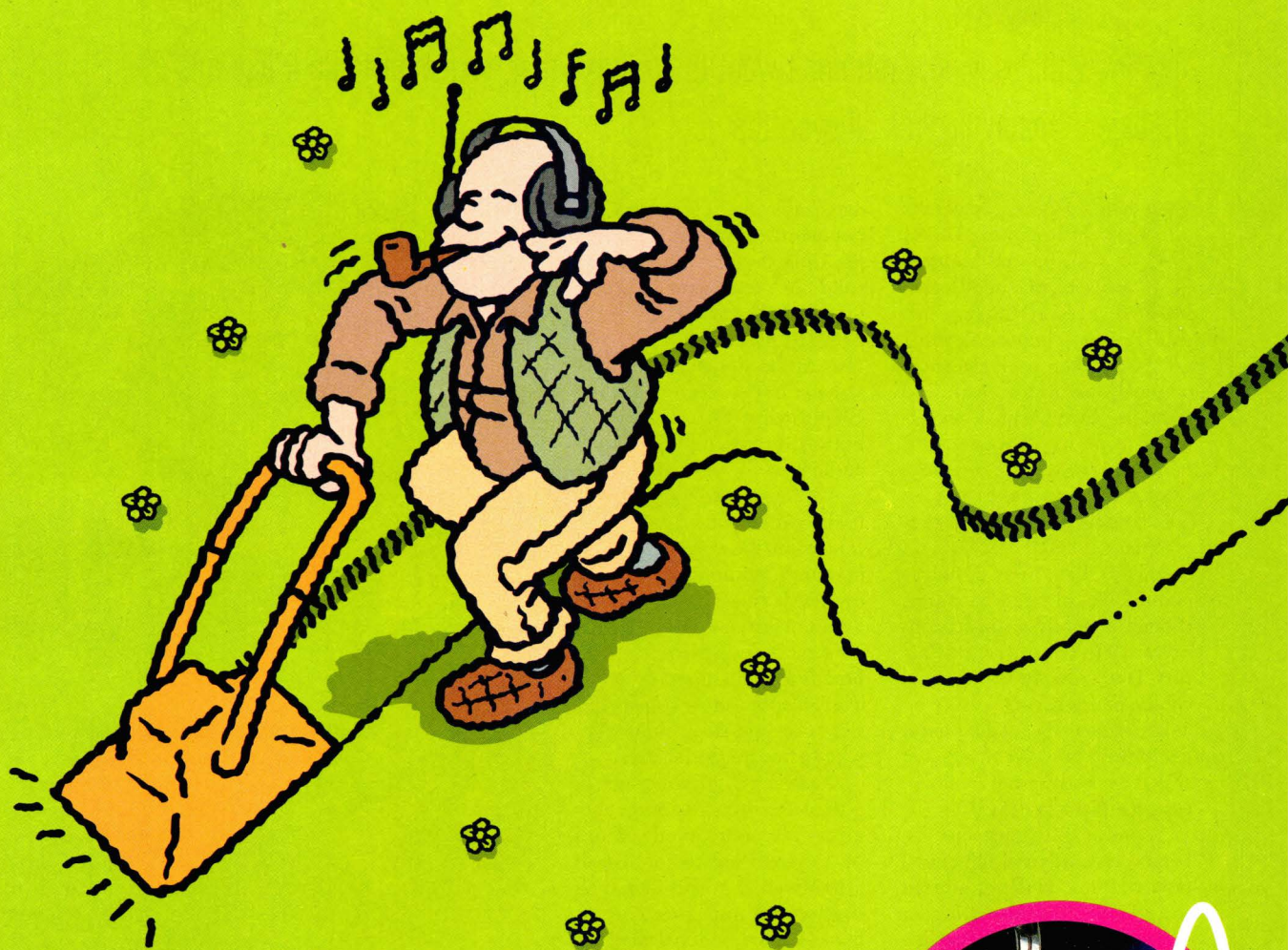
tant to the sound of speakers, too. In this case the aim is to provide a solid foundation for the speaker, so that spurious movement is greatly reduced. This enables the drive-unit cone to translate its movement into sound efficiently.

To achieve maximum rigidity, it's useful to weight down the speaker stand with sand or lead shot. Doing this improves focus and detail, leading to a more tactile and articulate sound that has greater immediacy and attack, plus increased firmness and stability.

Where spikes are used to provide an interface, it's vital that they're adjusted to the right height. This helps ensure an even spread of support, with no wobble or 'chatter'. Stands with glass shelves are particularly demanding of correct adjustment.

You must always remove the ►►

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◀ equipment from the shelf being set, to ensure the spikes are at the correct height. If you don't remove the component, its mass may cause the shelf to bend slightly, making it tricky to get each spike adjusted optimally. Likewise, speakers should be removed from stands when you're adjusting floor spikes to compensate for uneven surfaces.

Use a spirit level to ensure the stand is properly levelled — this is particularly important for components like turntables. Because many floors are uneven, you should reset the spikes if ever the stand is moved. Sometimes, even partially dismantling a stand (for cleaning, say) can result in slight changes to spike height, if the point beds into a different part of your floor.

While there is great merit in having rigid supports, many pundits advocate the use of decoupling platforms like the Townshend *Seismic Sink* [☎ (0181) 979 2155]. Turntables are very sensitive to external vibration, and some have only limited suspension. If footfall problems cause your turntable or CD player to jump when you walk past, investigate the use of an isolation platform.

Position your speakers!

Back in the 1970s, loudspeakers were regarded as the most important link in the hi-fi chain. Since that time, opinion has come to favour source components as determinants of a system's performance. There is merit in both points of view, but it's hard not to overestimate the importance of choosing the right speakers and positioning them correctly.

The classic stereo speaker setup has two enclosures spaced about eight to 12 feet apart, with the listener sat about the same distance away to form an equilateral triangle. You can vary these dimensions a little without



Your whole system will benefit from good supports.

serious mishap, but having the speakers too far apart may lead to wide central images — the 'hole in the middle' effect. Placing speakers too close together causes a lack of stereo breadth and width.

It's worth experimenting with placing the speakers in different parts of the room. Often, speaker positions are dictated by seating arrangements and furniture, but if you can try alternative sites, benefits may result.

Usually, you should set the height of the speaker so that the tweeter (high-frequency) unit is at ear level. This should help sharpen stereo imagery, and ensure that directional high frequencies are not lost. However, it can result in a tonal balance that is too bright and forward.

When this occurs, turn the speakers inwards so that their axes cross at a point in front of the listener. A less purist alternative would be to mount the speakers up high, near the ceiling. The latter arrangement gives a lovely, even spread of sound, albeit with a diffuse soundstage.

Hi-fi is unpredictable, and sometimes the best solution to a problem will be totally unexpected. For example, faced with a sound that lacked depth and treble brilliance, who would think that the best cure might be

to add a sub-woofer. Yet it's surprising just how vital it is for overall fidelity, to reproduce signals of 20Hz and below.

Even large speakers can benefit, let alone small stand-mounted types, which probably offer little useful output below 50Hz — whatever the spec says. A good sub can greatly improve imaging and depth, while imparting a lovely, rich sheen to the upper frequencies.

Even when you play recordings of instruments that seem to have little or no deep bass, the effect can be quite startling. A good sub isn't just for bass freaks who want to shake the room.

Homeopathic remedies

■ Removal of speaker grilles is strongly recommended by many pundits, but do listen and compare before consigning yours to oblivion. Sure, you'll get a sharper, more immediate sound with the grilles off, but with them on, things should sound more homogeneous and integrated.

A quick A/B comparison with grilles on and off will probably favour the latter, but see how you feel over a longer period. If, minus grilles, things sound slightly fatiguing, try listening for a whole evening with grilles on, and see if you enjoy the experience more. It's easy to be impressed by a bit of extra bite and immediacy, only to lose warmth and integration in the process.

■ If CD is your main source, and your amp has a tape-monitor button, using the tape input instead of the CD input may improve the sound. This is because the tape input takes the signal via a shorter path, bypassing the main input selector. The amplifier must have a separate tape-monitor button or switch for this to work, though.

■ Many integrated amps have two sets of speaker terminals, marked A and B, and logically, most users usually plump for set

A. However, these often reside above set B, and because they're physically further from the amp's main circuit board, they don't sound as good as the 'B' terminals. Sometimes swapping from A to B can make a surprisingly large difference.

■ This may be a right pain, but you'll find your main source sounds best if you don't have extra sources connected to the amplifier at the same time. If CD is your principal source, but you also have LP, tuner, tape and video connected, try this test.

Play a vivid-sounding CD and listen; then play again, having disconnected all other sources. Keep volume levels identical. Music should sound 'louder' and livelier when the amp has only one source connected; there should be firmer, deeper, more powerful bass, plus greater fine detail and presence.

It's a moot point whether any benefits are worth the hassle of connecting each individual source component every time you want to listen. One for the serious anorak only? Needless to say, I listen this way...

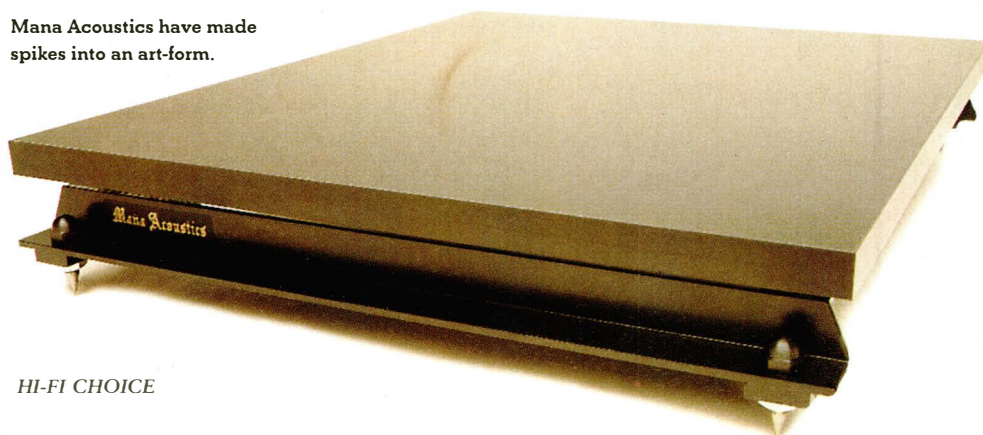
■ Those with only one source, or dedicated enough to connect only the source on audition, will find it beneficial to make up shorting plugs to short-circuit all the amp's unused input sockets.

Older readers may recall that some 1970s Japanese amps were actually supplied with such plugs — no-one knew why at the time! Take care when shorting-out the amp's tape record outputs. Unless these are buffered, and thus protected, you might find shorting plugs degrade the sound instead.

■ Finally, something that defies logical explanation: the way CD players seem to sound better when played from rest. John 'Ringmat' Rogers showed me this one, and it's bizarre. Play a CD by a selecting a track before the disc has started spinning. Then cue the same track, but this time with the disc spinning already. I think you'll find the sound equally impressive second time around.

If you cue from stop, listen, then press pause, or forward/reverse shuttle, you should notice the sound losing some of its freshness. The best sound seems to occur when you go straight to the desired track from stop. Strange, huh? ▲

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Help!

Malcolm Steward dispenses wise hi-fi advice with a toothsome smile and a cheeky wink.

Send your hi-fi queries to 'Help!' at the usual address (page 145) or 100433.1130@compuserve.com. We regret that we cannot answer individual queries on a personal basis.



Query of the month

Brought to you in association with B&W Loudspeakers!

We're awarding a pair of B&W DM601 speakers, worth £200, to the writer of this month's best query. These superb 14-litre enclosures sport one of B&W's famous 120mm Kevlar mid/bass drive-units, which come with a cast-alloy frame, leading to sound quality that is praised for its sense of authority and soundstaging. Wow!

Cartridge confusion

My present system consists of a pair of JPW P1 speakers on Heybrook stands, a NAD 3020i amp and a Yamaha KX-380 cassette deck. Recently, I picked up a secondhand Thorens TD160 turntable and SME Series III tonearm from a junk shop. I fitted a new drive belt and borrowed an Audio Technica AT-91 cartridge from a friend. Fortunately, the instructions for the arm had been supplied, although setting it up was still a small nightmare. The results have been amazing, to say the least; my previous experience of records was with a cheap midi system before the separates were purchased.

I do feel, however, that in comparison with the cassette deck, the bass could be a bit more powerful, and voices seem to have very harsh sibilance on some records, which is annoying. Obviously, the cartridge is only a very cheap one, and this is where I need advice on something better. The manual for the arm had some information about a Shure M75 cartridge with it, but this was not on the deck, and I am informed it is no longer available. I am willing to pay a fair amount for one, but please don't suggest something that costs a few hundred pounds!

Richard Pardoe-Williams, via the Internet

The Shure cartridge was a high-compliance design, ideally suited to your old SME arm. Nowadays, most cartridges have lower compliance and will work best in a more modern tonearm. So, I'd look

for a Rega RB250 or RB300 (right) — secondhand examples cost next to nothing — and bolt into it a cartridge, such as a Denon DL110 or Rega Elys. You'll need a new arm-board to fit the Rega to your deck, so while the Thorens is being dismantled, you should give it a complete overhaul: readjust its suspension, replace the oil in its main bearing and clean all the mating surfaces.

To optimise the deck's bass, search around for a suitable support for the deck — suspended sub-chassis turntables tend to be very sensitive about what's underneath their feet. See if your 'junk shop' has any Sound Organisation tables or similar hidden away.



Too laid back

I want to upgrade my Technics SLP-377A CD player, which I think may be causing my system to sound unbalanced. As there are so many players between £200 and £350, I would appreciate some advice on which ones to audition.

I would like more openness, a better soundstage, more detail and less harshness and brittleness on vocals. If I try warmer-sounding equipment (I listened to a Technics SUA-800 amp before I bought the Sugden OPT 80) my TDL RTL2s just sound too rich and warm in the bass. Also, vocals seemed to be too laid back, as if right at the back of the soundstage. The Sugden solved this problem and KAR interconnects did give a little warmth to the midrange and treble without losing too much detail.

I have tried a Teac CD3 CD player, which sounded good because it didn't over-emphasise the bass — a problem I found with some of the other amps I tried.

S. P. Guest, Rotherham, Yorks.

Compare the Teac to other players at the top end of your budget limit, such as the Kenwood DP7060, Onkyo's DX750, NAD's 514 and the Rotel RCD970BX. Remember, however, that changes to your CD player might also require you to reposition your loudspeakers, to maintain their correct tonal and timing balance. In your case, try moving them closer to, or further from, the rear wall to optimise bass weight, midrange clarity and soundstaging.

What amplification?

I have a Sony CDP312 CD player and a pair of Mordaunt-Short MS10s. Could you please

For a better sound-stage, try NAD's 514.





Try Naim's NAIT3 with the MS10s for a most pleasing sound.

give me some advice on what amp would suit this combination. I have been looking at various integrated amps, including the Yamaha AY1070 and Musical Fidelity's E10 and E100, along with AV amps like Denon's AVC 2800 and Arcam's Xeta One. I'm open to suggestions of anything you would consider a better buy. I can go up to about £800.

Can you also tell me what these phrases mean: bridged mono and bi-wired. I am a bit new to all this and some of the technical phrases are double Dutch to me. Are there any books on the market that could walk me through the wonderful world of hi-fi?

Simon Fearnley, Hong Kong.

The user-friendly MS10s will work with a budget amplifier or a top-notch model, sounding good with the former and significantly better with the latter. However, despite their accommodating nature, I think you'll find they'll be more rewarding with a dedicated hi-fi amplifier than with an AV model, if you're looking for the best performance with musical material. Some of the most pleasing sounds I've heard emerge from this speaker have been produced by Arcam's Alpha 5+ and Naim's NAIT3, so they would be good choices to audition first.

Bridged mono operation is a facility provided by some power amplifiers, whereby their two stereo channels can be combined to produce one, significantly more powerful mono channel. Obviously, you then need to use another identical bridged amplifier for stereo.

Bi-wiring simply means connecting your speakers to your amplifier with two sets of cables per speaker; both connect to the same terminals at the amplifier, but one cable connects to the treble unit while the other connects to the bass unit at the speaker end.

Bi-amping involves connecting each drive unit to its own amplifier: one stereo power amplifier can drive the left speaker while the other drives the right; or one amplifier can drive the left and right tweeters while the second drives the left and right bass units. It sounds trickier than it is. (Lots of hi-fi terms explained in our new Glossary, p.99 — Ed.)

Try before you buy

I recently upgraded my Philips CD player, replacing it with a Rotel RCD965BX, on the basis of consistent recommendations in *Hi-Fi Choice* over a long period of time. I was very pleased with the result — the sound from my Creek 4040 amplifier and Celestion 3 speakers was transformed into an altogether sweeter and more

Heystak was made for RCD965BX.



detailed presentation of music. The bass, however, left much to be desired and was less well defined than before.

I bought, on recommendation from another magazine, the 'best-selling amplifier made in the UK', namely an Arcam Alpha 6 Plus. I was unable to audition it with the now discontinued Rotel CD player, but was assured that it would go very well with it. It certainly improved the bass but in other respects there was not the dramatic improvement I expected. It seems, from your comments, that the Alpha partners some equipment well and others not so well. I intend to trade mine in at the earliest opportunity. However, I want to upgrade my speakers first, preferably to some decent floorstanders that will make the most of the qualities of the RCD965 BX.

Could you recommend a short-list of suitable amps and speakers, say £300 to £500 in each case?

K.P. Smith, Mansfield, Notts.

You have, at least, learned one valuable lesson: never buy anything you've not heard demonstrated to your satisfaction. Have you considered taking the amplifier back to the dealer and asking him to exchange it for something that better matches your system?

The RCD965BX was — and still is in many respects — an outstanding machine, but its generosity in the low end did make its performance rather more system dependent than most. It used to work extraordinarily well with the early Pioneer A-400 and Mission 760s, for example. With other components that didn't have the requisite complementary features, however, it could be far less rewarding.

Basically, the RCD965BX needs partnering with a tight-sounding amplifier and speakers that provide no excessive lift in the bass. Potentially suitable

audition candidates would be the Audiolab 8000A or Cyrus III amplifiers, with speakers such as the Rega ELA or Heybrook Heystak.

Pace and timing

My system currently comprises an Arcam Delta 250 and Black Box 50, Arcam Delta 290 and 290P, Epos ES14s with dedicated stands, Audioquest Quartz, Video 2 and Crystal cables, and a Soundstyle Tristand.

The improvements I'm seeking are in the area of pace and timing with female vocals, classical music (including a great deal of solo piano) and light jazz and blues.

I have listened to the Naim Audio 'one way street', but found that I lost out in the female vocal department. Should I explore the talents of the Epos' 14s with a change of amplifier — perhaps the Exposure 18 and 19? Alternatively, do I bin the speakers and move upmarket in that department, to gain the timing I am missing?

P.C. Jones, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.



ES14s demand top-quality amps.

As it happens, the ES14s — which time beautifully when suitably driven — were designed using Naim NAC32, HiCap and NAP250 amplification, and I've yet to hear them fully exploited by anything less. They're candid, revealing speakers, which demand to be fed by a top-quality source and amplifier combination.

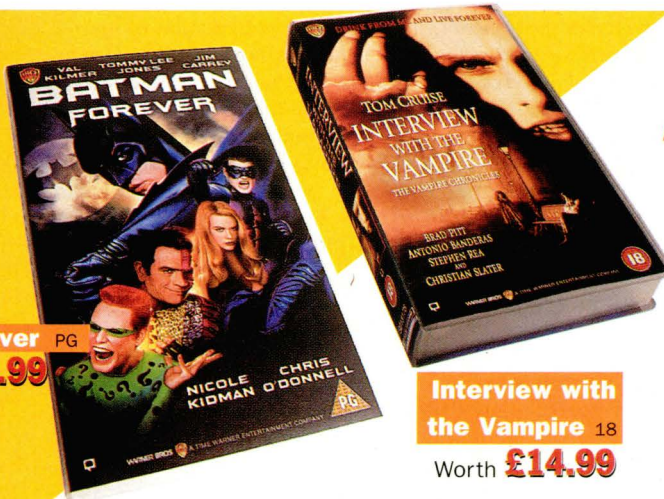
I would investigate amplifiers in the upper echelons of the Naim and Exposure ranges, along with CD players from

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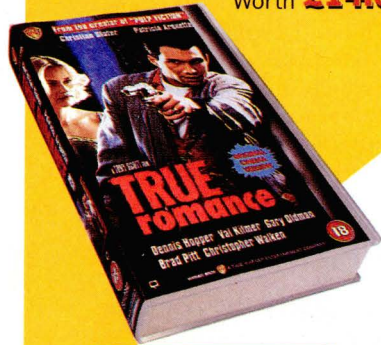


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Don't scrimp on the CD player — give Trichord's Genesis an audition.

◀ Naim or Micromega, before you decide to 'bin' the speakers. Sort out the amplifiers first and, if you decide to hang on to the Arcam CD player, investigate alternative interconnects, as I reckon you'll find those from the Chord Company will convey timing information better.

CD or Cyrus III?

About two years ago I bought the following system: a Cyrus II amp, Marantz CD52SE and Mission 753 speakers. I'm not quite sure where to go from here, and look to you for advice. Should I change my amp to the new Cyrus III with remote?

I like my system, although I still think something is missing, but I don't know what.

My speakers are bi-wired with cable that was supplied by the shop I bought them from. Do you think this is the problem or could it be the CD? I also use the supplied interconnects — do you suggest an upgrade?

I usually listen to pop, rock and some dance.

Jason Byrne, via the Internet

Buying a new CD player is your priority. The CD52SE is a good budget machine, but it's not capable enough to use with speakers such as the 753s, which need a supremely tidy, controlled feed to function as their designer intended. Afterwards, you can think about switching to a Cyrus III, which would be a good move, as it's a more balanced and a better-sounding product than its predecessor. Don't scrimp on the CD player, though; spending up to £1,000 on a player

for your system wouldn't be unreasonable.

Start your search by auditioning players at the Micromega Stage 4, Arcam Alpha 8 and Trichord Genesis level.

Tune into Naim

I have a system consisting of a Rotel RCD965LE, Metaxas Ikarus 11 integrated amplifier and Ruark Talisman II speakers. I want to add a good tuner, since I wish to listen to live FM broadcasts.

I'm considering the Audiolab 8000T, but I've also short-listed the Naim NAT3, Rotel RT990 Micromega Tuner and the Rotel Michi RHT-10, which has been recommended to me. These tuners are all within my £500 to £900 price range.

What is your advice relating to future digital cable broadcasting (DBB) in the context of the tuners mentioned above?

Carsten Poulsen, Aarhus, Denmark.

My preference is for the Naim NAT03, which I feel best captures the energy and atmosphere of live broadcasts. It's not as feature-laden a device as the Micromega and Audiolab models, which are also fine performers. You might find the latter two preferable if you like to station-hop and can't live without preset tuning. All of these tuners, however, need connecting to a serious antenna to get the best from them.

As far as digital cable broadcasting is concerned, you'll need a DAB receiver to access it, and I don't know of any hi-fi manufacturers currently producing such a device. However, I wouldn't worry unduly about it, because even when it becomes widespread it won't oust FM radio.

Nocturnal radio

I have a specific requirement that, to my knowledge, does not seem to be available, but I hope your magazine resources will be able to help.

Due to the nocturnal broadcasting traits of Radio 3 with reference to jazz transmissions, I have had to resort to using the timer function built into a Sony mini-separates system, to record said programmes. Unfortunately, certain live concerts exceed two hours — the length of the longest compact tape.

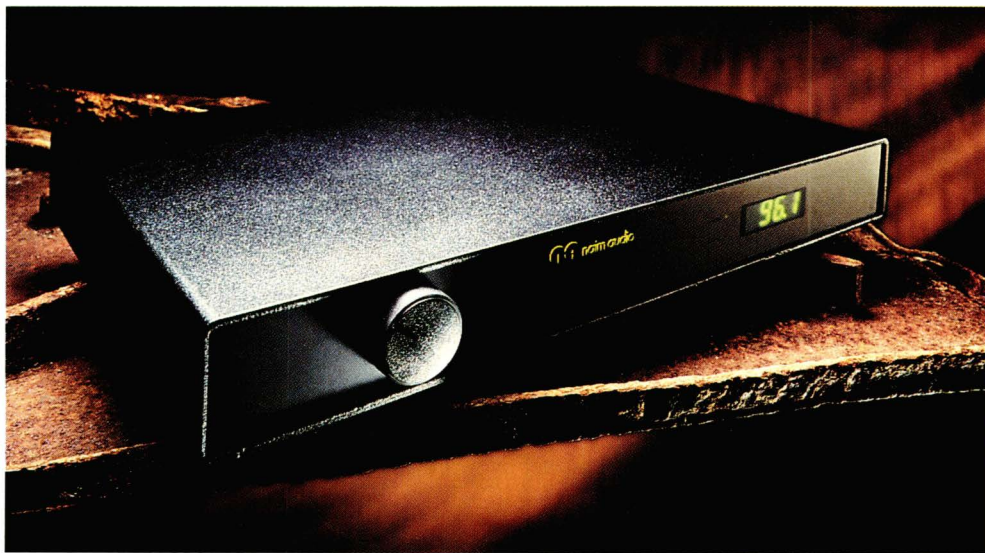
My question is: are there any double-deck tape units that have recording heads in both decks, with a relay command and a timer within, so that I could hook that up to a tuner to record using two C120 tapes? This would provide four hours for a concert broadcast.

A.J. Frost, Cardiff.

There's a simple answer to the four-hours-on-one-tape unattended recording conundrum: it's called a VCR.

Patch your tuner's output to the audio input of your video recorder and set the timer as you would for taping a regular TV show. If your VCR has an LP function, you can squeeze eight-hours of music onto one E240 tape. The other solution, which is hardly as convenient, is to drink loads of coffee and sit up all night.

I would also advise against using 120-minute cassettes if you want to take care of your audio deck: they're more prone to shedding and jamming than C60s and C90s.



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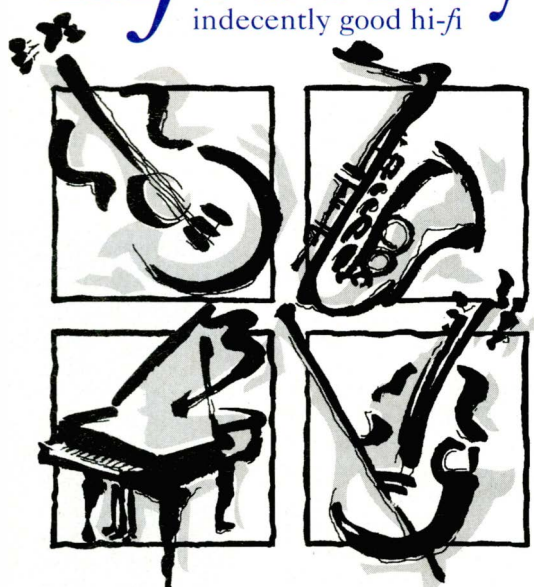
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◀ Good budget sound

I own a system that is composed of a Marantz CD-50 CD player, Cambridge Audio P50 amp, Marantz SD-50 cassette deck, Marantz ST-50 tuner and Sony speakers, which need to be replaced urgently.

I listen mainly to rock, but also enjoy classical music. I'd like to achieve good soundstaging, deeper bass and clearer treble.

Choosing speakers is always a difficult task, so I'd be grateful if you could give me your valued opinion about the models you consider most advisable for my system. I'm prepared to spend up to £500.

Pedro Silva, Amadora, Portugal.

Don't spend £500 on speakers until you've upgraded the rest of your system — you'll make it sound worse instead of better. Pick a speaker that will exploit the system's strengths rather than reveal its weaknesses. Controlled, deep bass and pristine treble are generally the preserve of more sophisticated CD players and tuners in particular.

Given your tastes, I would suggest you start by listening to speakers such as the Mordaunt-Short MS10i — or MS25i if you prefer a floorstander — the B&W DM601 and the Tannoy 632.

Dropping out

My system includes an Oracle Alexandria, Linn Ittok, Denon 304, Denon 3560 CD player with Stax Dac-talent, NAD 3500 tuner, Denon 44HX cassette player, Tandberg 3018 A preamplifier, Electrocompaniet AW100 DM poweramp, Stax Lambda Sig, SRM T headphones and Celestion SL700SE speakers.

I have a large LP collection, and use my turntable a lot but, as I enjoy purchasing new recordings, my CD collection is growing fast.

As many others have experienced, I 'drop out' of the music while listening to CDs. Is this because my CD player isn't good enough? Is it outdated? Would even cheap, new CD players outperform my combo?

I use a green pen to treat the edge of my CD collection. I find the sound to be less 'stressed' by doing so. Should I continue treating them in this manner, or



From rock to classical music, Tannoy's 632 floorstander suits all.

will I shorten their lives?

One of my speaker's treble unit has a little deformation. Should I replace one or both units, or is such a defect impossible to hear?

Sven-Erik Roed, Oslo, Norway.

I find even the best CD players less involving than vinyl, although Naim's CDS and Micromega's top models are more satisfying than most. I doubt that a modern budget player would better your player in musical terms, but you might

find its sound more cosmetically appealing.

I've gone right off green pens since I first tried to ungreen a disc I'd painted — my CDS doesn't like treated discs. Maybe I went about the cleaning with too much gusto, but the scrubbing required rendered the disc unplayable.

As for your tweeters, play a mono track through each speaker individually, to ascertain whether the deformation is affecting the performance. Naturally, you'll need to listen to each speaker in the same position — don't just use the balance control to swing the signal from one to the other.

As the 700 uses alloy diaphragms, it's probably best to replace the damaged unit. Celestion will tell you whether the tweeters are pair-matched, in which case you'll have to replace both.

Seriously hot speakers

My current system comprises a Rotel 970BX CD Player, Audio Alchemy DIB DAC, Audiolab 8000A amplifier, Audiolab 8000T tuner, and Infinity Kappa 8.1i speakers. I use Audioquest Ruby interconnects and bi-wired Audioquest Type 4 speaker cables.

To upgrade the system, could you suggest a more powerful amp (perhaps the Audiolab C and P combo), or should I go for a more 'refined' CD player. Although the system sounds excellent at low levels, when I turn the volume to anything past ten, it starts sounding less in control of the speakers and the amp gets seriously hot.

Thanasis Katakalos, Sydney, Australia.

I'd be inclined to investigate alternative speakers. It sounds as though they're working your amplifier too hard or making it unstable — the 8000A is usually robust and quite powerful

and shouldn't normally get "seriously" hot.

A different amplifier might solve the problem, but that goes against my philosophical grain: why use a giant amp to drive difficult speakers when you can simply use more efficient or amplifier-friendly speakers?

However, let's upgrade in the proper fashion and sort out the source first, because this, ultimately, decides how well the system will perform. So, if you're an Audiolab fan, why not start by taking a look at the company's new integrated CD player?

Curing harshness

My system consists of a Linn Axis/Akito record deck, Arcam P77 cartridge, Arcam Delta 60 integrated amplifier, NAD 6300 cassette deck, B&W Series 500 speakers, Beyer DT880 headphones, van den Hul MC D 102 Mk11 interconnects (tape deck) and Kimber Powerkord leads.

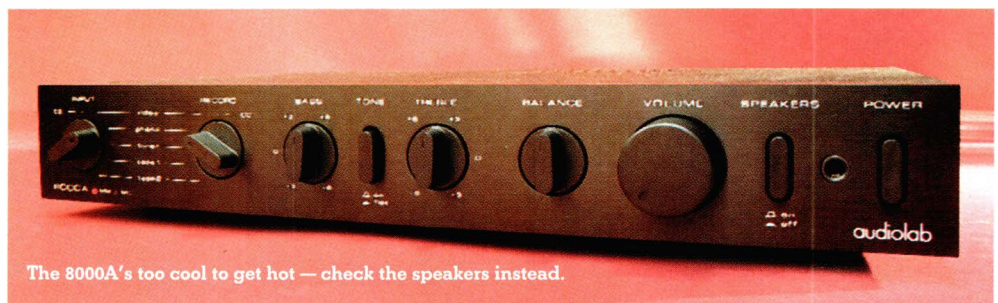
My problem is that this system is not pleasant to listen to. The sound is very detailed but harsh and very wearing on the ears. I have come to the conclusion that the Linn Axis is the worst offender, so I want to replace it.

My budget would be around £300, added to the trade-in value of the Linn. What deck would you recommend that would be neutral and easy on the ear but still give me the same detail and depth?

G. Rorke, Southport, Merseyside.

Unless the Axis has changed dramatically since I last heard one, your system should not be sounding harsh.

I suspect your cartridge is mistracking, due to wear, misalignment, or insufficient downforce. The cure for any of these ills will be less costly than a turntable upgrade.



The 8000A's too cool to get hot — check the speakers instead.

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← However, if you do decide to go the whole hog, I'd suggest you look at the Pro-ject 6, which should be affordable if you can sell or trade-in your Axis. There are cheaper decks around, but if you're having a change, why not make it one that will provide you with a significant improvement?

The perfect system?

I've spent many thousands of pounds trying to build the perfect, or at least a satisfying, system. I have a Cyrus III amp and two pairs of speakers: KEF Coda 8 and TDL RTL2.

I'm looking for a decent CD player and more agile, dynamic speakers. My budget is around £350 to £400 for the CD player, and £400 to £500 for speakers. I'm using Cable Talk Talk 3 speaker cable and Cable Talk Monitor 2 interconnects.

The CD players and speakers I'm interested in are the Pioneer PD-S703, Marantz CD63SE, Monitor Audio MA303, TDL RTL3 and Mission 753.

I mainly listen to rock music and I like it big, fast, loud, clear and as deep as it comes. Renos Pizanis, Cyprus.

Can I suggest you hold off on the speakers, spend your speaker budget on the CD player, and spend your CD player budget on an amplifier upgrade. That way you'll get more from your money and longer-lasting satisfaction.

The Cyrus III is a fine little amplifier, which becomes an even more attractive proposition when you add a PSX-R power supply to it. The PSX-R brings more punch and panache to the amp's presentation, clarifying the feed to the loudspeakers and revealing more about what the source is doing. And that's why you should be looking at a more sophisticated CD player, something like the Micromega Stage 4, Trichord Genesis or the Orelle CD100SE.

Naim upgrade

I recently heard about the Trichord Genesis CD player and, after reading an excellent review and listening to a few others, I decided to get one.

I would now like to upgrade my amp and speakers. I've got a 15-year-old, 50 Watt Hitachi



For the perfect system, match the Cyrus III with Orelle's sophisticated CD100SE.

HA5700 MOSFET amp. Although it's good, it's also very big and doesn't have speaker-plug connections, just bare wires that go into the back.

Can you recommend some amps that are slightly smaller in size, have the right speaker connections and would give even better sound quality, for up to around £600?

My speakers are IMF Super Compact 11, but I'd like you to recommend some floor standing speakers for up to £700.

Anton Martin, Worthing, W. Sussex.

So we're after something small in the amp department and tall at the transducer end, are we, sir? Try a slim-line Naim NAIT3 amplifier and the new Naim Intro loudspeakers, which are fine components in their own right and designed to work harmoniously as a team. Or how about the ultra-compact Cyrus III, perhaps, with a pair of Mission 752s? The Audiolab 8000A is another slim-line offering, and it blends well with Monitor Audio's MA14 Gold II loudspeakers.

Now off with you for a demonstration before I turn into John Inman.

Cartridge confusion part II

My system of ten years' vintage comprises a Revolver turntable with Linn Basik tonearm and cartridge, NAD 5420 CD, Kenwood (Trio) KX54 cassette deck, A & R Cambridge A60 amp and Heybrook HB1 speakers.

The time has come when I need to replace the cartridge again. Please could you give me advice on alternatives to the Linn Basik that might improve detail and give a clearer sound, considering my budget is a meagre £50 maximum. At a

future date, with more money, would it be worthwhile spending extra on a cartridge, considering the limitations of the Revolver turntable?

My speaker cables are QED 79 Strand. Are there others that might give me a noticeable sound improvement — again, not too expensive, please.

Finally, can you recommend a record cleaning/care kit?

Philip Cundy, West Galilee, Israel.

The obvious cartridge choice here is the Audio Technica AT95E. Revolver used this as the basis for its own cartridge many moons ago. The company selected samples and then super-glued the stylus assembly into place to improve the structural integrity. You might like to try that dodge yourself; the cartridge only costs £19, so replacing the whole shebang when the stylus wears isn't too painful. When you want to get into serious money cartridges upgrade to a turntable that's more capable of exploiting them.

I would suggest changing your speaker cables to Cable Talk's Talk 3.1, which, although inexpensive, will provide a worthwhile improvement over your 79 Strand.

As for cleaning records, I recommend playing them! Unless they're truly abused and filthy, the stylus will do a better job than any record-cleaning widget. For the stylus to do that properly, however, it needs to be kept scrupulously clean. I always tickle my needle with Linn's 'green stuff' before playing each album side. This super-fine abrasive paper removes the baked-on crud that camel brushes and fluids don't touch. The striker from a book of safety matches is equally

effective. If you have any really disgusting vinyl, take it to a dealer who has a Keith Monks cleaning machine.

Support your system

My system consists of a DPA transport and DAC, Musical Fidelity The Pre-amp and two bridged Typhoons, and Linn Keildh speakers. The speaker cable is Nordost Flatline twin, and the interconnects are Nordost Blue Angel. I also use DPA The Power for the transport and DAC, and a four-way mains filter for the amps.

I like to listen to folk, blues and rock music. I would like to upgrade my system but do not know which way to go. I want to keep my CD player and DAC. Should I look at changing my amps (pre or power, or both) or my speakers? I also wonder if the system would benefit from a rack from Mana. My current support is a steel table with glass shelves and spiked feet that I made myself. Garry Rigen, Ashford, Kent.

I support the notion of making lasting improvements that bring long-term benefits, so I'd recommend investing now in Mana tables. These will bring out the best in your present system and any components you change subsequently. Once the system is optimally supported, I'd start auditioning amplifiers: I don't know what your tastes are, but I find the Typhoons lack subtlety. I have no idea what sort of mains filter you have on the power amps but I'd suggest removing it. This is because I don't think mains filters and hi-fi mix, especially not when the hi-fi in question is a power amp that regularly needs to suck large gulps of current from the mains in a hurry. ▲

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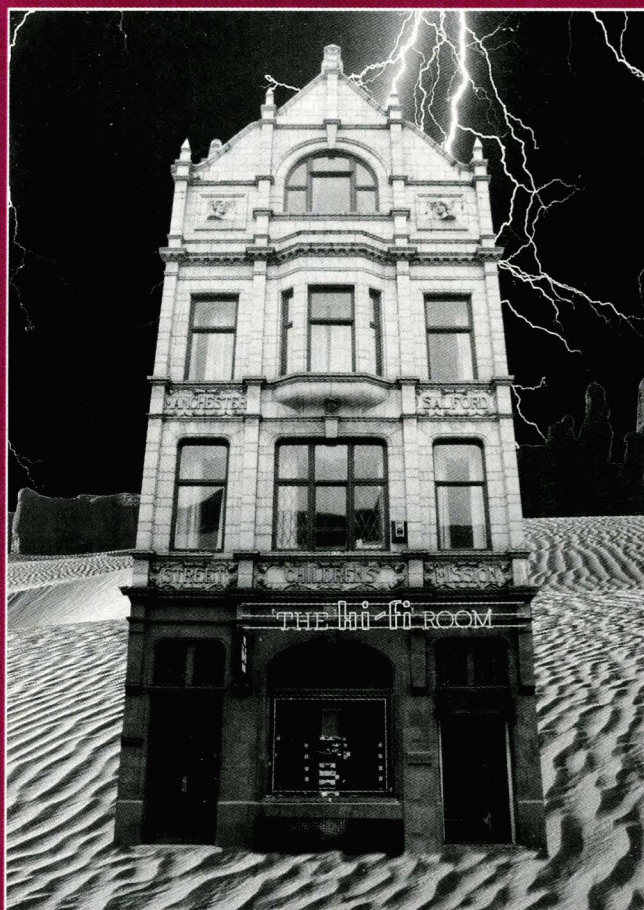
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Separate systems

Systems reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 150 (Rega), 151 (Powerplant), 153 (Richer Sounds), 154 (Micromega)

REGA'S REAL RECORD PLAYER

Serious good looks and coherent cosmetic integrity are just two strong incentives to go for Rega's top-of-the-line record playing system. It's based on the unique ceramic-platter *Planar 9*, the remote control *HAL* preamp, two 150W monoblok *EXON* power amps and the floorstanding *XEL* speakers. A versatile equipment rack keeps everything (bar the turntable) neat and tidy. The package totals

nearly £4,000 — very upmarket.

Easy zero-aggro installation and consistent performance are major plus points. The turntable is outstanding, especially in mid-band integrity and dynamic range, but would have benefited from Rega's still newer *Exact* cartridge. The up-front nature of the turntable fits in neatly with the more laid back amp/speakers, to give agile, detailed music, with bags of muscle.

A fine investment for long-term satisfaction.



POWERPLANT'S MID-PRICE PACKAGE

Plucked from the shelves of Brighton's Powerplant dealership, the three basic components of this CD-playing system are all indisputably stylish items in their own right.

The combination of Cyrus's *III* amp (£500) and Micromega's *Stage 4* (£600) does make for a certain cosmetic inconsistency, though, not to mention introducing a pair of handsets that one must juggle.

The hidden bonus here lies in future upgradability, by adding *PSX-R* power supplies to the *Cyrus III*.

The sound didn't gel straight away, but feeding the pretty little B&W *CDM2* (£400) speakers with

Hitachi *SSK-102K* bi-wire cable (£7 per metre), and using a Trichord *Pulsewire* interconnect (£150), did marvels for the tonal balance — admittedly, leading to an increase in the total package price.

The end result was a little sparser but a whole lot cleaner, with fine timing, excellent stereo and oodles of detail.

This combination offers not only a taste of the high life, but an open-ended invitation for future enhancements, courtesy of a few waste-free upgrades.



RICHER SOUNDS' REALLY RADICAL RACK FILLER

You sure get a lot for your money down at Richer Sounds. £800 buys a pair of floorstanding *Gale 4* speakers (£200), Cambridge Audio's *CD-4* CD player (£150) and on-board *DACMagic 2i* digital decoder (£150), plus the distinctive silver-and-gold *Axiom* amplifier from Alchemist (£289).

The CD player is a smooth, warm-sounding player, which perks up in presence and bite (and loudness) when the separate decoder is added. The *Axiom*, too, has a warm rather than analytical sound, with smooth, clean treble and full bass.

By contrast, the *Gales* are lively and forward, with plenty of detail and attack, as well as a touch of hardness.

Initially auditioned without the (optional) *DACMagic* converter, the overall sound was lively, sharp and clear. Introducing the converter brought the expected improvement in detail and attack. On the other hand, this tended to make the speakers' hardness more noticeable.

Although the *DAC2i* brought a worthwhile improvement in the test system, in the context of this package, we actually found the sound more friendly with just the *CD-4* on its own. Either way, it's a fine demonstration of the sort of performance true separates can deliver, even at packaged-system prices.



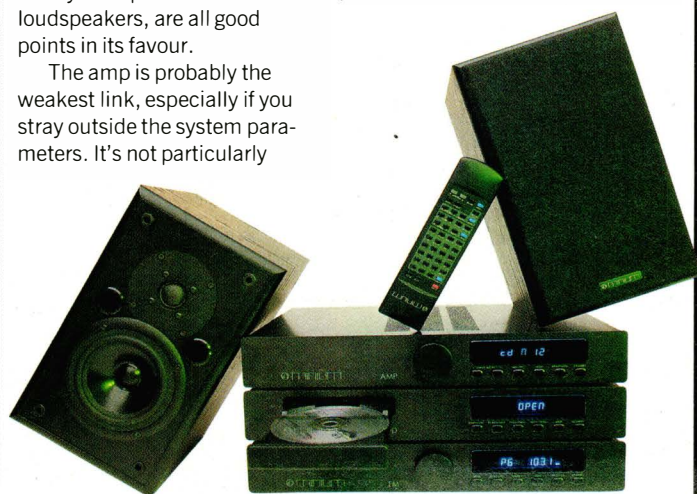
MICROMEGA'S MINIMUM MUSIC MASTER

Those who regarded French CD specialist Micromega as an high-end company will have to think again. This new *Minimum* package has FM tuner, CD player, amp, speakers and remote handset, and costs £1,800. A class CD player, a respectable enough tuner, and a rather fine and solidly-built pair of miniature loudspeakers, are all good points in its favour.

The amp is probably the weakest link, especially if you stray outside the system parameters. It's not particularly

powerful, has a lowish input sensitivity, and its protection circuitry seemed rather over-zealous when used with third-party loudspeakers. Power limitations apart, it worked fine in the system context, always sounding as smooth and crisp as freshly ironed silk.

The control software is typically Gallic and inventive, and the system comes on a little like a French version of Arcam.





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AV systems

AN A/V ODYSSEY

In *HFC* 159, Reviews Ed Alan Sircom was dispatched to investigate the options available for adding the A/V dimension to a conventional stereo hi-fi system — three times over. Covent Garden dealer Musical Images helped sort through the bits. There were too many strands, all told, to list in detail here, but the highlights went as follows.

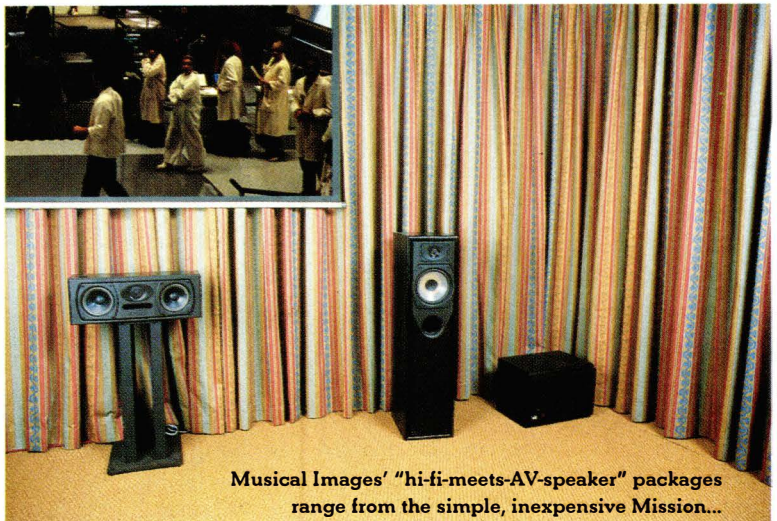
The starting point was a typical ≈ £1,000 hi-fi system: **Marantz CD63mkII/SE** CD player (£350), **Arcam Alpha 8** amp (£350) and **Mission 733** speakers (£330). The heart of the A/V additions was the £450 **Yamaha DSP-E580**, while the extra speakers were the **Mission 73C** (£150) dialogue and a pair of **73S** surround speakers (£100), plus some extra bass heft from **M&K's** baby **V-75** (£650), taking the total all-in system price up to £2,379.

System Two started off with **Cyrus** digital and analogue electronics and **KEF Reference One** speakers, costing around £3,500 in stereo guise — somewhat pre-empting the A/V conversion by starting off with the **Cyrus AVMaster** pre-amp (£698) at the control heart. Going A/V involved extra **Cyrus Power/PSX** amplification (total £826), **KEF 70S** surround speakers (£299), and **Model 100** dialogue (£359), plus the £800 **M&K 125THX** subwoofer,

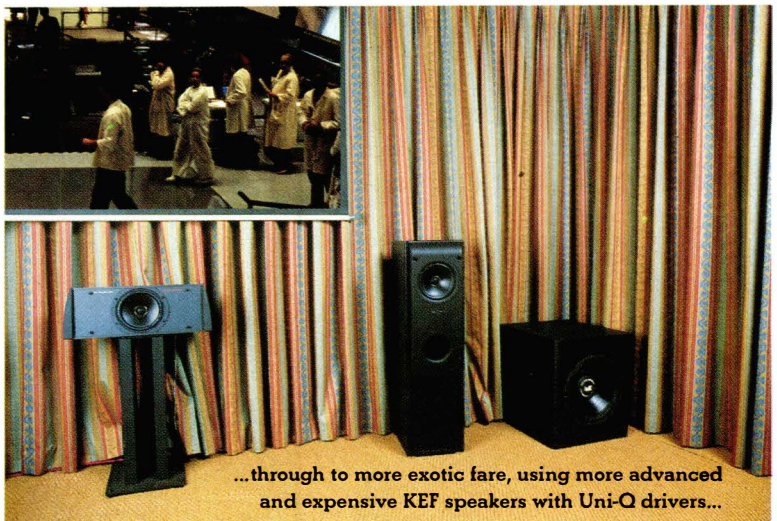
taking the total system price up to a healthy £5,800.

The final Grande Fromage system started off stereophonically with **Meridian 508.20** CD player (£1,685) combined with US **Sumo Artemis/M-10** pre/power amps (£1,695) and **ProAc Response 2.5** speakers (£600), totalling just over £10,000. The decision to opt for the full Dolby Digital AC-3 monte with this system will be understandable to anyone who's heard this all-discrete surround sound format, but it jacks up the A/V contribution substantially here, taking the total system price to a whopping £23,250. To have opted merely for Dolby Pro-Logic would've saved plenty.

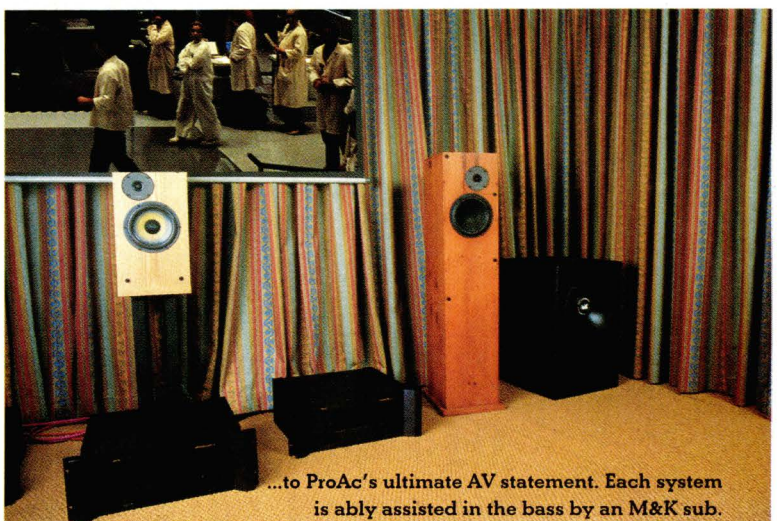
Experiencing these different systems in both stereo and surround versions made it clear that the hi-fi buff should not be put off by the idea of adding A/V. Done properly it needn't spoil the stereo music performance at all, and really does add that extra dimension to movies. Remember that it's important to get the voicing right between main and A/V speakers: ideally, stick to one manufacturer throughout. Adding a properly transparent A/V upgrade is likely to cost at least 50-60 per cent of the original system price — but can easily be twice that, depending on how much you spend on subwoofers and/or Dolby Digital AC-3.



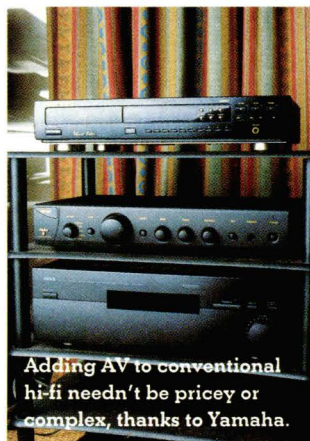
Musical Images' "hi-fi-meets-AV-speaker" packages range from the simple, inexpensive Mission...



...through to more exotic fare, using more advanced and expensive KEF speakers with Uni-Q drivers...



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£1000 systems

There are endless ways of distributing a £1,000 hi-fi budget. In issue 156, Malcolm Steward tried out three philosophies to see how the different cookies crumbled.

THE PACKAGE

The packaged one-make system approach appeals to those intimidated by the complexities of hi-fi and anxious to ensure full compatibility, while the attractions of matched cosmetics, compactness and full feature remote control are further incentives. Denon's popular 'silver separates' mini systems like the £1,000 D-F10 (excluding speakers) offer all these benefits, and try to add serious sound quality alongside. To a great extent the D-F10 succeeds with an eminently respectable musical performance. It balances well, goes decently loud, and maintains rhythmic integrity well, albeit with some loss of character and dynamic contrasts. Plus you get those useful things like radios, cassette decks and full remote control!

THE SPECIALIST

Dealers Infidelity, of Kingston-Upon-Thames, stretched the notional budget by combining a **Micromega Stage 4** CD player (£600) with **Rega Elex** amp (£398) and



Infidelity's prime system of specialist separates hails from both sides of the English Channel.

bookshelf size **Rega Kyte** (£198) speakers, but the source may be upgraded cost-effectively at a later date.

The system proved deliciously responsive, and the most effective of the three in delivering accurate rhythm and timing. While there might be room for discussion about the cosmetics of its rather lightweight portrayal, there was no question that this system put listeners in touch with the music. It was full of fine, characterful communication, though some ears might find it a little too exuberant.

THE BARGAIN HUNTER

From the Richer Sounds catalogue, this has much in common with the package

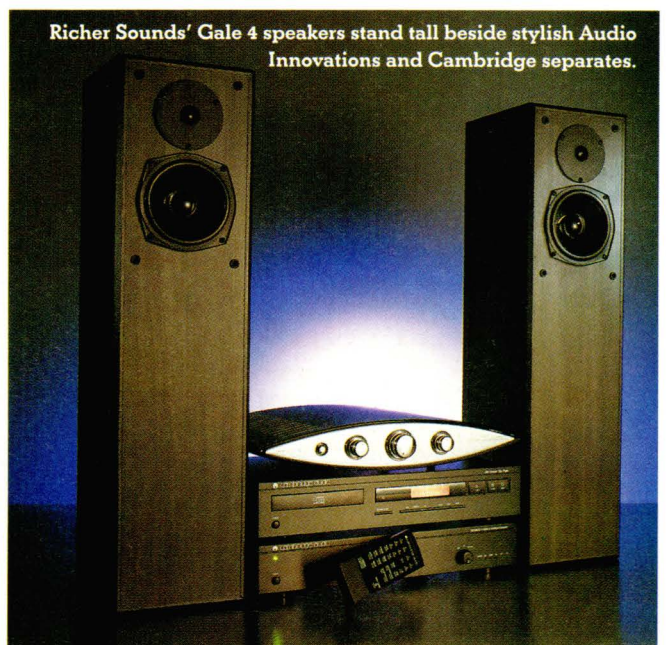
examined on page 83, differing only by substituting the £300 **Audio Innovations Alto** amp for an Alchemist. The £150 **Cambridge Audio CD4** drives the £150 **DACMagic 2** outboard decoder, while the £200 **Gale 4** floorstanding speakers sit at the end of the chain — £800 all told, and no speaker stands required. The sound is seriously refined, with impressive weight and open transparency. Though lucidly detailed, relaxed and easy, the

amp did seem a little too laid back for the more urgent types of rock material, but the whole was harmonious.

Denon's mini does a good job in context, providing the full range of sources in elegantly convenient packaging, but doesn't match the musical insight of the separates packages. The RS collection has a price advantage and a fuller sound, but the Micromega/Rega combo proved the pick of the crop for musical communication.



Denon's D-F10 system is among of the few of its breed that can compete with true separates.



Richer Sounds' Gale 4 speakers stand tall beside stylish Audio Innovations and Cambridge separates.



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The Naturally Neutral Chain

Lifestyle systems

All systems reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160



JVC
UX-1000

The £270 JVC UX-1000 belongs to the really-decent-really-small camp. Superfluous treats are limited to upper-bass-boost, and it also does without a tape unit.

Considering the tiny size, small lengths of speaker wire and minimal single-driver speakers, the UX-1000 sings its little heart out. Although there's no bass to speak of, the system is suffused with an infectious funkiness.

Not only is the JVC UX-1000 a stylish performer, but it's one that sounds as understated as it looks — which can't be bad.

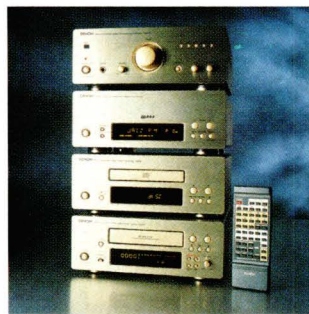
JVC ☎ (0181) 450 3282

DENON
D-F07

Denon has defined the top-end mini/lifestyle system market for some years now. The new £650 D-F07 system is split into a separate 45W amplifier, CD player, RDS tuner, tape and timer, all rolled into four midi-sized units, with free choice of speakers.

The D-F07 put in a very fair showing sonically, though the lack of separate power supplies takes its toll in the area of dynamic shading. However, the system is crisp, clean and fast, without being aggressive, making it a perfect plug-and-play option.

Denon ☎ (01753) 888447



TECHNICS
SC-CA01

Technics £650 SC-CA01 is a group of very tiny separate components: CD player, tuner, a radical digital 45W amplifier, cassette deck and speakers, all looking like scaled-down full-size Technics gear.

This is one tidy-sounding system, which doesn't try to push a punchy, up-beat interpretation of the music at you.

For us hi-fi types, this is a perfect second system. It's separate and minimal enough not to upset even the most delicate audiophile sensibilities, and it sounds damn fine to boot.

Technics ☎ (0990) 357357

TEAC
H500

The £800 Teac H500 system comprises 50W amp, RDS tuner, cassette deck and CD player. There's something very American in the big-knob styling and big, warm, dark and expansive sound, which is slightly on the blowsy side. But it makes good sense for those seeking decent classical music from a one-make system, with a passable attempt at dynamic shading.

Teac's excellent first attempt must rank as one of the first one-make systems that doesn't cost a king's ransom.

Teac ☎ (01923) 819630



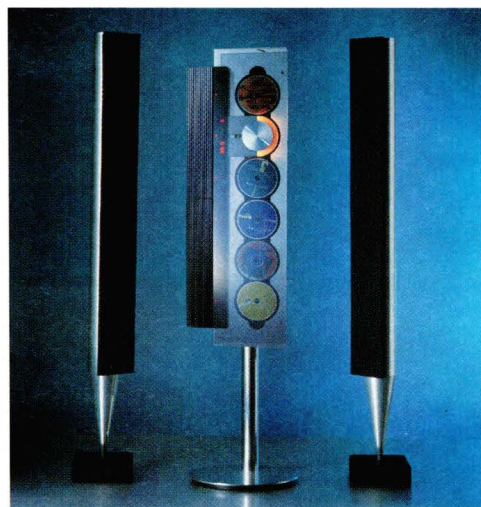
BANG & OLUFSEN
BEOSOUND 9000

B&O's £4,600 Beosound 9000 comprises a six-disc CD player, a 60-preset AM/FM

tuner, a timer and a pair of floor-standing active loudspeakers. The discs are on display beneath a powered glass door, and the playing mechanism moves from disc to disc. It takes a fair time to

set up, but once going, it's as easy to use as it is stunning looking. It doesn't compete with well-chosen separates at the same price, but the sound is refined, the tonal balance natural, and the active speakers sound weighty without being overblown or ill-defined.

Bang & Olufsen ☎ (01734) 692288



BOSE
LIFESTYLE 20

The £3,000 Bose Lifestyle 20 is filled to the brim with sophisticated features. The 'Virtually Invisible' sat/sub speaker system puts the power amps in the subwoofer, and the satellites are miniscule. The system controller combines an AM/FM tuner with a six-disc CD multiplayer, and there's much more besides. The sound is massive and the sense of scale is excellent and very life-like — up to a point. There's a distinct lack of upper bass, and at low levels the bass booms quite a bit,

due to a zealous 'automatic loudness contour'.

Ultimately, Bose's Lifestyle 20 system will prove popular because of its minute size and huge sound.

Bose ☎ (01795) 475341





B&W



Sweeps The Board At This Years Awards!

B&W has had a fantastic year for awards. Right now the mantelpiece at B&W's factory is groaning under the weight of four coveted trophies. But this consistent success is not down to luck. Instead it is the fruit of B&W's continued investment in top-quality acoustic performance and aesthetic design.

British Hi-Fi Awards – B&W P4

At the British Hi-Fi Awards in April 1996, B&W's £600 floorstander, the P4, took the prize for 'Hi-Fi Loudspeaker Above £500'. It had won not just a trophy but the hearts and minds of the Great British Public, for it was they who voted the P4 winner. *Hi-Fi Choice* magazine, reporting the Awards in its June 1996 edition, summed up the P4 thus: "A compact loudspeaker capable of considerable loudness and bass extension... should work in a variety of systems with the utmost ease."



Home Entertainment Awards – B&W CC3

At the 1996 Home Entertainment Awards, as reported in the magazine's November 1996 edition, the CC3 emerged dominant in the Budget Centre Speaker category. "The CC3 delivers a crisp and precisely articulated sound, which ensures that dialogue is highly intelligible, even when volume is low, or when music and special effects are vying for the listener's attention... It represents the kind of value that others struggle – and usually fail – to achieve."



HomeEntertainment
awards
WINNER

EISA European Audio Awards – B&W DM302.

In September 1996, B&W's £130 bookshelf baby, the DM302, was announced the darling of the European Imaging & Sound Association, EISA, which voted it European Loudspeaker Of The Year '96-'97. In the Award citation, reported in the October '96 edition of *Hi-Fi Choice*, the highly-respected panel of judges did not stint in its praise, lauding the speaker with phrases like: "... Gives sensational performance at an affordable price... tonal balance almost perfect... extraordinary dynamic capabilities... proves it is possible to match a low price with a high-tech approach."



What Hi-Fi? Awards – B&W DM601

At this year's *What Hi-Fi?* Awards the winning 'Best Buy' loudspeaker was none other than B&W's Kevlar-toting DM601 bookshelf model. "Though strictly average in size, the DM601's sound huge," said the judges. "These speakers play music in a big, majestic fashion."



The European Imaging and Sound Association (EISA) Awards are made annually, at a meeting which brings together the Editors of the leading European audio magazines from fifteen countries. Products are shortlisted, votes are cast and winners are announced in a dozen different component categories, encompassing hi-fi, general audio and home cinema products.

European Compact System of the Year

JVC

UX-1000 £270

From the people who originally brought us the micro-system, let's give a big hand to the ultra-micro — just the thing for our increasingly cluttered environments. The main unit (containing three-band radio, CD player and clock/timer), stands only 1.6cm high and is roughly the width of a CD case.

Power output (14W) and loudness capabilities are modest, but clever design using a single dome/cone high excursion drive unit for each channel, plus JVC's proprietary Hyper Bass equalisation technology, combine to give surprisingly accomplished sound quality.

JVC ☎ (0181) 450 3282

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160

European Loudspeaker of the Year

B&W

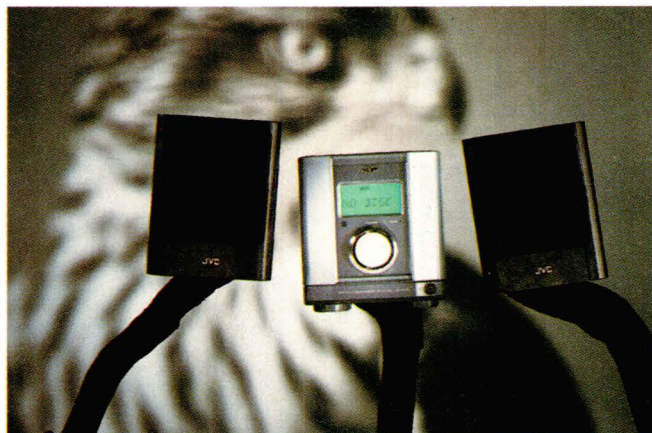
DM302 £130

A Choice Best Buy, B&W's first beer-budget speaker for some years makes remarkably clever use of plastic moulding techniques. A 'Prism' rear panel consists of a series of wedges seen from the inside, and these serve to diffract and disperse (rather than directly reflect) the sound energy from the back of the main driver. A moulded front panel promotes wide lateral sound distribution.

The reduction in box coloration, combined with an exceptionally well controlled tonal balance, results in remarkably good sound quality for such a modestly priced loudspeaker.

B&W ☎ (01903) 750750

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 156



JVC UX-1000: a pocketful of ultra-micro Compact System.

European High End Audio of the Year

KRELL

KAV-300i £2,490

When one of America's most famous high-end names decides to produce its first-ever integrated amplifier, the results are likely to be quite spectacular. The £2,490 KAV-300i might be pricey by European hi-fi standards, but it's considerably less expensive than typical high-end pre/power combos.

There are line level inputs only, but full digital remote control allows knobs to be replaced by a handful of pushbuttons, while the high-regulation 400VA transformer and discrete complementary circuitry delivers a massive 150Wpc into eight Ohms.

Absolute Sounds ☎ (0181) 947 5047

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 160

European Amplifier of the Year

AUDIOLAB

8000S £700

Much more than merely a remote-control version of the evergreen 8000A, this £700

integrated amplifier is much more a device for audiophiles. There are no tone controls now, and the S incorporates technology introduced on the upmarket 8000Q preamplifier.

Technically it's a wide bandwidth design, conservatively rated at 60 Watts per channel, with low distortion and micro-processor-controlled architecture to facilitate future upgrading to pre- or power amp configurations. Sonically this is a smooth, refined and neutral performer, with plenty of fine detailing, though it lacks a little passion and exuberance.

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 154

Audiolab ☎ (01480) 415600

Factsback 1740

European CD Player of the Year

MARANTZ

CD-63MKII KI-S £500

The 'KI-S' bit stands for Ken Ishiwata Signature, with KI being a Japanese audiophile of some renown based at Marantz's European headquarters. The trick here is to take an already respected mass-market player (the CD-63II) and add numerous (33) and quite extensive production modifications, maximising the sound quality for the hi-fi enthusiast while keeping the price affordable.

A heavier, beefed-up chassis, toroidal transformer, extensive copper plating, and substantially improved analogue output stages, all contribute to a level of sonic refinement and delicacy that deserve comparison with the real 'high end'.

Marantz ☎ (01753) 680868

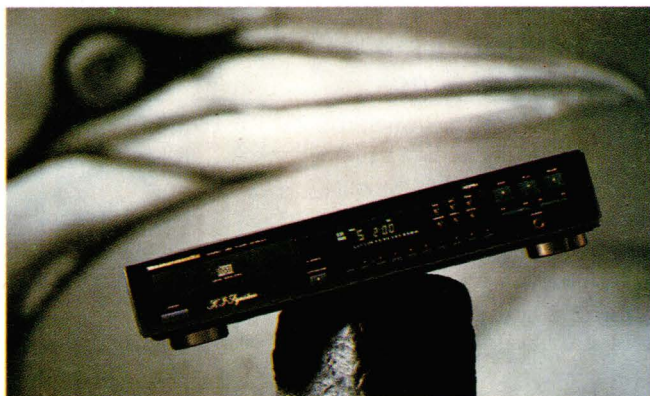
Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 153
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European Audio Recorder of the Year

PIONEER

PDR-05 £1,300

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Marantz's CD-63II KI Signature took EISA's CD player honours.

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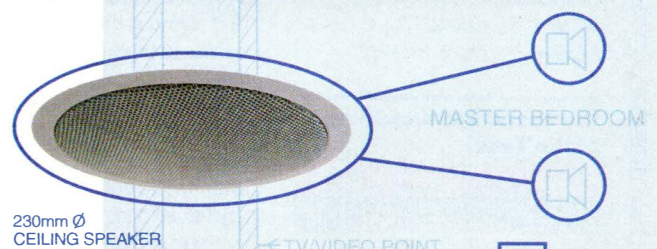
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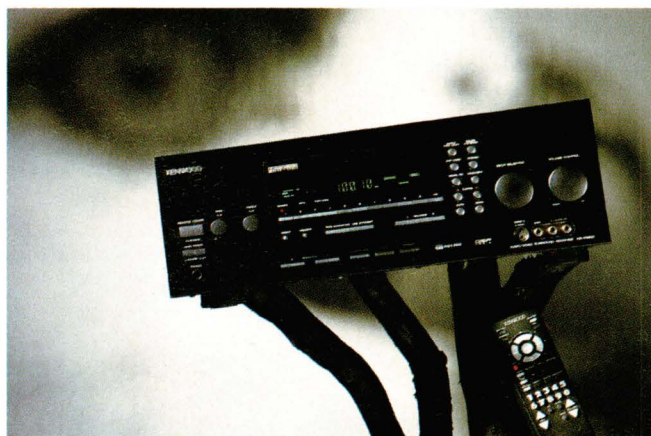
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Kenwood's KR-V990D takes one-box AV amp technology to the limit.

PDR-05 allows you to make up your own 60-minute CDs, which can be replayed on the same machine or any other CD player.

This is a genuinely innovative product that could well represent the future of home recording; besides this EISA Award the *PDR-05* also picked up the Editor's Award for Outstanding Hi-Fi Product of the Year in the British Hi-Fi Awards. It's impressively flexible in allowing direct digital recording from a variety of sources (eg CD, satellite, DAT), as well as handling any analogue sources — including live music!

Pioneer ☎ (01753) 789789

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 148

European Advanced Audio System of the Year

GRUNDIG

PA3-I/II £1,000

A real tour de force of industrial design, Grundig's *PA3* tower system stands tall and metallic, yet contains the components needed to fill a good size room with sound.

The sources include a seven-disc CD changer, an auto-reverse cassette deck and a 59-preset AM/FM RDS radio. A claimed 160 RMS watts of power drive a subwoofer built into the column, and the clever bit — the Space Fidelity speaker system — which generates a remarkably spacious soundstage from a horizontal tube with drivers mounted into each end. The less-expensive *PA3-I* version is finished in silver and black, while the *PA3-II* is in sil-

ver and beech with 'wings'.

Grundig ☎ (01788) 577155

Reviewed *Home Entertainment*, issue 36

European Home Theatre Display of the Year

SONY

KL-37W1 £3,800

Widescreen 16x9 shape TVs may be the future of television, but in the here and now the vast majority of our programming is 4x3 in shape, and a 4x3-shaped image tends to look pitifully small if shown undistorted on most widescreen TVs. Not so this large 37 inch Sony rear-projector, which is marvellous in full-width movie mode, but equally satisfactory for watching *The Big Match* with a decent sense of scale.

It uses the latest LCD technology as an alternative to traditional colour picture tubes, which gives bags of brightness from a unit which is remarkably shallow, minimising bulk when

placed close to a wall.

Sony ☎ (0181) 784 1144

Reviewed *Home Entertainment*, issue 38

European Home Theatre Amplifier of the Year

KENWOOD

KR-V990D £1,300

Dolby's new all-discrete multi-channel AC-3 surround sound system could be the best news yet for home cinema fans. There's no question it's a lot better than mere Pro-Logic with movies, and only software availability stands between it and world domination.

The *KR-V990D* is one of the first to handle AC-3, alongside a DSP-enhanced Pro-Logic alternative. It offers a cornucopia of inputs and outputs, some 400W of total power, a 30-pre-set AM/FM RDS tuner, and neat on-screen graphic display which makes everything easy to set up.

Kenwood ☎ (01923) 816444

Reviewed *Home Entertainment*, issue 38

European Home Theatre Decoder of the Year

TECHNICS

SH-AV500 £280

An AV decoder or processor such as this Technics *SH-AV500* is the best way for the hi-fi enthusiast to add home cinema capabilities to a system without risking upsetting the existing stereophonic apple cart. The *SH-AV500* supplies 50W for the centre-front dialogue channel, 2x16W for the surround speakers, and passes the

main left/right channels over to your existing hi-fi amp.

Its major advantages are that it's relatively inexpensive, and uncommonly transparent and refined, with subtle, smooth and well balanced sound.

Technics ☎ (0990) 357357

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 153

European Home Theatre System of the Year

MISSION

M-TIME £2,500

Conceptually one of the most elegant and innovative products of the year, Mission's *M-Time* acknowledges you can't stack your telly on top of you hi-fi, and provides instead a hi-fi system built into a substantial TV plinth. This incorporates a massive 600W of multi-channel amplification, a plethora of inputs and outputs, twin active-drive subwoofers, an FM/AM tuner and a dialogue speaker.

Set-up is particularly straightforward, with channel balancing undertaken automatically at the press of a button, using a supplied microphone. The bottom end is even and tight, the mid-band open and clear and the whole thing has a relaxed and enveloping richness.

Mission ☎ (01480) 451777

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 153

European Home Theatre Loudspeaker of the Year

KEF

60S/80C/30B £1,026

This KEF home cinema speaker combination also carried off this year's British Hi-Fi Award for AV systems over £750, and other plaudits too. The *60S* carries out front left/right and surround duties, the slimmer *80C* supplies the dialogue, and the *30B* provides bass for the whole system.

All the satellite speakers have magnetic shielding and use KEF's Uni-Q technology. The subwoofer has built-in power amplification, and the whole caboodle produces most convincing home cinema.

KEF ☎ (01622) 672261

Reviewed *Hi-Fi Choice*, issue 155



Mission's M-Time is one sophisticated telly stand.

ACOUSTIC ENERGY

ARCAM

AUDIOLAB

AUDIO QUEST

B&W

CASTLE

CHORD

DENON

DUAL

DYNAVECTOR

EPOS

KEF

LEXICON

LINN

LOEWE TV

MARANTZ

MERIDIAN

MICROMEGA

MILLER & KREISEL

MISSION

MYRYAD

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PANASONIC

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QUAD

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ROTEL

SENNHEISE

SHAHINIA

YAMAHA

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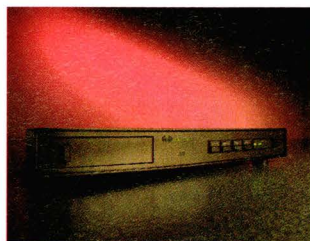
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The British Hi-Fi Awards are unique, because the winning products are decided on the basis of votes cast by hi-fi buyers all over Britain. Voting forms were available in selected magazines including Hi-Fi Choice, as well as in numerous hi-fi dealerships. There were 21 categories in total.



Naim Audio CD3.

CD player (under £250)

DENON

DCD-825 £240

Combining Japanese build with UK-sound tailoring, the DCD-825 was Recommended way back in December '94. It's been a firm favourite in the budget marketplace ever since, thanks to its solid, beefy sound, with plenty of zest and vivacity.

Denon ☎ (01753) 888447

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 137

Factsback 1531

CD player (over £250)

NAIM

AUDIO CD3 £977

Recommended in issue 155, Naim's £977 CD3 has an alarming ability to outperform much more expensive alternatives. CD3 puts its energies into capturing the essence of the music rather than titivating the sound.

Naim ☎ (01722) 332266

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 155

Factsback 1765

Tuner (under £250)

ARCAM

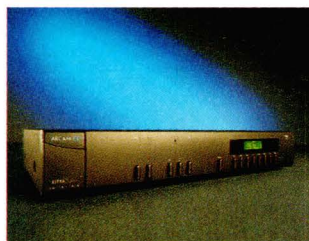
ALPHA 5 PLUS £220

This tuner matches Arcam's other Alpha components very well, but also makes sense as a standalone device. Placing audio quality ahead of reception capabilities, the Alpha 5 delivers a zestful musical experience.

Arcam ☎ (01223) 440964

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 124

Factsback 1254



Arcam Alpha 5 Plus.

Tuner (over £250)

AUDIOLAB

8000T £800

As Best Buy in issue 142, in spite of a substantial £800 price-tag, this fine tuner excels in every respect. The 8000T boasts fine radio reception (even on AM bands), innovative ergonomics and superior sound quality.

Audiolab ☎ (01480) 52521

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 142

Factsback 1254

Cassette Deck (under £250)

DENON

DRS-640 £200

As storming Choice Best Buy back in issue 140, this deck eschews gimmicky features in favour of simplicity and robust engineering, which should prolong its active life. A drawer-loading mechanism gives an attractively slimline appearance, and the sound proved very smooth and satisfactory.

Denon ☎ (01753) 888447

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 140

Factsback 1591

Cassette Deck (over £250)

PIONEER

D-05 £900

DAT (digital audio tape) might not have made any mass-market impact, but it remains an important niche among professionals and serious enthusiasts. This £900 D-05 is the least



Audiolab 8000Q.

expensive of three Pioneer DATs, which all offer 96kHz high-rate sampling for the ultimate home-digital recording quality.

Pioneer ☎ (01753) 789789

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 152

Integrated amp (under £350)

MUSICAL FIDELITY

E10 £300

The £300 E10 is a minimalist design, which retains vinyl-disc-playing capabilities. This amp has the sort of soft, warm sound that is more commonly associated with valve designs.

Musical Fidelity ☎ (0181) 900 2866

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 154

Factsback 1746

Integrated amp (over £350)

CYRUS

III £500

This beautifully styled 'half-width' amp has full remote control, plenty of power, and ample facilities, including a vinyl disc input. The Cyrus III's sound quality is naturally balanced and vigorous, offering subtle detailing for the price.

Cyrus ☎ (01480) 451777

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 140

Factsback 1585

Pre-/power amp

AUDIOLAB

8000Q/8000M £2,700

Audiolab's advanced remote control 8000Q preamplifier



Denon AVR-900.

(£1,100), combined with two 8000M (£800 each) monoblock poweramps, offers leading-edge technology with capacitor-less signal paths and 150 Watts of power. The commanding sound has an authoritative grip, which creates solid, focused and articulate images.

Audiolab ☎ (01480) 52521

Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 145

Factsback 1301

AV amp (under £350)

DENON

AVR-900 £350

This budget-level multi-channel Dolby Pro-Logic receiver has full remote control and a built-in 40-preset AM/FM tuner. The AVR-900 supplies a beefy 60 Watts of power for each of the front three channels, plus an additional two times 15 Watts for the surrounds.

Denon ☎ (01753) 888447

Pending review

AV amp (over £350)

ARCAM

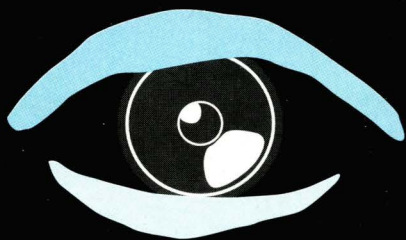
XETA ONE £1,000

The only British-built integrated AV amp, the Xeta One looks more discreet than most of the breed, thanks to its use of the TV screen for display and set-up.

Audiophile-grade power amps for the three front channels (from the 290P) ensure you can have your multi-channel Dolby Pro-Logic movie sound, without compromising serious hi-fi stereo performance.

Arcam ☎ (01223) 440964

Reviewed Home Entertainment, issue 24



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KEF's Uni-Q® drivers create a more precise stereo image, over a wider listening area, than any conventional loudspeaker can. The latest advance in KEF's patented technology delivers a smoother midrange response and clarity that's simply stunning.

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Infinity KEF Marantz Meridian Micromega Mission Mordaunt-Short NAD Onkyo Polk Proac
Quad REL Rotel Ruark Sounds Unique Spendor Tannoy Target Thorens Yamaha

BADA



Celestion Style.

**AV speaker system
(under £750)**

CELESTION

STYLE £700

This multi-speaker surround sound package uses lots of plastic mouldings to create strikingly curvilinear shapes, which not only look the business, but also perform the useful function of 'de-focusing' internal standing waves. The four models involved include the CSW/III powered subwoofer; the MP1 for main left/right channels; Little 1s for surround duties; and the CSC for dialogue. Celestion ☎ (01473) 322222
Pending review

**AV speaker system
(over £750)**

KEF

60S, 80C, 30B £827

The neat and discreet 60S features a Uni-Q coaxial driver and a built-in mounting bracket. Its obvious lack of bass reproduction is supplied instead by the cuboid 30B powered subwoofer. Dialogue is reproduced by the 80C, which is another Uni-Q device, in a horizontal enclosure designed to sit above or below the screen.

KEF ☎ (01622) 672261
30B reviewed in Hi-Fi Choice, issue 154

Subwoofer

REL

STORM £695

REL prefers to describe its speakers as sub-bass units. Their ability to supply genuine deep grunt, without muddying everything up with midbass boom, has broken Britain's traditional reluctance to take such devices seriously. The Storm might not be the prettiest sub around, but



KEF 60S, 80C, 30B.

it's packed with solid engineering and deep, deep bass.

REL ☎ (0181) 207 5050
Reviewed Home Entertainment, issue 26

**Hi-fi speaker
(under £200)**

KEF

CODA 7 £120

Massive sales success greeted the launch of this budget speaker. The Coda 7 is larger and bassier than some of its rivals, and features an attractive (and functional) moulded 'soft-look' front panel, which snuggles around the drivers and port in a most attractive way. The sound, too, is very appealing, with a slight forwardness that makes detail open and explicit.

KEF ☎ (01622) 672261
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issues 145 and 156
Factsback 1783

**Hi-fi speaker
(£201 to £500)**

MISSION

733 £330

This is one of the best-looking budget floorstanders around. The 733 doesn't use all of its generous box volume, instead behaving like a large bookshelf speaker, with an integral stand that's more stable than most. Our original review found the balance beautifully judged, but a revisit found the treble a little too dull.

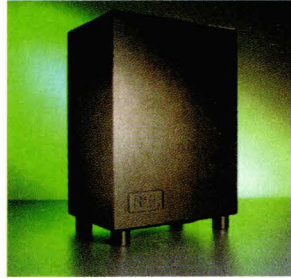
Mission ☎ (01480) 451777
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issues 139 and 156
Factsback 1786

**Hi-fi speaker
(over £500)**

B&W

P4 £675

The smallest and least expensive in B&W's luxury floor-



REL Storm.

standing P-series range, the P4 is attractively compact and finished in a selection of real-wood veneers. High-tech drivers include a Kevlar-coned main unit (port loaded) and a 26mm metal dome. The P4 also has an internal deflector panel, which directs internal reflections down into the wool absorbent inside the enclosure.

B&W ☎ (01903) 750750
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 156

**Complete system
(under £1,000)**

AKAI

TX700 £500

Akai's TX700 was not just a feature-stuffed mini system of the stereophonic persuasion; it included Dolby Pro-Logic surround sound for cosy evenings in at the movies. The stereo sound was basically clean and uncluttered from CD, tape or tuner, and the surround sound package was one of the sharpest around at the price, with impressively punchy surround effects.

Akai ☎ (0181) 897 6388
Reviewed Home Entertainment, issue 32
NB: THIS SYSTEM HAS BEEN DISCONTINUED AND HAS BEEN REPLACED BY THE TX710, £499.99

**Complete system
(over £1,000)**

QUAD

77 SYSTEM £1,944

Quad's most recent system uses computer communications techniques to link up signals, controls and power along Quad-link bus lines. However, what's even more impressive is the two-way menu-driven QuadRemote, which is, like the system itself, fully upgradeable and future-proofed. Matching box loudspeakers were designed in



Pioneer PDR-05.

association with Spendor, ensuring the whole £1,944 system exudes British class from stem to stern.

Quad ☎ (01480) 433777
Reviewed: 77 amp Hi-Fi Choice, issue 139; 77 CD Hi-Fi Choice, issue 155

Hi-fi accessory

ATACAMA

SE24 £70

To get decent performance from a pair of budget miniature speakers, it's essential to get a good-quality pair of speaker stands. You can better the SE24 by paying more money, but at £70 this market leader does most things very capably indeed. The SE24 is properly engineered and very sensibly designed, to maximise performance for minimum outlay, making an ideal partner for most modest systems.

Atacama ☎ (01455) 283251
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 140
Factsback 1373

**Editor's award for
Outstanding Hi-Fi
Product of the Year**

PIONEER

PDR-05 £1,300

The first truly affordable CD recorder, the PDR-05 lets you make up your own 60-minute CDs, which can be replayed on any CD player. This genuinely innovative product could well represent the future of home recording. It's impressively flexible, allowing direct-digital recording from a variety of sources, as well as from analogue material. Besides this Editor's Award, the PDR-05 also picked up an EISA Award this year.

Pioneer ☎ (01753) 789500
Reviewed Hi-Fi Choice, issue 148



Stuff is the sharp new one-stop guide to anything a man might want to buy – and where to get it.

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[ON SALE 14 NOVEMBER]

Glossary

Baffled by hi-fi jargon? Confused by technical terms? Fear not: **Paul Messenger** has the answers to your lexicographical questing, in the all-new Choice glossary.

A

ACTIVE: Loudspeaker systems that contain, or partner, dedicated electronics — power amplification plus electronic cross-overs and equalisers.

AFC: Automatic Frequency Control. A feature found in audio and TV/video tuners to ease station tuning and stability.

ALC: Automatic Level Control. Used in audio recorder circuitry to avoid unwanted overload, usually by sacrificing much of the available dynamic range.

AM: Amplitude Modulation. This is a broadcasting technique used for medium- and long-wave radio transmissions, and for television pictures.

AMP: 1) Ampere. A unit that measures the amount of electrical current flowing. 2) Diminutive of amplifier.

AMPLITUDE: Size or magnitude, hence loudness or level.

ANALOGUE: Signal-modelling technique using a directly analogous and continuously varying medium.

AV or A/V: Audio Visual. Software/programming in which audio and visual content is of similar importance.

AUTO REVERSE: Audio cassette tape transport, which changes direction at end-of-side.

AZIMUTH: Alignment of (audio cassette) tape-head gap with respect to tape path; inter-deck variations compromise high-frequency performance.

B

BALANCE: 1) The relative loudness of the left and right channels of a stereo system. 2) The relative loudness of different parts of the audio spectrum (for example, bass and treble) with respect to each other.

BANDWIDTH: The range of frequencies with defined upper and lower limits over which a system operates.

BASS: The lower part of the audible frequency range.

BIAS: 1) Lateral force applied to tonearms to assist tracking.

2) Electromagnetic preconditioning of audio tape recording; some cassette decks provide adjustable bias to 'fine tune' tape and machine co-performance.

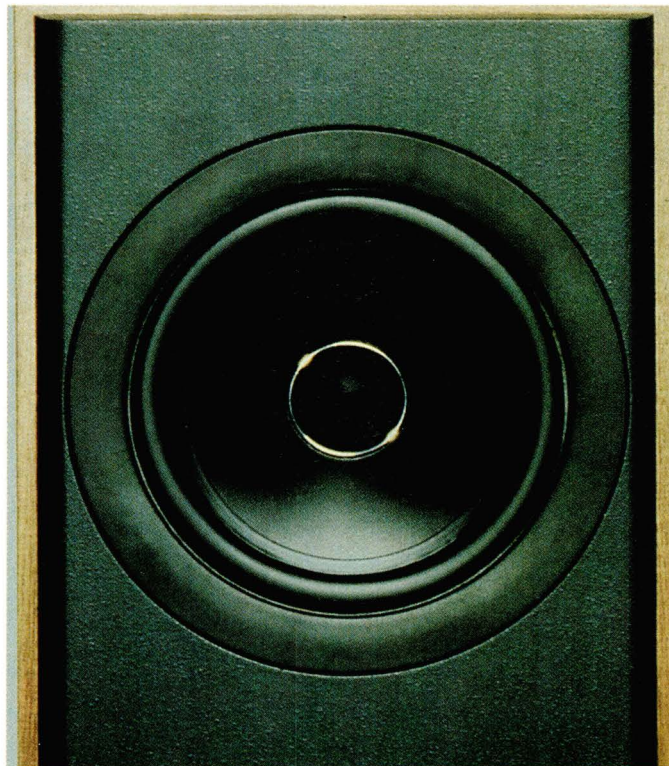
C

CASSETTE: Convenient system of housing, protecting and using magnetic tape in a plastic case.

CD: see Compact Disc

CD-R: Relatively new, pricey, but rapidly growing recordable-CD system; discs record once only; particularly useful for personalised compilations.

CD-ROM: High-capacity optical discs based on CDs but configured as flexible computer



A coaxial KEF drive unit featuring a concentric treble unit.

read-only software; many applications including some AV potential.

CLIPPING: The consequences of overdriving an electrical circuit, resulting in waveform distortion and loss of control; especially common in power amplifiers.

COAXIAL: Made symmetrical about a common core — for example, shielded aerial cable or loudspeaker drive units.

COLORATION: A general term used to describe the audible effects of a whole range of different distortions in various hi-fi components, but especially record decks and loudspeakers.

COMPACT CASSETTE: World standard for consumer tape recording/playback. Originated in the '60s and still going strong(ish).

COMPACT DISC (CD): World standard for laser-read digital-stereo music discs.

COMPATIBILITY: From the basic ability of different items of equipment to work together, to the subtleties of their interaction and optimisation of same.

CONVERTER: DAC, digital-to-analogue converter.

CROSSOVER: More precisely described as a dividing network, the electrical circuitry inside a loudspeaker that apportions the drive signal to the individual drive units.

D

DAC: Digital-to-analogue converter. This is used to change digital-audio code to analogue, prior to amplification.

DAT: Digital Audio Tape. A digital cassette tape format that uses CD-type signals and is incompatible with compact cassettes. Used by the music business, but rare in the consumer marketplace.

DCC: Digital Compact Cassette. A medium launched in the early Nineties to little effect.

DECIBEL (dB): A logarithmic unit used to express relative loudness.

DIGITAL: Digital audio uses a variety of approaches to represent the essentially analogue music signal in digital code, for storage and/or transmission — for example, CD, DAT, NICAM stereo, MD, Dolby Digital.

DIN: German standards body, responsible for a popular range of standard plug/socket specifications widely used in Europe.

DISTORTION: Literally any deviation from the original, though often specified to particular mechanisms. Hence, non linearities.

DITHER: Low-level noise added when digitally encoding a signal to randomise quantisation errors.

DOLBY B: Original domestic noise-reduction system for audio cassettes, now ubiquitous.

DOLBY C: More extreme but less popular extension of Dolby B.

DOLBY DIGITAL (aka AC-3): Multi-channel surround sound system for movie soundtracks. To date, software is only on imported laser discs.

DOLBY S: Complex 'smart' noise-reduction system, which should help the compact cassette survive beyond the millennium.

DOLBY SX: Record-only system that increases high-frequency headroom, especially with cheaper Type-1 tapes.

DOLBY PRO-LOGIC: Technique that extracts additional centre-front (dialogue) and surround channels from stereo movie soundtracks, for home cinema reproduction. Used almost universally on movies.

DRIVE UNIT/DRIVER: The sources of acoustic output in a loudspeaker; includes woofers, tweeters and so on.

DUB: Copy — for example, on tape.

DVD: Digital Video Disc. A nascent high-density optical disc format intended to squeeze complete movies onto compact-size discs, with potential for better-than-CD sound-only applications. Still to be launched (and it's taking a time).

DYNAMIC RANGE: The ratio (dBs) between the loudest and softest sounds a system or component can handle.

E

ELECTROSTATIC: A principle employed in some exotic loudspeaker and headphone transducers.

F

FILTER: An electrical circuit used to limit the bandwidth of a signal.

FM: Frequency Modulation. A widely used method of encoding signals for transmission or recording.

FREQUENCY RANGE/SPECTRUM: This can refer to any spread of frequencies, but most commonly the audio band of human hearing, from 20 cycles per second (20Hz) in the extreme bass to 20,000 cycles per second (20kHz) in the highest treble.

FREQUENCY RESPONSE: The variation in output across a specified range of different frequencies.

G

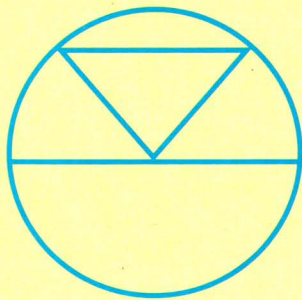
GAIN: The amplification ratio of electrical signals.

H

HARMONIC: Harmonics are the whole number multiples of a base frequency called a fundamental.

HARMONIC DISTORTION (THD): The addition of unwanted harmonics to a signal.

HF: High frequency, such as treble. ➡



LINN

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THE PRODUCTS

DOLBY DIGITAL

AV5103 System controller	£4850.00
AV5105 Stereo power amplifier	£1200.00
AV5140 Floor standing speakers	£2000.00
AV5120 Compact speakers	£650.00
AV5110 Black Local speakers	£295.00
White Local speakers	£315.00
AV5150 Active Isobarik speakers	£2850.00
AV5101 Personal handset	£250.00

CD PLAYERS

KARIK	£1750.00
MIMIK	£875.00
NUMERIK	£1400.00

TUNERS

KREMLIN	£2600.00
KUDOS	£775.00
KUDOS (Sneaky)	£500.00

TURNTABLES

SONDEK LP12 Inc Lingo PS	£1750.00
SONDEK LP12 Inc Valhalla PS	£1200.00
SONDEK LP12 Inc Basik PS	£1050.00

TONEARMS

EKOS	£1500.00
AKITO	£350.00

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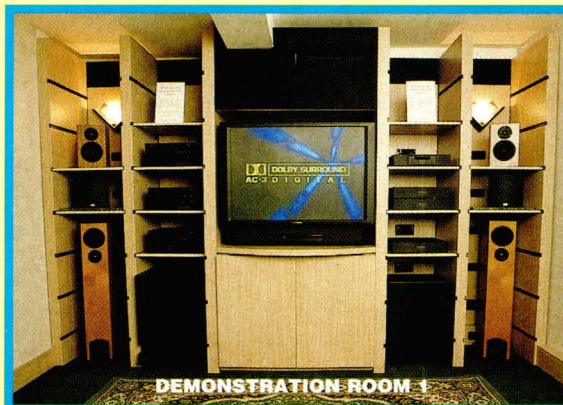
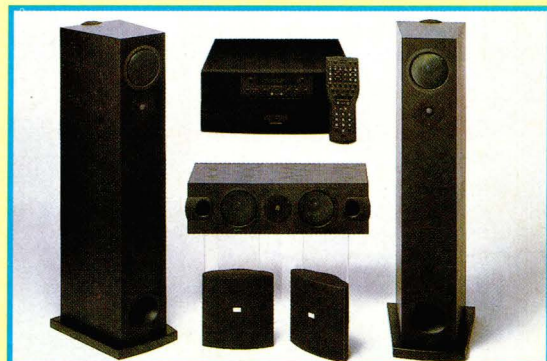
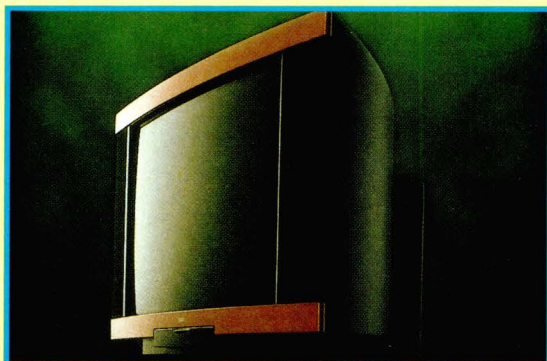
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HI-FI STEREO: Name specifically given to stereo FM soundtrack system used on upmarket domestic VCRs.

Hz (HERTZ): Unit of frequency of vibration, 1Hz equals one cycle per second.

I

IMPEDANCE: Measure of the electrical resistance (and reactance) of a component's inputs and outputs.

INTERMODULATION (IMD): A form of distortion whereby a high and a low frequency interact to produce sum and difference signals that are not harmonically related to either.

J

JACK: Connector standard used for headphones and microphones; Walkmen begat mini-jacks.

JITTER: Perturbations in the timing clock used to reconstitute an analogue signal from digital data.

K

kHz (KILOHERTZ): 1,000Hz or vibrations per second (1kHz actually corresponds to a tone nearly two octaves above middle C).

L

LED: Light-emitting diode, usually a red indicator bulb.

LF: Low frequency, such as bass.

LINEAR: A linear device that produces an output that exactly mirrors the input over the required operating range, and so is distortion free.

LONG WAVE (LW): Low-quality AM radio band, loved by housewives, old dears and cricket fans.

'LOUDNESS': A switchable equalisation sometimes fitted to amplifiers, which boosts low and high frequencies. Intended for low-level listening but scorned by enthusiasts.

M

MD: see Mini Disc.

MINI DISC: Sony-led compressed-digital audio record/replay format on tiny optical discs. Happening in Japan but not much UK activity yet.

MEDIUM WAVE (MW): Low-quality AM radio band loved by sports fans.

MIDBAND, MIDRANGE: The middle range of audio frequencies, where the ear is most sensitive.

MODULATION: In whatever medium, the variations or coding that describe the programme signal.

MOL: Maximum operating level, of audio tape, usually referred to five per cent mid-band distortion.

MONITOR: High-quality loudspeaker.

MOVING COIL: A transducer system, which changes mechanical energy into electrical energy or vice versa; used in high-quality pickup cartridges and in conventional loudspeaker drive units.

MOVING MAGNET: Inverting the moving coil technique, a transducer system whereby a magnet (or induced magnet) moves within a (relatively) static coil. Widely used in low-cost pickup cartridges.

MULTIPLEX FILTER: Device fitted to some cassette decks to avoid interference from stereo pilot tones when recording from stereo FM radio.

N

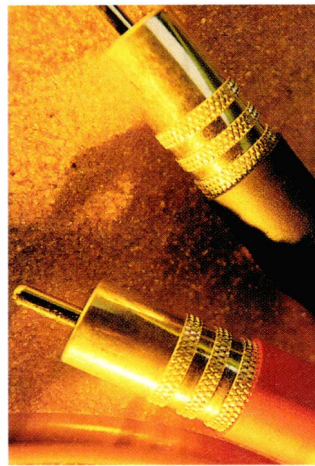
NICAM: Acronym for digital-stereo-sound-with-TV system, currently widely available in UK terrestrial TV broadcasts.

NOISE: Random, unwanted low-level signals.

O

OCTAVE: Span of frequency or pitch that represents a doubling or halving of frequency.

OHM (Ω): Unit of electrical impedance or resistance.



Get plugged in with a phono.

P

PHONO: The most commonly used plug/socket system for audio signals; also abbreviation for record deck.

PICKUP (CARTRIDGE): Device with cantilever and stylus at the end of a record-playing tone arm.

PORT: In reflex-loaded loudspeakers, the opening that is 'tuned' to the box size and main driver characteristics, to improve output at low frequencies.

POWER AMPLIFIER: The final stage of an amplifier, which provides the urge to drive the loudspeakers.

PREAMPLIFIER: The first part of an amplifier, which accepts, switches and routes the signals from and to other components, applying any equalisation and adjusting volume prior to feeding the power amplifier(s).

R

RF: Radio Frequencies. Used for the transmission of radio signals. Sometimes cited as a cause of distortion within audio kit.

S

SENSITIVITY: 1) In loudspeakers, the amount of output (loudness) for a given electrical input (usually one Watt).

2) The electrical signal input required by an amplifier or tape recorder to deliver full power output or recording level.

SCART: 21-pin Euroconnector standard widely used for audio/visual applications, especially the connection of television to peripheral devices (aka Peritel).

SEPARATION: The separateness of the left and right channels of a stereo audio system.

SIGNAL-TO-NOISE, S/N: The difference between the maximum level of a signal and the background noise left when the signal is removed.

STEREO: Literally 'solid' — a system that uses two loudspeakers (or a pair of headphones) to create solid, spatial sonic images.

STYLUS: Carefully shaped piece of diamond that rides the extracts information from a vinyl record's groove.

SUBSONIC: Below the audible-frequency range — for instance, below 20Hz.

SURROUND SOUND: Systems that go beyond stereo in attempting to envelope the listener in sound from all around (see Dolbys Pro-Logic/Digital AC-3).

T

TREBLE: The upper part of the audible frequency range.

TWEETER: Small loudspeaker drive unit used for higher-frequency (treble) sounds.

TYPE I: Basic ferric audio cassette tape.

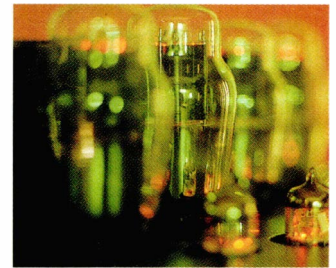
TYPE II: Premium chrome or superferric audio cassette tape.

TYPE IV: Upmarket metal-particle audio cassette tape.

U

ULTRASONIC: Frequencies above the limit of human audibility — for instance, 20kHz.

UNIT: Loudspeaker drive unit.



The valve or vacuum tube.

V

VALVE: Early thermionic electronic device, still highly regarded by many enthusiasts.

VCR: Video cassette recorder or video recorder; sometimes VTR (video tape recorder).

VOLT: Unit of electrical potential difference; a varying voltage is used to 'model' audio signals in transducers and electronic components.

W

WATT: Unit of electrical power (the product of voltage and current).

WEIGHTING: Equalisation applied in measurement techniques to improve relevance.

WOOFER: Loudspeaker drive unit that handles lower-frequency (bass) sounds.

WOW & FLUTTER: Low- and high-frequency pitch variations due to poor mechanical performance in tape transports and turntables.



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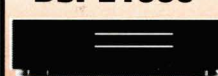
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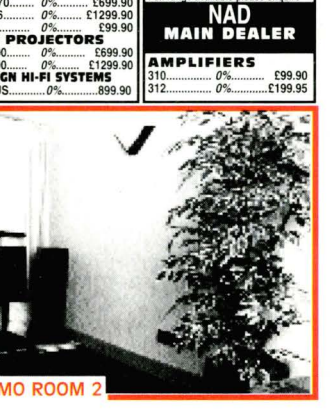
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DEMO ROOM 1



DEMO ROOM 2



DEMO ROOM 3

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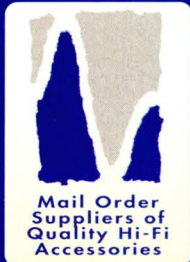
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The truth is out there

Kevin Scott airs some controversial views on the thorny topic of hi-fi buying.

A hi-fi system should aim to reproduce the complete live musical experience as plausibly as possible. Unfortunately this objective often seems to be forgotten by an industry that once combined passion with ingenious means to achieve increasingly higher fidelity, but which now combines marketing and ingenious packaging to realise increasingly higher sales.

Unfortunately for the music lover, neither style nor a strong brand image are any guarantee of high sound quality. Similarly, a system comprised of 'recommended' components from a magazine buyer's guide is no guarantee of satisfaction.

When you visit a concert hall a number of things will immediately strike you. First, there is the enormous scale of the performance. Second, there is the vast dynamic contrast. Third, there is the magnificent breadth and depth of tonal shapes, shades and colours. All of these qualities are used and manipulated by a composer as fundamental components of artistic impression. Without them the impact of any composition will be diluted.

Listening to the vast majority of hi-fi systems, this dilution is all too readily apparent. The scale of presentation is often tiny. Worse still, there is next to no contrast



Finding good hi-fi is easier than finding aliens — but both discoveries result only from open-minds...

in dynamics — those that exist are compressed unevenly. More deflating still, tonal colours are flattened, often to restricted monochrome shadings.

So the most important question for the music lover to ask is: how do I bring the concert hall experience into the home?

The only way to answer this satisfactorily is to find an audio dealer who shares the same aspirations. A dealer who

understands your needs can explain how they will be met, and practically illustrate solutions to you. You need to phone dealerships before you visit and gauge the level of expertise and interest. There are many shops that are extensively stocked with many brands, but have no idea what they want to achieve sonically, or how to achieve what you

want sonically. The fact that some dealers are happy to sit on the fence and let you choose what you prefer is not in your best interest. It may take some searching, a number of 'phone calls and a degree of travel outside your immediate locality, but when you have found a quality dealer you will usually be pleased with the results in the long run.

A good system always works as a whole, displaying an overall balance of virtues. The essential qualities of the concert hall experience — natural tonal balance, full tone colours, good scale and wide contrast — will all be present in equal measure. This balance is achieved through the artful matching of components, including important but apparently peripheral items such as power cables, connecting cables and equipment supports. The net result is an exciting and engaging musical experience that encourages you to purchase music and develop your musical sensibility.

Any system is only as good as its weakest link — which could very well be your resistance to being advised.

Kevin Scott is the proprietor of Definitive Audio in Nottingham. Views expressed are not necessarily those of Hi-Fi Choice.



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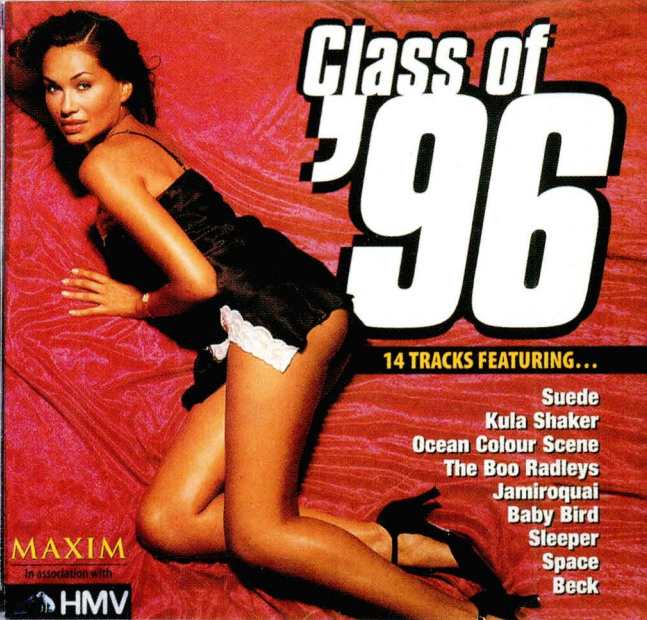
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Lisa lets rip, p22

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THE DIRECTORY

Our Three Step Guide to Buying Hi-Fi

The legendary *Hi-Fi Choice* Directory is now simpler to use than ever before, but contains all the information you need to select and buy the perfect hi-fi system.

STEP 1

Discover which products fall within your budget by using our Price Guide (starts on page 114). This listing is updated monthly and includes all hi-fi products currently available in the UK. It is organised by product type, then by price band, and is sorted alphabetically. Products whose names are printed in **red** are those that we have reviewed. Which leads us to...

STEP 2

Read about the hi-fi equipment that we have reviewed in the Directory (starts on page 122). Here you will learn which items have been singled out for our famous Best Buy and Recommended awards, which denote products of exceptional quality and value. The Directory is sorted by product type and listed alphabetically, and the beginning of each section provides essential information about each kind of hi-fi component.

STEP 3

Find your nearest hi-fi store in our Dealer Directory (starts on page 139) to book a demonstration of the products you are interested in.

Best Buys and Recommendations

If you see a Best Buy (**red**) or Recommended (**blue**) flag at the beginning of an entry in our Directory of reviewed products, the item concerned is particularly deserving of your attention.

B Red signifies the Best Buy swing-tag, which indicates products of the best quality and superb value for money in their price category.

R Blue Recommended products offer excellent quality and value, but not the same cost-effectiveness as a Best Buy.

Please note that an expensive Recommended product will nearly always perform better than an inexpensive Best Buy.

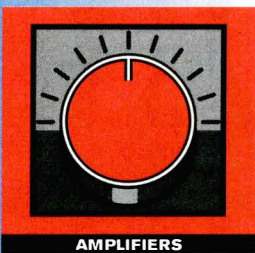
Using Best Buys and Recommendations to buy hi-fi.

Do not commit the cardinal sin of dashing into your local dealer, magazine in hand, demanding to purchase Best Buy CD player A, Best Buy amplifier B and Best Buy speakers C. This is unlikely to result in your long-term satisfaction. Our belief at *Hi-Fi Choice* is that you must consider the hi-fi system as a complete entity, not as a collection of components. While a superb system might well contain Best Buy and Recommended components, one cannot lump together Best Buys and Recommendations in the hope that they will automatically perform superbly. These ratings make a useful guideline for short-listing components worth trying, but only by hearing them for yourself can you draw meaningful conclusions about what suits your taste. Furthermore, don't panic if the dealer offers you equipment that we have not tested. At the end of the day, what matters most is that your hi-fi system fits your tastes like a glove, and it is the dealer's challenge to ensure your satisfaction by any means – and components – necessary!



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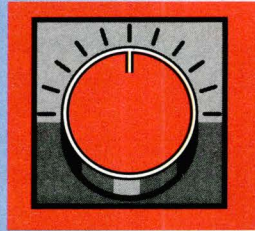
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JVC AX-V6BK	230
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TEAC AR500	250
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LFD Integrated 0 LE	799
Linn Majik (Phono)	725
Marantz PM-17	900
Meridian 551	795
Micromega Tempo 2	900
Minstrel Ultra Linear	900
Monrio MC-200S	895
Naim Audio Nait 3 R	724

Pioneer A-07	1,000
Rega Elicit	730
Shearpe Phase 2 Reference	799
Sony TAFE-SES	1,000
Stamfoot Audio SF100	849
Talk Electronics Storm 2 P	730
TEAC AB-X10	1,000
Thule IA100	949
Unison Research Simply Two	995
£1001 to £2000	
Arion Acoustics Elektra	1,399
Arion Acoustics Talos	1,499
Arion Acoustics Nereus SE 300B	1,850
Arion Acoustics Tycho	1,999
Art Audio Integra	1,499
Audio Innovations Classic 25	1,099
Audio Innovations S500	1,199
Audio Innovations S700	1,199
Bryston B-60	1,090
Bryston B-60R	1,249
Copland CSA-14	1,100
Copland CTA-401	1,699
Credo LIM 702	1,191
Credo LIM 703	1,249
EAR 859	1,595
EAR 834	1,599
Electrocompaniet ECI-2SF	1,173
Graef Venticinque	1,995
LFD Integrated 1	1,099
Marantz PM-16	1,700
Meracur Intrare	1,095
Minstrel Partridge	1,499
Monrio MC-205	1,545
Musical Fidelity A1000	1,399
Rogers E-20a	1,090
Rogers E-40a	1,900
Sonic Frontiers SFC-1	1,795
Sonus-Faber Quid	1,223
Tube Tech Unis S'Line	1,399
Tube Tech Unis phono	1,399
Unison Research Simply Four P	1,555
Unison Research Simply Four T	1,595
Woodside ISA230 Line	1,099
Woodside ISA230 Disc	1,249
Over £2000	
Adyton Opera	2,595
Electrocompaniet ECI-1	2,233
Electrocompaniet ECI-1 SF	2,415
Gamma Acoustics Rhythm	2,499
Jadis DA30	3,490
Jadis DA60	5,490
Krell KAV-300i	2,490
Mcintosh MA6800	3,735
Meracur Onesta	2,595
Pioneer A-09	4,000
Tube Tech Synergy 1	3,999
Unison Research Performance One	4,500
Preamps Up to £500	
Alchemist Kraken/Pre	380
AMC AV81 Control	289
AMC 1030	379
AMC S84	479
AMC AV81 H.T. Control	499
Analogue Saturn	75
Analogue Saturn MC	75



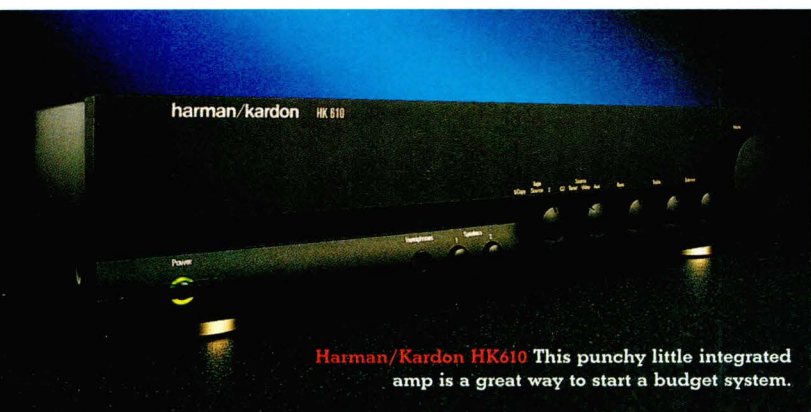
Preamps
Up to £500



Audiolab 8000Q/M The range-topping pre/power combo features in a system context next month!

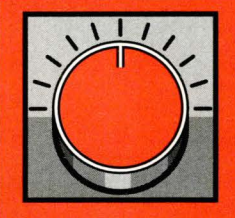
Art Audio Minuet	499
Audio Innovations P1	369
Audio Innovations L1	369
Audio Innovations T2	425
Creek OBM-8	99
Creek OBM-9	110
Creek P42	279
Crimson CS610C	499
Denon PMA-425R	230
DPA DSP 200S	495
EAR 834P	399
EAR 834L	449
Harman/Kardon AP2500	499
LFD Linestage LSO	499
Lumley Reference PP70	325
Lumley Reference PP1	325
Magnum MP330	475
Michell Iso	420
Moth 30 Passive	149
Moth 30 RIAA	199
Moth 30 Active	249
Moth 30 RIAA 100VA	299
Moth 30 Active 100VA	349
Musical Fidelity E20	399
Musical Fidelity F2	499
NAD 114	270
NAD 116	430
Naim Audio Prefix	334
Naim Audio NAC92	448
Qed Vector	199
Rega EOS	398
Roksan Art Axxexes	395
Rose RV-23	450
Rotel RC970BX MkII	175
Talk Electronics Hurricane 1	500
Technics SU-C1000	350
Thorens TTP-2000	500
Unison Research Simply Phono	500
£501 to £2000	
Adyton Chorus	1,995
Alchemist Forsetti Pre	919
Arion Acoustics Eros	1,199
Arion Acoustics Eros Phono	1,399
Art Audio Headline	700
Art Audio VPL	741
Art Audio Conductor Phono	750
Art Audio VP1	952
Art Audio Conductor	1,250
Art Audio Conductor Export	2,000
Audio Innovations L2	749
Audio Innovations P2MM	749
Audio Innovations P2MC	949
Audio Research PH-3	1,550
Audio Research LS-7	1,598
Audio Research LS-3	1,845
Audio Synthesis Pro Passion	595
Audio Synthesis Passion	695
Audio Synthesis Passion 6	1,195
Audio Synthesis Passion 8S	1,695
Audio Synthesis Passion 8M	1,695
Audiolab 8000C	550
Audiolab 8000PPA	900
Audiolab 8000Q	1,100
Aura CA-200	700
Aura CA-200C	750
AVI S2000MP	849
AVI S2000MP + P	1,049
Bryston .4	546
Bryston BP1	673
Bryston BP5	757
Bryston BP4	757
Bryston BP20	802
Bryston BP25	1,129
Bryston BP-25P	1,355
Bryston 4B-ST PRO	1,495
Bryston BP-25MC	1,580
Chord CPA 1800	1,730
Concordant Exhilarant	900
Concordant Exquisite	1,950

Copland CSA-303	1,155
Copland CTA-301MkII	1,349
Counterpoint SA-1000E	1,195
Counterpoint Solid 8E	1,195
Counterpoint SA-2000E	1,695
Credo CMP004	1,246
Credo CMP005	1,876
Dawn Audio Prelude +50	951
DNM 3 Start	950
DNM 3A Start	1,500
DPA Enlightenment	695
DPA DSP500S	2,000
Dynavector L200	1,195
Dynavector P100	1,495
Dynavector L100	1,995
ECA Vista S	760
ECA Vista HD	880
ECA Prisma	880
Electrocompaniet ECP-1	580
Electrocompaniet ECP-1 SF	675
Electrocompaniet EC-4.5	1,200
Electrocompaniet EC-4.5SF	1,343
Electrocompaniet EC-4 Line	1,466
Electrocompaniet EC-4 SF Line	1,648
Electrocompaniet EC-3MC	1,953
Exposure XIX	800
Exposure XVII	850
Gamma Acoustics Era Std	999
Graef WFB Two	1,195
Graef WFB One	1,895
Heybrook Signature II	1,600
Jadis DPL2	1,790
LFD MC1 Phonostage	949
LFD LS1 Linestage	999
LFD MC2 Phonostage	1,499
LFD LS2 Linestage	1,599
LFD Linestage LS2P	1,750
LFD Linestage LSB	1,999
Linn Wakonda/L	750
Linn Wakonda	850
Linn Kairn Line	1,400
Linn Kairn Phono	1,700
Lumley Reference PS1	795
Lumley Reference WAP1.5	895
Lumley Reference LV1.5	895
Lumley Reference LV1	1,000
Lumley Reference LV1	1,150
Lumley Reference WAP1	1,150
Lumley Reference L/R PV1.5	1,350
Lumley Reference PV1.5	1,500
Lumley Reference PV1	1,500
Lumley Reference PV1	1,700
Marantz AC-500	700
Marantz EC-500	900
Marantz SC-23	1,000
Mcintosh C712	1,479
Meracur Ingredi	925
Meridian 501	695
Meridian 562	765
Meridian 501V	875
Meridian 562V	995
Meridian 502	1,295
Michell Argo	730
Michell Iso HR	895
Michell Argo HR	1,339
Michi RHC-10	795
Michi RHQ-10	1,150
Michi RHA-10	1,150
Micromega Tempo P	1,250
Monrio ADN	625
Monrio PLUR1-L	960
Musical Fidelity WAP1.5	1,499
NAD 118	1,000
Naim Audio NAC32R	599
Naim Audio NAC72	690
Naim Audio NAC 102	998
Onix OA36L	999
Onix OA36	1,100
Quad 77PR	850

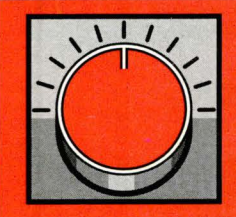


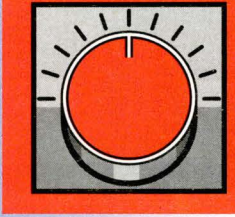
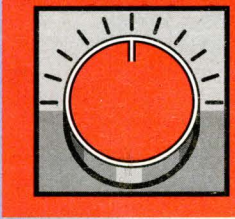
Harman/Kardon HK610 This punchy little integrated amp is a great way to start a budget system.

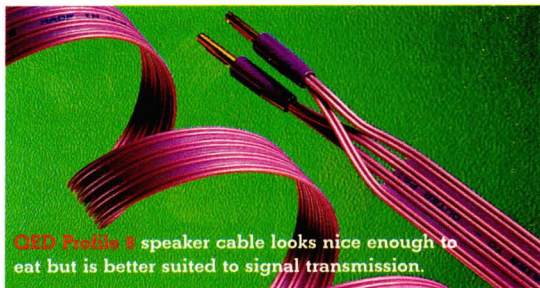
Rega HAL	998
Roksan ROK-L2.5	1,250
Rose RV-23S	525
Shearpe Phase 6 Pre	895
Shearpe Phase 1 Pre Ref	1,399
Sonic Frontiers SFL-1	1,095
Sonic Frontiers SFL-1	1,395
Sonic Frontiers SFP-1 Sig	1,495
Sonic Frontiers SFL-1 Sig	1,795
Sumo Ullyses II	629
Sumo Athena II Line	767
Sumo Polaris III	950
Sumo Athena IIB/II LS	987
Sumo Artemis OP	1,695
Sumo Audiomedia III	1,810
Sumo Model Five	1,975
Talk Electronics Hurricane 1 P	550
Talk Electronics Hurricane 2	650
Talk Electronics Hurricane 2P	730
Talk Electronics Hurricane 3	900
Talk Electronics Hurricane 3P	1,000
Technics SU-C2000	700
Tesserac TAADA	1,500
Tesserac TALA	1,500
Tesserac TAHA	1,800
Thorens TTP-2000F	650
Thorens TRP-3000	1,500
Thule PR200	699
Tube Tech Seer Line	575
Tube Tech Seer Phono	649
Tube Tech Prophet	1,199
Unison Research Mystery One	1,750
Unison Research Phono One	1,995
Woodside SC27 Line	949
Woodside SC27 Phono MM	1,099
Woodside SC27 Phono	1,249
Woodside SC26 Line	1,557
XTC PRE-1	1,000
Yamaha CX-2	650
Over £2000	
Adyton Temper	2,495
Adyton Modus	2,695
Alchemist Control	4,995
Arion Acoustics Midas Phono	2,250
ATC SCA2	2,499
Audio Research LS-3b	2,250
Audio Research PH-2	2,895
Audio Research LS-2 II	2,997
Audio Research SP9 III	3,290
Audio Research LS-2b II	3,398
Audio Research LS22	4,125
Audio Research LS-5 II	5,690
CAT SLI Sig line	5,500
CAT SLI Sig phono	6,000
Chord CPA 2200	2,298
Chord CPA 2800	3,090
Chord CPA 3200	3,352
Chord CPA 4000	6,025
Counterpoint SA-3000E	2,195
Counterpoint SA-5000E	3,995
Counterpoint SA-9	3,995
Credo LPR 001	2,815
DNM 3B Twin E	3,050
DNM 3B Primus E	3,630
DNM 3B Six E	4,780
EAR 802MC	2,599
EAR G88	6,999
Electrocompaniet EC-3MC SF	2,135
Gamma Acoustics Era Ref	3,999
Graaf GM13.5B	3,950
Jadis DP60L	2,800
Jadis DPL	3,190
Jadis DPMC	3,190
Jadis DEFY-P60	3,774
Jadis JPL	4,720
Jadis JPP-200	4,998
Jadis JP-30MC	5,978
Jadis JP-S2	7,900
Krell KRC-2	3,198
Krell KRC-2	3,331
Krell KRC-2	4,190
Krell KRC-HR	6,949
Krell KRC	6,949
LFD Disc Preamp	4,499
Lumley Reference L/R M100	2,250
Lumley Reference L/R LS2	3,250
Lumley Reference L/R PS2	3,550
Lumley Reference L/R M140	4,250
Lumley Reference ST150	4,350
Marantz Model 7	3,500
Marantz SC-5	7,000
Mark Levinson 38	3,995
Mark Levinson 38S	6,495
Matisse Fantasy	2,300
Matisse Reference	3,500
Mcintosh C28	2,095
Mcintosh C22	2,099
Mcintosh C39	3,129
Mcintosh C40	3,239
Meracur Pretare	2,195
Meridian 601	2,750
Naim Audio NAC82	2,058
Naim Audio NAC52	3,190
Roksan ROK-L1.5	2,250

Sonic Frontiers SFL-2	3,795
Sumo Model Ten/M	4,200
Tesserac TAP-A	5,300
Woodside SC26 Line & Phono	2,233
	
Power Amps	
Up to £500	
AMC 2445	299
AMC 2030	449
Arcam Alpha 9P	400
Arcam Delta 290P	400
Creek A42	279
Crimson CS620C	450
Denon PMA-250SE	160
Denon PMA-350SE	200
Denon PMA-725R	350
Harman/Kardon PA2100	400
LFD Powerstage PAO	499
Marantz MA-500	250
Marantz SM-500	400
Marantz MM-500	450
Moth 30 Series Power	239
Moth 30 Mono/40	459
Myryad MA 120	450
Naim Audio NAP90/3	428
Rotel RB970BX MkII	225
Rotel RB800BX	450
Talk Electronics Tornado 1	450
Technics SE-A1000	400
£501 to £2000	
Alchemist Forsetti Pwr	1,309
Arion Acoustics EOS	1,299
Arion Acoustics Triton	1,399
Arion Acoustics Tycho	1,850
Art Audio Quintet	1,393
Art Audio Quintet SE MB	1,500
Art Audio Concerto	1,669
Audio Innovations Ser 800	999
Audio Innovations First Audio	1,749
Audio Innovations Ser 1000	1,799
Audio Synthesis Desire	1,695
Audiolab 8000P	750
Audiolab 8000M	800
Aura VA-150C	850
Aura PA-200	1,200
Aura PA-200 C	1,250
AVI S2000MA	849
AVI S2000MM	1,249
Bryston 2B-LP	639
Bryston 3B-ST PRO	987
Bryston THX3B	1,074
Bryston 3B-NRB	1,159
Bryston 7B-ST PRO	1,545
Bryston THX7B	1,605
Bryston 5B-ST PRO	1,610
Bryston 4B-NRB	1,756
Bryston 7B-NRB	1,815
Bryston THX4B	1,858
Bryston 8B-ST PRO	1,868
Chord SPM 400	1,290
Chord SPM 600	1,680
Copland CTA-501	1,599
Copland CTA-504	1,999
Counterpoint Solid 1EM	995
Counterpoint SA100E	1,495
Counterpoint Solid 1E	1,495
Counterpoint NPS-100E	1,995
Credo PMP 804	1,876
Crimson CS630C	800
Dawn Audio Cmd 2 by 200	890
DNM PA1	1,750
DPA Enlightenment	995
ECA Lectern S	880
ECA Lectern HD	1,480
Electrocompaniet AW60B	1,185
Exposure XVIII Super	850
Exposure XVIII (pr)	1,599
Harman/Kardon PA2200	700
Harman/Kardon PA2400	1,000
Jadis DA5	1,997
LFD PA1 Powerstage	999
LFD Powerstage PA2	1,599
LFD Powerstage PA2M	1,999
Linn LK100	650
Linn Klout	2,000
Lumley Reference ST40	1,250
Lumley Reference ST70	1,950
Lynwood Ruby	985
Magnum MF330	685
Marantz MA-23	1,800
Mcintosh MC7100	1,259

Meracur Ciere	1,095
Meridian 555	750
Michell Alecto Stereo	1,150
Michell Alecto Mono	1,989
Michi RBH-05	1,100
Michi RBH-10	2,000
Micromega Amp	1,250
Monrio Cento	1,495
Monrio HP1	1,995
Moth 30 Stereo/60	549
Moth 30 Mono/100	879
Musical Fidelity FX2	799
NAD 218THX	850
NAD Monitor 208	999
Naim Audio NAP140	722
Naim Audio NAP180	1,016
Naim Audio NAP135	1,576
Naim Audio NAP250	1,576
Onix OAG01	699
Onix OA801	849
Onix OA701	899
Papworth TVA50	1,425
Quad 77SA	600
Quad 707	800
Rega EXS	598
Rega Exon	598
Roksan ROK-S1.5	1,495
Rose RP-190 (Dual Mode)	550
Rotel RB990BX	625
Shearpe Phase 3	619
Shearpe Phase 3 Reference	689
Shearpe Phase 5 Mono	879
Sonic Frontiers SFS-40	1,695
Sumo Andromeda III	1,975
Talk Electronics Tornado 2	600
Talk Electronics Tornado 3	750
Talk Electronics Tornado 4	1,100
Technics SE-A2000	1,100
Thorens TTA-2000	550
Thorens TRA-3000	2,000
Thule PA200	1,798
Tube Tech Unisig Pwr Amp	1,099
Woodside SA240	1,199
Woodside MA100	1,733
Woodside STA50	1,800
XTC POW-1	2,000
Yamaha MX-2	750
Over £2000	
Adyton Cordis 1.6	3,495
Alchemist Stereo	3,995
Alchemist Mono	8,995
Arion Acoustics Nemesis SE 300B	3,000
Art Audio Tempo	2,499
Art Audio Quintet SE	2,500
Art Audio Maestro	3,524
Audio Innovations Ser 1000SE	2,499
Audio Innovations Second Audio	3,299
Audio Research D130	2,497
Audio Research VT60	2,645
Audio Research VTM120	2,645
Audio Research VT60SE	3,190
Audio Research VTM120SE	3,190
Audio Research D-200	3,248
Audio Research V35	3,355
Audio Research V70	4,480
Audio Research D-300	4,800
Audio Research VT130	5,994
Audio Research D-400II	6,600
Audio Research VT150	7,200
Audio Research VT130SE	8,145
Audio Research VT150SE	8,400
Audio Research V140	8,960
Bryston THX8B	2,030
Bryston 8B-NRB	2,195
Chord SPM 800	2,155
Chord SPM 1000B	2,650
Chord SPM 1200	3,840
Chord SPM 200	4,890
Chord SPM 1600	4,890
Chord SPM 3000	7,960
Copland CTA-505	2,099
Counterpoint Solid 2E	2,495
Counterpoint NPS-200E	2,995
Counterpoint SA4	3,575
Counterpoint Nat Progress	4,125
Counterpoint NPS-400E	4,395
Counterpoint NPM-E	8,995
Credo LPO 804	2,456
Credo PMP 155	2,676
Credo LPO 155	3,714
Credo LPO 455	4,975
DNM PAZBE	4,250
DNM PAZBS	5,250
DNM PAZBS-1	5,650
DPA DPAS00S	3,000
Dynavector HX75	2,195
Dynavector HX1.2	3,995
EAR 509 Mk II	3,499
EAR 519	4,699
EAR 549	6,999
Electrocompaniet AW100DMB	2,115
Electrocompaniet AW100DMB-SF	2,298
Electrocompaniet AW250DMB	3,983
Electrocompaniet AW250DMB-SF	4,215

Electrocompaniet AW180MB	4,673
Electrocompaniet AW180MB-SF	4,910
Exposure IV	2,199
Exposure XVI	4,000
Gamma Acoustics Aeon 211/VT4C	4,999
Gamma Acoustics Space Ref	5,999
Graaf 5050	2,150
Graaf GM 100	4,490
Graaf GM200	8,000
Jadis JA-30	2,880
Jadis DA8	3,333
Jadis JA300B	4,500
Jadis JA-80	4,956
Jadis DA7	5,290
Jadis DEFY-7	5,290
Jadis JA-200	7,759
Krell KSA-50s	3,690
Krell KSA-100s	5,843
Krell KSA-200s	7,987
Krell KSA-300s	9,500
Lumley Reference M120	3,200
Marantz Model 8	3,500
Marantz Model 9	4,000
Marantz SM-5	5,000
Mark Levinson 29	3,450
Mark Levinson 331	4,495
Mark Levinson 27.5	5,399
Mark Levinson 332	6,999
Mark Levinson 333	7,399
Mark Levinson 235	8,495
Matisse Ref Monoblocks	7,800
Mcintosh MC7108	2,249
Mcintosh MC7150	2,295
Mcintosh MC7104	2,729
Mcintosh MC150	2,855
Mcintosh MC7300	3,195
Mcintosh MC7106	3,425
Mcintosh MC275	3,595
Mcintosh MC300	3,765
Mcintosh MC2600	5,395
Mcintosh MC500	6,265
Meracur Tentare	2,245
Meracur Cantare	8,995
Musical Fidelity F16	2,499
Musical Fidelity F19	3,999
Papworth M100	2,645
Papworth M200	3,825
Roksan ROK-M1.5	2,250
Shearpe Phase 1 Pwr Ref	2,199
Sonic Frontiers SFS-80	2,895
Sonic Frontiers SFS-160	5,495
Tesserac TAMP-60	7,350
Tube Tech Genesis	2,599
Unison Research Smart 845	3,250
	
AV Amplifiers/Receivers	
Arcam Xeta One	1,000
Audio Research SDA1	4,391
Citation 7.1	2,500
Denon AVR-900	350
Denon AVC-1800	550
Denon AVC-2800	800
Exposure XXV	1,000
Grundig V1000DPL	360
Harman/Kardon AV1100	300
Harman/Kardon AVR-10	380
Harman/Kardon AV1150	400
Harman/Kardon AVR-21	500
Harman/Kardon AV1200	500
Harman/Kardon AVR-25	650
Harman/Kardon AVR-30	1,000
Heybrook Parasound HCA 806	1,495
JVC AX-V6BK	230
JVC RX-616RBK	270
JVC RX-616RBK	350
Krell KAV500/2	3,485
Krell KAV500/3	3,985
Krell KAV500/4	4,485
Krell KAV500/5	4,985
Lumley Reference MM-500	400
Marantz PM-711AV	450
Mission AV-Master	650
NAD AV-316	450
NAD 216THX	470
NAD 917	500
NAD 716	600
NAD ASV 620	700
Onkyo A-SV610	600
Onkyo TX-SV525PRO	600
Onkyo TX-SV919THX	2,000

Pioneer VSA - 303	300
Pioneer VSA - 805S	450
Rotel RB956AX	350
Rotel RSP960AX	400
Sony TA-VE700	350
Sony TA-VE 800G	400
Sony TA-VA 8ES	700
Yamaha RX-V390RDS	300
Yamaha DSP-A590	349
Yamaha RX-V590RDS	449
Yamaha DSP-A780	599
Yamaha DSP-A970	799
Yamaha DSP-990	900
Yamaha DSP-A2070	1,099
Yamaha DSP 3090	1,700
	
Surround Sound Processors	
Arcam XETA 2	650
Audio Research SDPI	3,293
Exposure XXIII	750
Exposure XX1	1,050
Heybrook Parasound PSP 1000	995
Kenwood SS-3300	200
Marantz AV-1030	330
Marantz AV-1040	400
Marantz DP-870	600
NAD 117	470
NAD ED 901	700
Naim Audio NAV1	1,600
Onkyo SR211PRO	340
Pioneer VSP-200	250
Sanyo HT F450	180
Sherwood ES5030R	200
Sony SDP E300	230
Technics SH-AV500	280
Yamaha DSP-E390	250
Yamaha DSP-E580	450
Yamaha DSP-E1000	700
	
Surround Sound Receivers	
Denon AVR-600RD	300
Grundig R14DPL	280
Grundig R1000DPL	400
Harman/Kardon AVR-20	499
Harman/Kardon AVR-25	699
Harman/Kardon AVR-30	1,000
JVC RX-416VBK	270
JVC RX-616RBK	350
Kenwood KR-V5080	280
Kenwood KR-V6080	330
Kenwood KR-V7080	380
Kenwood KR-V990D	1,300
Marantz SR-66	300
Marantz SR-770	700
Marantz SR-96	1,300
NAD 711	400
NAD TXSV 424	450
NAD 316	450
NAD AV713	480
NAD 713	480
NAD TXSV 535R	600
NAD TXSV 525R	600
NAD AV716	600
NAD TXSV 727R	900
NAD TXSV 828THX	1,300
NAD TXSV 919THX	2,000
Onkyo TX-SV424PRO	450
Onkyo TX-SV525PRO	600
Onkyo TX-SV727PRO	900
Philips FR731	250
Philips FR751	300
Pioneer VSX-405RDS	250
Pioneer VSX-505RDS	300
Pioneer VSX-804RDS	399
Sherwood RV4050R	120
Sherwood RV5030R	300
Sherwood RV5050	



QED Profile 3 speaker cable looks nice enough to eat but is better suited to signal transmission.

Sherwood RV7050R	400
Sony STRD E405	280
TEAC AG-V600	400
Technics SA-EX100	200
Technics SA-EX300	250
Technics SA-EX500	350
Technics SA-EX700	450
Technics SA-TX50	1,000
Yamaha RX-V390RDS	299
Yamaha RX-V590RDS	449



CABLES
Analogue Interconnects

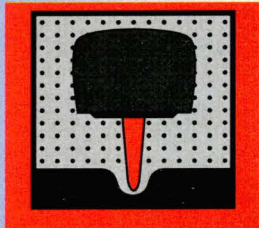
Art Yam Church 5000	515.00
Cable Talk Improved 2/CD	26.00
Cable Talk Advanced 2	35.00
Cable Talk Improved 2/T	50.00
Cable Talk Studio 2	65.00
Cable Talk Professional 2	85.00
Cable Talk Broadcast 2	130.00
Cable Talk Reference 2	180.00
Cable Talk Signature Gold	300.00
Cambridge Audio Atlantic	10.00
Cambridge Audio Artic	20.00
Cambridge Audio Pacific	30.00
Cambridge Audio Studio Ref	40.00
Chord Chrysalis	30.00
Chord Cobra	49.00
Chord Siren	65.00
Chord Chameleon	68.00
Chord Solid	99.00
DPA Slink	41.00
DPA White Slink	75.00
Heybrook Inter/BS Blue STRK	95.00
Ixos 104	20.00
Ixos 103	40.00
Ixos 102	60.00
Ixos 101	100.00
Kimber Cable Illuminati DX50	350.00
Kimber Cable Orchid	750.00
Kronos Konnekt 3	49.00
Kronos Konnekt 2	99.00
Kronos Konnekt 1	199.00
Naim Audio SNAIC-5	47.00
Nordost Magic	30.00
Nordost Black Knight	50.00
Nordost Blue Angel	80.00
Nordost Blue Heaven	120.00
Nordost Red Dawn	250.00
Qed P2 Gold	20.00
Qed Incon P2 Screened	23.00
Qed Incon P1 Screened	26.00
Roksan High Def 0.6M	75.00
Roksan High Def 1.0M	85.00
Roksan High Def 1.5M	95.00
Silver Sound SS3	49.00
Silver Sound SS2	99.00
Silver Sound SS1	199.00
Sonic Link Bonus 1m	15.00
Sonic Link Silver pink	30.00
Sonic Link Black	45.00
Sonic Link White	50.00
Sonic Link Brown	60.00
Sonic Link Violet HPMC	65.00
Sonic Link Violet	85.00
Sonic Link Violet HPMC	100.00
Sonic Link Blue Nickel	105.00
Sonic Link Vermillion	170.00
Sonic Link Red earth	260.00
Sonic Link Black earth	350.00
Sonic Link Blue earth	495.00
Sonic Link Rare earth	1,200.00
Sumo IC-50	37.00
Sumo IC-80	60.00
Trichord Pulsewire 75	150.00

Digital Interconnects

Art Yam Church 5000	275.00
Audioquest Video 2	50.00
Audioquest Digital PRO	90.00
Cable Talk Digital 2	75.00
Chord Codac	33.00
Chord Prodac	50.00
DPA Digi-link	28.00
Ixos 105	25.00
Monster DataLink 100	45.00
Moth Leyline DataLink	140.00
Nordost Moonglo	135.00
Nordost Moonglo-XLR	165.00
Qed DigiLink	20.00
QLN Nordost Moonglo	130.00
QLN Nordost-XLR	165.00
Roksan High Def 0.6M	45.00
Roksan High Def 1.0M	55.00
Roksan High Def 1.5M	65.00
Sonic Link Silver Pink	15.00
Sonic Link Green	50.00
Sonic Link Green Earth	110.00
Sumo IC-100	73.00
Sumo IC-200	151.00

Speaker Cables

Art Yam Church M2000	470.00
Art Yam Church 5000	795.00
Brandside LC7409	4.00
Brandside LC4110	28.00
Brandside LC3410	40.00
Brandside LC3210	75.00
Brandside LC3219	75.00
Brandside LC3220	90.00
Brandside LC3310	95.00
Brandside LC3240	125.00
Cable Talk Overture 2.1	4.00
Chord Myth	6.00
Chord Legend	15.00
DPA Black Sixteen	345.00
Electrocompaniet EC-K2	119.00
Gale XL315	2.00
Gale XL160-2	3.00
Grado 4500CM	25.00
Ixos 607	2.00
Ixos 605	5.00
Ixos 606	8.00
Ixos 605/5	15.00
Linn K20	4.00
Linn K400	10.00
Linn K600	15.00
Lumley Reference Silver	35.00
Naim Audio NACA 5	5.00
Purasonic 7845	2.00
Rega REGA	2.00
Silver Sound 12 Gauge	15.00
Silver Sound 10 Gauge	35.00
Silver Sound 8 Gauge	75.00
SME S2LB-4	37.00
SME S3LB-4	42.00
SME 4900A	62.00
SME 5900A	83.00
Sonic Link Nickel plated	3.00
Sonic Link Gold plated	5.00
Sonic Link Silver aero	18.00
Sonic Link Silver aero SX00x2	35.00
Sonic Link rare earth metal	90.00
Sumo SS-1000-D	323.00
Trichord Pulsewire 75/D	64.00



CARTRIDGES
Up to £100

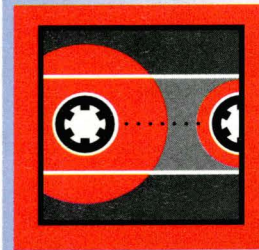
Audio Technica AT-91	13
Audio Technica AT-95E	19

Audio Technica AT-110E	24
Denon DL110	70
Denon DL160	90
Denon DL103	100
Goldring Elan P	17
Goldring Elan	19
Goldring Elektra	29
Goldring 1006	59
Goldring 1012GX	65
Goldring 1012 GX Cartridge	79
Goldring 1022GX	99
Grado ZTE+1	27
Grado ZCE+1	37
Grado Z3E+1	47
Grado Prestige Green	49
Grado Prestige Black	59
Grado Prestige Blue	69
Grado ZFL+	82
Grado Prestige Red	99
Linn K5	65
Nottingham Analogue Tracer I	98
Ortofon VM52	14
Ortofon OMP-5E	20
Ortofon OM-5E	20
Ortofon OM10 Super	30
Ortofon OMPRO-S	38
Ortofon OM PRO S	38
Ortofon 510	38
Ortofon OMDJ's	50
Ortofon OMDJ's+2	60
Ortofon OM Night Club S	65
Ortofon 520	65
Ortofon OM20 Super	70
Ortofon OM Night Club E	70
Ortofon MC1 Turbo	70
Ortofon Concord PRO-S	70
Ortofon Concord DJ's	80
Ortofon OM30 Super	90
Ortofon Concord PRO-S +2	95
Ortofon OMNC+2	100
Ortofon MC10 Super	100
Ortofon 530	100
Pickering TE-15	20
Pickering TE-15	25
Pickering T-E	25
Pickering V15-DJ	28
Pickering TL-E	35
Pickering TL-2E	45
Pickering XV15-625E	50
Pickering XV15-150-DJ	50
Pickering TL-2-S	55
Pickering XV15-757S	60
Pickering XV15-625DJ	60
Pickering XV15-1800S	70
Pickering TL3S	80
Pickering XEV-3001E	95
Pickering XLZ-3500	100
Pickering TL-4-S	100
Pro-Ject 78rpm Kit	20
Rega Bias	39
Rega RB78	39
Rega Super Bias	59
Rega Elys	85
Shure SC35C	29
Shure ME95B	38
Shure M70BX	38
Stanton 500AL II	34
Stanton 500EL	37
Stanton 680AL/X	56
Stanton 680EL/X	70
Sumiko Oyster	30
Sumiko Black Pearl	50
Sumiko Pearl	70
Sumiko Blue Point	100

Over £100

Audio Technica AT-OC9	245
Audio Technica ART-1	944
Audioquest MC5	250
Audioquest 404L	599
Audioquest 404IMH	899
Audioquest 7000SX	1,495
Denon DL304	200
Dnm Reson Mica	150
Dnm Reson Aciore	199
Dnm Reson Reza	225
Dnm Reson Etile	299
Dnm Reson Lexa	899
Dynavector 50X	159
Dynavector 10X	189
Dynavector 23RS	375
Dynavector 17D2	450
Dynavector XX-1L	998
Dynavector XX-1	998
Dynavector Te-Kaitora	1,698
Goldring Eroica	110
Goldring Eroica LX	110
Goldring 1042	120
Goldring Elite	220
Grado Prestige Silver	119
Grado Prestige Gold	149
Grado Signature Junior	149
Grado Signature 8M2	250
Grado Signature MCZ	375

Grado Signature TLZ	650
Grado Signature XTZ	975
Koetsu Red T	1,550
Koetsu Red K Sig	1,998
Koetsu Urushi	2,297
Koetsu Signature	3,218
Koetsu Gold PR	5,498
Linn K9	150
Linn K18/II	250
Linn Klyde	500
Linn Arkiv	1,000
London Decca Maroon	259
London Decca Gold	299
London Decca Maroon Dp	339
London Decca Gold Dp	379
London Decca S Gold	399
London Decca S Gold Dp	479
London Decca Jubilee	999
Lyra Lydian	699
Lyra Clavis Da Capo	1,069
Lyra Parmassus	2,295
Nottingham Analogue Tracer II	175
Nottingham Analogue Tracer III	350
Nottingham Analogue Tracer IV	550
Ortofon Concord NC S	110
Ortofon OMDJ's+2	115
Ortofon OMNC+E	120
Ortofon Concord NC E	120
Ortofon MC3 Turbo	130
Ortofon MC15 Super II	130
Ortofon 540	130
Ortofon Concord NCS+2	150
Ortofon Concord DJ's+2	150
Ortofon Concord NC+E	165
Ortofon MC25E	180
Ortofon MC25FL	249
Ortofon MC10 Supreme	300
Ortofon MC20 Supreme	425
Ortofon MC30 Supreme	525
Ortofon MC2000II	750
Ortofon MC Rohman	1,000
Ortofon MC3000II	1,100
Ortofon MC5000	1,500
Ortofon MC7500	2,000
Pickering TL-3003	145
Pickering XLZ-4500	175
Pickering TL-4004	150
Pickering XSW-5000U	200
Pickering XLZ-7500	200
Pickering TLZ-7500-S	200
Pro-Ject 6/A30	1,000
Pro-Ject 6/A35	2,350
Roksan Corus Black	130
Roksan Shiraz	970
Stanton 890AL/X	118
Sumiko BPS	250
Transfiguration SPIRIT	1,000
Transfiguration AF-1 MkII	1,950
Transfiguration TEMPER	1,950
Transfiguration Supreme	1,995
Van Den Hul MM-1	250
Van Den Hul MM-2	299
Van Den Hul ODT-II	699
Van Den Hul MC-10	799
Van Den Hul MC-One	999
Van Den Hul MC-ONE Super	1,150
Van Den Hul MC-Two	1,349
Van Den Hul The Frog	1,700
Van Den Hul Grasshopper I/ISLA	2,200
Van Den Hul Grasshopper II/GLN	2,999
Van Den Hul Grasshopper III/GLA	2,999
Van Den Hul Grasshopper IIICMN	3,000
Van Den Hul Grasshopper IIICHN	3,400
Van Den Hul Grasshopper IV/GLA	3,450



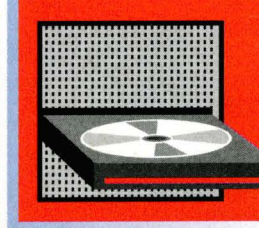
CASSETTE DECKS
Up to £200

Aiwa AD-F450	120
Aiwa AD-WX727	170
Denon DRM-550	160
Denon DRW-580	200
Denon DRS-640	200
Dual CC8000 RS	200
Grundig CCF3	200
JVC TD-W218BK	170
JVC TD-X372BK	170
JVC TD-R472BK	200
JVC TD-W318BK	200
Kenwood KX-W4080	160
Kenwood KX-3080	160

Kenwood KX-W6080	200
Kenwood KX-5080S	200
Luxman K-322	200
Marantz SD-53	200
Marantz SD-55	200
NAD TARW 311	20
Pioneer CT-S250	150
Pioneer CT-VV205R	160
Pioneer CT-W505R	180
Pioneer CT-S450S	200
Sony TC-KE200	120
Sony TC-WE405	150
Sony TC-KE400S	180
Sony TC-WE505	180
TEAC W-416	100
TEAC V-610	100
TEAC W-780R	170
TEAC R-560	180
Technics RS-TR373	200
Technics RS-BX501	200
Yamaha KX-390	150
Yamaha KX-V392	180
Yamaha KX-490	199

Over £200

Aiwa AD-F850	230
Aiwa AD-S950	300
B&W DR-3	450
B&W DR-2	750
B&W DRAGON	2,350
Denon DRM-740	270
Denon DRS-810	310
Harman/Kardon TD420	280
Harman/Kardon TD450	350
Harman/Kardon TD470	450
JVC TD-V562BK	220
JVC TD-W718BK	250
JVC TD-V662BK	270
Kenwood KX-7060S	330
Luxman K-373	400
Marantz SD-63	300
NAD TA 6210	230
NAD 613	230
NAD 614	270
NAD 616	299
NAD TARW 311	320
NAD TA 6310	330
NAD TARW 411	370
Onkyo TA-RW311	320
Onkyo KR-609	350
Onkyo K-W606	370
Onkyo K-611	430
Pioneer CT-S550S	250
Pioneer CT-W803RS	300
Pioneer CT-S830S	500
Pioneer CT-95	1,000
Sony TC-KE500S	230
Sony TC-WE80S	250
Sony TC-KE600S	300
Sony TCK-661S	300
Sony TC-KA6ES	550
TEAC W-850R	250
TEAC V-1030	250
TEAC W-6000R	450
TEAC V-6030S	650
TEAC V-8030S	550
Technics RS-TR474	220
Technics RS-A26	230
Technics RS-TR575	280
Technics RS-A27	300
Yamaha KX-W592	200
Yamaha KX-690	400
Yamaha KX-W952	599



CD PLAYER
Up to £250

Aiwa XC-300	150
Cambridge Audio CD4	150
Denon DCD-625	200
Denon DCD-825	240
Denon DCD-825	240
Dual CD1135RC	140
Dual CD1150RC	150
Dual CD1000RS	170
Dual CD1180RC	180
Eclipse Model 30	50
Eclipse model 50	60
Eclipse model 101	80
Eclipse CD101	80
Grundig CDII	170
Harman/Kardon HD710	250



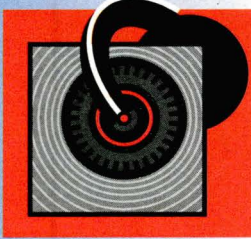
Pioneer CT-S830S This impressive recorder is expensive but still great value for keen recordists.

JVC XL-V184BK	120
JVC XL-V284BK	140
JVC XL-F116BK	180
JVC XL-F216BK	200
JVC XL-V574BK	250
Kenwood DP-M5570	250
Kenwood DP-5060	250
Luxman D-322	200
Marantz CC-47	200
NAD 510	199
NAD 512	250
Onkyo DX-710	200
Onkyo DX-703	240
Philips CD711	120
Philips CD721	130
Pioneer PD-104	130
Pioneer PD-204	150
Pioneer PD-M603	200
Pioneer PD-S505	200
Pioneer PDF-605	230
Rotel RCD-930AX	180
Sony CDP-XE200	120
Sony CDP-M303	130
Sony CDP-XE300	140
Sony CDPCE-105	150
Sony CDP-XE500	160
Sony CDP-CE405	180
Sony CDP-XE700E	200
Sony CDP-C325M	200
Sony CDP-761E	250
TEAC CD-P1800	130
TEAC CD-P3450	150
TEAC CD-P3450SE	200
TEAC PD-D2200	250
Technics SL-PG380A	120
Technics SL-PG480A	140
Technics SL-PG580A	160
Technics SL-PG570A	170
Technics SL-PG670A	200
Technics SL-PS770A	250
Yamaha CDC-555	199
Yamaha CDC-655	249
£251 to £500	
Aiwa DX-C100M	500
AMC C06	349
Arcam Alpha 5 Plus	480
Audio Innovations Alto	399
Audio Innovations Alto	400
Aura CD100	450
B&W MB-4s	350
Creek CD42	500

Denon DCD-1015	350
Grundig CDC14	300
Harman/Kardon HD7325	299
Harman/Kardon FL8450	300
Harman/Kardon HD730	300
Harman/Kardon HD7425	349
Harman/Kardon HD7525	400
JVC XL-2674BK	300
Micromega Minium	350
Musical Fidelity E60	300
NAD 513	290
NAD 515	350
NAD 514	370
NAD 517	400
Onkyo DX-7210	260
Onkyo C721	290
Onkyo DX-7510	400
Onkyo CM716	450
Orlelle CD-100	500
Pioneer PD-S705	300
Pioneer PDF-805	330
Pioneer PD-F905	400
Pioneer PD-S904	400
Rotel RCD-9658X	300
Rotel RCD-9708X	375
Sony CDP-XE900E	300
Sony CDPXC-200	380
TEAC CD-5	350
£501 to £1000	
Arcam Alpha 8	520
Arcam Alpha 6	600
Arcam Delta 250	800
B&W MB-2s	700
Harman/Kardon HD7625	550
Harman/Kardon HD7725	800
Heybrook Signature 11	989
Linn Mimik	875
Luxman D-373	550
Meridian 563	795
Meridian 200	895
Meridian 506	995
Monrio Privilege	995
Myrrad MC100	700
Naim Audio CD3	977
Quad 77B	700
Quad 77M	900
TEAC VRDS-10SE	850
Technics SL-P2000	1,000
Thule CD100	849
Over £1000	
Audio Research CDI	3,290

AVI S2000MC	1,249
Copland CDA-288	1,799
Copland CDA-277	1,800
Jadis JS-1	8,068
Krell CD-DSP MkII	5,000
Krell CD-DSPII 5000	5,000
Krell KPS-20i	9,990
Luxman D500XS	4,500
Marantz CD-17KI	1,300
Marantz CD-23	4,000
Mcintosh MCD7008	2,195
Mcintosh MCD7009	2,635
Meracus Auriga	1,295
Meracus Flagrare	2,495
Meracus Amago	3,995
Meracus Imagio	4,495
Meridian 606	1,350
Meridian 508	1,685
Micro-Seiki CD-M2DC	3,695
Micro-Seiki CDM-2000X	4,689
Mission Disc/Dacmaster	1,900
Musical Fidelity FCD	1,499
Naim Audio CD2	1,977
Naim Audio CD5	3,751
Roksan ATT-DP3P	1,595
Audio Alchemy DDS III	700
Audio Research CDTI	3,290
Audio Synthesis Transcend	1,395
Audiolab 8000CDM	1,400
Audiomeca Damnation	950
Audiomeca Damnation SE	1,100
Audiomeca Kreatura	1,199
Audiomeca Kreatura	1,299
Audiomeca Kreatura SE	1,450
Audiomeca Talisman	1,850
Audiomeca Mephisto	2,100
Audiomeca Mephisto	2,350
Cambridge Audio New CD-4	200
Cambridge Audio Discmagic One	300
Cambridge Audio CD6	300
Counterpoint DA-11E	1,495
DPA Enlightenment	725
Jadis JD2	4,990
Jadis JCDT	8,000
Jadis JDI	9,950
Krell KSP-20i/1	1,100
Krell MD-20	4,999
Krell MD-10	7,990
Krell KPS-20T	8,490
Krell DT-10	9,090
Linn Karik	1,750
Marantz CD-57	230
Marantz CD-63E	350
Marantz CD-63I/KI	500
Marantz CD-17	800
Meridian 500	1,245
Meridian 602	1,750
Micromega Drive 1	700
Pink Triangle Cardinal	875
PS Audio Lambda TR	2,250
PS Audio lambda AT&T	2,778
Roksan ATT-DP3	1,295
TEAC VRDS-T1	550
TEAC VRDS-7	599
TEAC P-700	900
TEAC P-30	2,500
Theta Data Basic II	2,298
Theta Data Basic II AT&T	2,877
Theta Data BasicII S MDE	3,490
Theta Data III NTSC	5,345
Theta Data III NTSC/PAL	5,879
Thorens TCD-2000	900
Wadia 8	3,195
Wadia 20	4,370
XTC CDT-1LE	1,250
Arcam Black Box 50	480
Arcam Black Box 500	750
Counterpoint DA-10E	1,895
Linn Numerik	1,400
Pink Triangles Ordinal	837
Pink Triangle DaCapo	1,400
PS Audio UltraLink 2 HDCCD	2,590
PS Audio Ref Link	4,550
TEAC D-T1	500
Trichord Pulsar Ser One	1,395

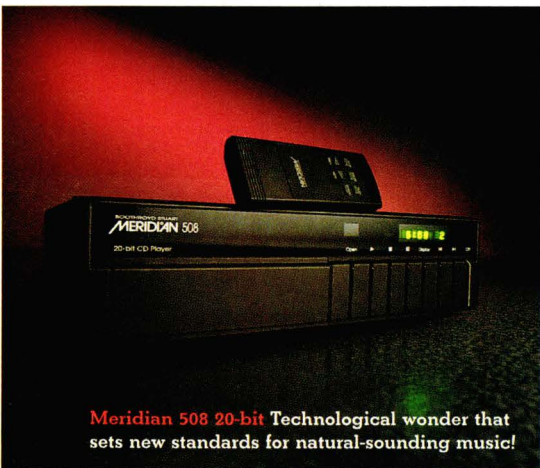
Pioneer D-07	1,150
Pioneer PDR-05	1,300
Sharp MD-R1H	400
Sharp MD-MS100H	400
Sony MDS-SE7	300
Sony MDSJE-500	300
Sony MDS-S1	550
Sony MDS-503	550
Sony DTCZE-700	699
Sony MDA-JA3ES	700
Sony MXD-D1	800
TEAC R-9	1,200



HEADPHONES

Up to £40

Aiwa HP-X201	13
Aiwa HP-A360	13
Aiwa HP-X301	20
Aiwa HP-VX303	25
Aiwa HP-X705	40
Audio Technica ATH-P1	10
Audio Technica ATH-P3	15
Audio Technica ATH-P5	20
Beyer DT111 Alpha	13
Beyer DT111 Beta	17
Beyer DT111 Gamma	21
Beyer DT211	34
Denon AH-C33	26
JVC HA-22	6
JVC HA-CD88	18
JVC HA-D525	20
JVC HA-F65	20
JVC HA-D626	25
Kenwood KH-535	5
Kenwood KH-757	7
Kenwood KH-959	25
Kenwood KH-1000	25
Kenwood KH-2020	40
Maxell EB-125	4
Maxell HP-200	6
Maxell EB-225	7
Maxell HBS-150	8
Maxell HP-300	8
Maxell EBS-325	9
Maxell EB-425	10
Maxell HP-700	10
Maxell HP-800	11
Maxell HBS-250	13
Maxell HBS-350	13
Maxell HP-1000	25
Maxell HP-2000	25
Maxell HP-3000	30
Pioneer SE-A10	8
Pioneer SE-A20	13
Pioneer SE-A40	20
Pioneer SE-A20V	23
Pioneer SE-M250	25
Pioneer SE-M350	30
Ross RE-233	5
Ross RIH-150	6
Ross RE-235	6
Ross RE-234	6
Ross RE-229	6
Ross RE-2030	6
Ross RMH-300	7
Ross RE-280	7
Ross RE-246	7
Ross RE-223	7
Ross RMH-500CD	9
Ross RIH-360CD	9
Ross RE-2060CD	9
Ross RMH-310TV	10
Ross RIH-550	10
Ross RIH-460CD	12
Ross RDH-200CD	13
Ross RDH-100CD	15
Ross RDH-300CD	17
Ross RDH-400CD	22
Sennheiser MX3	9
Sennheiser HD26	10
Sennheiser HD36	15
Sennheiser MX4	15
Sennheiser HD56	18
Sennheiser MX5	25
Sennheiser Vegas	30
Sennheiser Manhattan	30
Sennheiser HD60TV	40
Sony OPEN MDR-005EL	6
Sony MDR-E807	8
Sony MDR-007-MK2	8
Sony MDRW-08L	10
Sony MDR-009	10
Sony MDR-E81TV	12
Sony MDR-A009	12
Sony MDR-V50	13
Sony MDR-E827 KIT	15
Sony MDR-15	15
Sony MDR-W24V	15
Sony MDR-E837	18
Sony MDR-E846MP	20
Sony MDR-009TV	20
Sony MDR-A34L	20
Sony MDR-E848	20
Sony MDR-CD170	20
Sony MDR-P1TV	25
Sony MDR-IF120	30
Sony MDR-CD270	30
Sony MDR-CD370	40
Technics RP-HT300	40
Vivanco SR60	3
Vivanco SR12	3
Vivanco SR52	5
Vivanco SR54	7
Vivanco SR14	7
Vivanco SR16	8
Vivanco SR120	15
Vivanco SR250	19
Vivanco SR150	20
Vivanco SR200	25
Vivanco SR300	30
Over £41	
AKG K222IR	100
AKG K333IR	150
AKG K444IR	180
AKG K1000	700
Audio Technica ATH910PRO	90
Beyer DT311	57
Beyer DT411	69
Beyer IRH790	79
Beyer DT331	82
Beyer DT431	98
Beyer IRH 890	99
Beyer DT511	117
Beyer DT770 Pro	129
Beyer IRS790	130
Beyer DT531	135
Beyer DT890 Pro	160
Beyer DT100	160
Beyer DT801	172
Beyer DT811	200
Beyer IRS890	222
Beyer DT901	222
Beyer DT911	235
Denon AH-D210	45
Denon AH-D350	65



Meridian 508 20-bit Technological wonder that sets new standards for natural-sounding music!



DIGITAL RECORDERS

Meridian CDR	4,500
Philips DCC730	250
Philips DCC170	250
Pioneer D-05	800



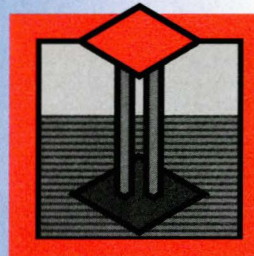
Beyer DT321 Just one of this German company's extensive range of ear-cossetting cans.



Mordaunt-Short MS10i Officially declared "a kickin' little box" in our recent review.

Denon AH-D550	80
Denon AH-D650	95
Denon AH-D750	130
Denon AH-D950	150
Ergo 1	120
Ergo Model2	140
Grado SR80	110
Jecklin Float Model 1	79
Jecklin Float Model 2	99
Jecklin Float ELS	399
JVC HA-D727	43
JVC HA-D910	65
JVC HA-D1000	250
JVC HA-F25	699
Kenwood KH-5000	70
Sennheiser HD445	45
Sennheiser HD414 Class	50
Sennheiser HD455 II	55
Sennheiser HD465	65
Sennheiser IS360/UK	70
Sennheiser HD475	80
Sennheiser HD25 SP	90
Sennheiser HD535	105
Sennheiser IS450	120
Sennheiser HD545 Ref	125
Sennheiser HD565 Ovat'n	150
Sennheiser HD265 Linear	150
Sennheiser HD25	160
Sennheiser IS550	180
Sennheiser HD 580 Precision	200
Sennheiser HD600	250
Sennheiser LUCAS	280
Sennheiser IS850	859
Sennheiser HE60/HEV70	998
Sennheiser Orpheus	9,652
Sony MDR-IF120K	50
Sony MDR-CD470	50
Sony MDR-IF50K	70
Sony MDR-CD570	70
Sony MDR-LF320RK-MK2	80
Sony MDR-CD770	100
Sony MDR-CD770	100
Sony MDR-D77	130
Sony MDR-NC20	150
Sony MDR-NC10	150
Sony MDR-IF610K	160
Sony MDR-CD1700	200
Stax SR34	169
Stax SR Gamma	239
Stax SR84	259
Stax SR Lambda	349
Stax Gamma Pro	399
Stax Lambda Pro	449
Stax Lambda Sig	549
Stax Omega	1,695
Technics RP-HT400	50
Technics RP-HT600	60
Technics RP-HT700	70
Vivanco IR5700	50
Vivanco IR5000	50
Vivanco SR850	50
Vivanco SR850	50
Vivanco SR750	60

Vivanco IR6000	70
Vivanco SR909	70
Vivanco IR6500	90
Vivanco SR10001FL	110
Vivanco IR7100	120
Vivanco IR7600	140
Vivanco SR2001FL	140



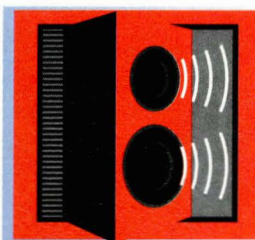
EQUIPMENT SUPPORTS
Speaker Stands

Canon SDS25	70
Deadrock 903	60
Deadrock 902	60
Deadrock 901	60
Harbeth HL-Stands	199
QLN Signature	75
Royd Royd	99
Sound Organisation Z037	55
Sound Organisation Z027	55
Sound Organisation Z026	55
Sound Organisation Z040	70
Sound Organisation Z055	72
Sound Organisation Z010	82
Sound Organisation Z018	84
Sound Organisation Z024	86
Soundstyle X016	100
Soundstyle X012	100
Soundstyle XD24	105
Soundstyle X020	105

Equipment Supports

Audiophile Furniture Base	480
Deadrock 701	60
Deadrock 703	130
Deadrock 704	190
Deadrock 705	230
Fi-Rax R4	321
Ixos 800	35
Ixos 701	40
Ixos 711	60
Ixos 802	70
Ixos 803	90
Ixos 802P	100
Ixos 703	100
Ixos 803P	110
Ixos 804	110
Ixos 713	130
Ixos 804P	140
Ixos 704	140

Ixos 705	170
Ixos 714	190
Ixos 715	230
Jamo TLS-1	40
Jamo ST-80	130
JPW MS2	45
JPW MS3	55
JPW MS1	80
JPW 3 Tier	80
JPW 5 Tier	100
Kenwood SR-CM7	45
Kenwood SR-WB7	100
Mana Acoustics Sound Frame	125
Mana Acoustics Mini Table	150
Mana Acoustics Sound Table	235
Mana Acoustics Reference Table	350
Mana Acoustics 2 Tier Amp stand	375
Mana Acoustics 3 Tier Amp Stand	450
Mana Acoustics 4 Tier Amp Stand	500
Mana Acoustics 5 Tier Amp Stand	600
Mana Acoustics 6 Tier Amp Stand	700
QLN A3	125
QLN Modulus	125
QLN A4	165
QLN A5	205
QLN A6	245
Quadraspire Q4MSC	60
Quadraspire QKSC	80
Quadraspire QAVSC	120
Quadraspire Q4MC	200
Quadraspire Q4	200
Quadraspire Quadrspire	300
Quadraspire QKC	400
Sound Organisation Z222	60
Sound Organisation Z020	70
Sound Organisation Z021	75
Sound Organisation Z030	95
Sound Organisation Z060	115
Sound Organisation Z550	125
Sound Organisation Z038	130
Soundstyle X300	180
Soundstyle X053	200
Soundstyle X050	200
Soundstyle X305	210
Soundstyle X100	220
Soundstyle X058	230
Soundstyle X310	250
Soundstyle X120	250
Soundstyle X105	250
Soundstyle Select 6105	280
Stands Unique Tuned Speaker supp	220
Stands Unique Midi Sound Support	222
Stands Unique Midi Sound Tower	249
Stands Unique Sound Tower	249
Stands Unique Sound Tower	269
Stands Unique Sound Support 10	299
Stands Unique Sound Tower 10	349
Stands Unique High	349
Stands Unique Ultimate	449
Stands Unique Ultimate High	529
Stands Unique Ultimate Tower	599
Target B5	175



LOUDSPEAKERS
Up to £130

Allison Micro Monitors	95
Allison Black Gold Centre	99
Allison AL100	100
Allison Mini References	120
AMC WM50	120
B&W Solid HCM1S	125
B&W DM302	130
B&W Solid HCM2	130
Bose XL1000	130
Canon SV15	100
Canon S-C10	130
Celestion CC1	90
Celestion Little 1	99
Celestion Impact 10	129
Celestion CSC	129
Denon SCM2	80
Gale Mini Monitors	60
Gale Centre 1	80
Gale Gold Hotshots	80
Gale Gold Monitors	90
Gale Ref Monitors	100
Gale Centre 2	120
Genexxa STS-50	25
Genexxa GX300	80
Genexxa GX330	80
GLL Arena HF	99
Goodmans Active 75	65
Interaudio XL1000	100
Jamo Studio-80	70
Jamo D-100	80
Jamo SAT-90	90
Jamo Studio-110	100
Jamo D-110	100
Jamo Cornet 20.4	100
Jamo SAT-170	110
Jamo Artina	120
Jamo D-115	120
Jamo Cornet 30.4	120
Jamo 28	125
Jamo SAT-200.II	130
JBL Control One	115
JPW Sonata Vinyl	100
JPW Sonata	120
JVC SX-SC1VBK	60
JVC SP-V50	80
JVC SP-X220TBK	100
JVC SP-X550BK	130
KEF Coda 7	129
Mission 73	100
Mission 731i	130
Mordaunt-Short MS05i	100
NAD 801	100
Pioneer CS-3030	120
Realistic Minimus 3.5	30
Realistic Minimus 21	30
Realistic Minimus 26	56
Realistic Minimus Pro-7	60
Realistic Minimus Pro-77	100
Revolver Beretta	100
Sony SS-E300	50
Sony SS-E500	80
Sony SS-86E	100
Sony SS-126E	130
TDL NUCLEUS 1	60
TDL NFM1	120
TEAC LS-CT8	80
TEAC LS-X8	80
Technics SB-CS55	80
Technics SB-CS75	100
Visionik 5202	129
Wharfedale Centre Cube	49
Wharfedale Modus CUBE	60
Wharfedale Valduis 100	79
Wharfedale Valduis Centre	79
Wharfedale Valduis 7.1	100
Wharfedale Diamond 6R	109
Wharfedale Valduis 200	109
Wharfedale Modus Micro	109
Wharfedale Modus Centre	119
Yamaha NS-C80	99

£131 to £200

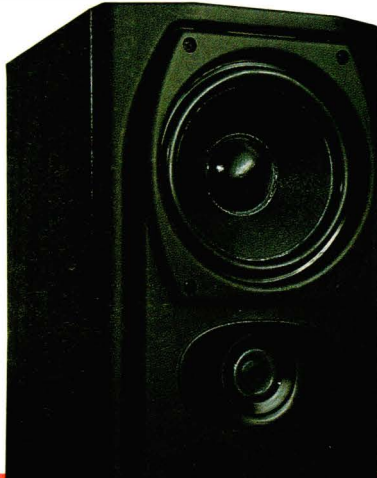
Acoustic Energy AE100	200
Allison Model 4A	170
Allison AL105	170
AMC WM75	160
Audio Innovations Alto	200
B&W CWM5	150
B&W DM601	199
B&W Solid Monitor	200

Bose 101 M'ble Monitor	190
Bose XL2000	200
Boston Acoustics HD5	139
Boston Acoustics 325	139
Boston Acoustics CR6	149
Boston Acoustics Runabout	169
Boston Acoustics 350	179
Boston Acoustics 335	179
Boston Acoustics Satellites	179
Boston Acoustics 351	180
Boston Acoustics CR7	199
Boston Acoustics Runabout II	200
Canon S-25	150
Canon S-30	180
Canon S-B20	200
Celestion CS135	139
Celestion 3 MKII	139
Celestion Impact Centre CH	149
Celestion MP1	149
Celestion Centre 2	189
Celestion Style 1	199
Celestion Impact 15	199
Cerwin Vega HED165	200
Denon SC-E313	160
Gale 2is	139
Gale 3s	150
Gale Model 4	200
Genexxa GX650	140
GLL Arena SW	139
GLL Imagio IC100	170
Grundig BX1	160
Harman/Kardon LS0200	149
Harman/Kardon LS0300	199
Heybrook Prima	139
Heybrook Solo	199
Infinity SM65	150
Infinity Reference 1i	150
Infinity Reference 11i	200
Interaudio XL2000	140
Interaudio XL3000	160
Interaudio XL4000	200
Jamo Studio-140	140
Jamo SAT-300.II	150
Jamo D-135	160
Jamo Studio-180	180
Jamo 38	180
Jamo Converta	180
Jamo D-165	200
JBL TLX111	140
JBL TLX121	170
JPW P1 Vinyl	150
JPW P1	170
JPW AP2	200
KEF Coda 8	189
KEF 60S	199
Kenwood LS-200G	200
Mission 73C	150
Mission 73Z	200
Monitor Audio MA301	200
Mordaunt-Short MS10i	140
Mordaunt-Short MS20i	200
Naim Audio NA PX0	133
Ortofon Concord 2	170
Pioneer CS-5030	170
Polk RT3	200
QLN Projekt A3	135
QLN Projekt A4	180
QLN Qubic111	200
Rega KYTE	198
Revolver Cott	139
Revolver Purdey MkII	199
Rogers LS1	149
Rogers LS1	149
Royd The Herald	198
Sequence 200	199
Sony SS-176E	200
Tannoy 631	149
Tannoy 632	189
TDL RTL1	180
TDL SBR	200
Technics SB-CS95	150
Technics SB-M20	200
Visionik 6003	143
Visionik 5001	170
Wharfedale Modus Mini	139
Wharfedale Diamond 7.2	140
Wharfedale Valduis 300	149
Wharfedale Modus Music Centre	150
Wharfedale Modus Music Two	170
Wharfedale Valduis 400	199
Wharfedale Modus Music Four	200
Wharfedale Diamond 7.3	200
ZYP AI	199

£201 to £300

Allison Mini Ref Sub	210
Allison MS200	220
Allison AL110	220
Allison AL115	280
Allison RA LABS HTS One	299
Allison CD6	300
AMC WM100	210
Audio Gem Opal	230
B&W CWM6i	240
B&W Solid HCM1	249

B&W DM602	300	Mordaunt-Short MS30i	275	Castle Eden (STD)	430	Rogers LS55	429	Orelle Orator II	699
B&W Solid Powerbass	300	Mordaunt-Short MS25i	300	Castle Severn	500	Rogers LS55	429	Origin Live Resolution	732
B&W CWM8i	300	NAD 802	279	Celestion Impact 25	399	Rogers Studio 3	499	Origin Live Victory	750
Bandor Loudspeakers Voice	270	Ortofon Concord 4	230	Celestion Style 4	399	Royd The Squire	350	Pentachord B	519
Bandor Loudspeakers Pictures	300	Pioneer CS-7030	230	Celestion Style 3	399	Royd Doublet	450	Pentachord Pentode	729
Bang & Olufsen Beovox CX50	300	Pioneer S-40K	250	Celestion Impact 30	429	Ruark Swordsman Plus II	329	Pioneer S-200	600
Bose XL3000	230	Pioneer S-60	270	Celestion SL6Si	429	Ruark Icon	359	Polk RT12	600
Bose 151 Environmental	270	Pioneer CS-9030	280	Celestion CS6i	449	Ruark Sabre II	449	Polk LS50	800
Bose 161 Freestyle	275	Pioneer S-LC1	300	Celestion CS8i	499	Ruark Templar	499	Proac Response CC One	599
Bose 201 Ser III	290	Polk M3 II	220	Carwin Vega VS10	350	SD Acoustics SD3R	449	Proac Tablette 50	599
Bose XL4000	295	Polk RT5	250	Clements 300si	395	Sequence 400	329	Proac Studio 100	699
Boston Acoustics 360 Ser II	209	Polk RT7	300	Dali 1048	370	Spendor 2020	399	QLN 313	600
Boston Acoustics 361	210	Polk M5	300	Dawn Audio Chorus BS	482	Tannoy Subsat3	399	QLN 929	700
Boston Acoustics CR8	239	QLN Projekt A5	225	Epos ES12	499	Tannoy 636	419	QLN Classic One	800
Boston Acoustics 380	249	QLN Projekt B3	240	Faraday SG	345	Tannoy 625	450	Quad Q7710L	600
Boston Acoustics 381	250	QLN Qubic 121	250	Faraday Siren	445	Tannoy 637	499	Rogers AB1	549
Boston Acoustics CR9	279	QLN 122	270	Fullers Sultan	349	TDL RTL 3	400	Rogers LS3/5A	699
Boston Acoustics Voyager	299	QLN A6	270	Fullers Sultan H.E.	475	TDL RTL 3	400	Rogers Studio 5	699
Boston Lynnfield VR10	250	QLN Projekt B3i	285	GLL Imagio IC120	420	Technics SB-M300	350	Roksan Roksan 1	595
Boston Lynnfield VRS	300	Rega EL8	298	Grundig B33 Mk II	350	Technics SB-M500	450	Roksan Ojan 3S	795
Boston Lynnfield VR12	300	Rogers LS33	249	Heybrook Heylios	339	Technics Ojan 3 Black	795	Roksan Ojan 3 Black	795
Canon SV15KIT2	210	Rogers LS33	249	Heybrook Trio	373	Royd The Sorcerer	595	Royd The Sorcerer	595
Canon V-100	210	Royd Minstrel	269	Heybrook Heylo	389	Royd Abbot	665	Royd Abbot	665
Canon V-100W	220	Royd Merlin	298	Heybrook Heystak	499	Ruark Talisman II	749	Ruark Talisman II	749
Canon V-100EX	240	Sequence 300	249	Infinity SM105	350	Shahinian Super Elf	790	Shahinian Super Elf	790
Canon SV15KIT1	250	Sequence FW120	249	Infinity SM115	450	Silverado Raider	695	Silverado Raider	695
Canon S-35	250	Sony SS-176SEB	250	Infinity SSW-10 Sub	500	Sonus-Faber Concertino	595	Sonus-Faber Concertino	595
Castle ISIS	229	System Audio 905	250	Jamo 407A	350	Spendor 2030	599	Spendor 2030	599
Castle Keep (STD)	250	Tannoy 633/II	300	Jamo 98	360	Spendor LS3/5A	630	Spendor LS3/5A	630
Castle Durham 900	300	TDL RTL 2	280	Jamo Classic 6	360	Spendor SP3/1	795	Spendor SP3/1	795
Celestion Impact 20	279	Visonik 7003	203	Jamo BX-100A	370	Acoustic Energy AE1-II	795	Tannoy 638	599
Celestion CSW	299	Visonik SUB85	259	Jamo D-365B	400	Allison RA LABS HTS Two	509	Tannoy D100	649
Celestion Style 2	299	Wharfedale Modus MFM1	250	Jamo THX Sub One	400	Allison Model 3A	525	TDL T-Line 2	550
Celestion Impact 23	300	Wharfedale Modus Music Six	280	Jamo THX LCR One	400	Allison CD8	550	TDL RTL4	650
Carwin Vega HED265	300	Wharfedale Yaldus 500	299	Jamo Graphic	400	Allison AL125	650	TDL T-Line3	750
Carwin Vega SAT-6	300	Yamaha NS10M	300	Jamo Classic 8	430	Allison AL130	800	Totem Rokk	695
Dali 102B	260	ZYP A1T	219	Jamo BX-150A	460	Audio Gem Emerald	540	Triangle Zephyr	749
Faraday FS1	245	ZYP A2S	275	Jamo 128	500	Avanti C6/20	533	Ukd-Opera Operetta II	770
Gale Model 5	220	ZYP A2ST	295	Jamo 477A	500	Avanti C6/25	763	£801 to £1500	
GLL Imagio IC110	300	Acoustic Energy AE109	330	Jamo Concert Centre	500	B&W CDM1	600	Acoustic Energy AE2-II	1,095
Heybrook HB1	269	Allison CD7	380	Jamo Silhouette	500	B&W P4	675	ATC SCM10	1,000
Infinity SM85	250	Allison Model 2A	420	JBL TLX151	350	Bandor Loudspeakers Trident	720	ATC SCM20	1,500
Jamo 68	230	Allison AL120	420	JBL TLX70	400	Bbc Monitors LS3/5a	699	Audio Physic Step	1,299
Jamo 307A	230	Audio Innovations Alto	329	JBL TLX161	400	Bose SE-5 Ser II System	800	Audiovector 2X	850
Jamo Art	270	AVI Neutron	499	JBL TLX171	500	Bose A'mass AM511	760	Audiovector 3X	1,500
Jamo Atmosphere	280	B&W CDM2	400	JPW Ruby 1	500	Boston Acoustics SubSat 7	549	Avanti C6/28	1,303
Jamo Deco Art	300	B&W Solid Verticale	400	KEF Q30	379	Boston Lynnfield VR30	600	B&W P5	875
Jamo D-265D	300	B&W AS6	500	Keswick Audio Aria II	329	Canon V-200	600	B&W Matrix 805 V	995
Jamo D-265C	300	B&W DM603	500	Keswick Audio Centrale	359	Castle Avon	700	B&W DM604	1,000
Jamo Classic 4	300	B&W Signature 7	500	Linn Sekrit Passive	350	Castle Chester	700	B&W P6	1,095
JBL TLX50	250	Bang & Olufsen Beovox CX100	400	Linn Tukan Passive	500	Castle Harlech	799	Bandor Loudspeakers Bandora	1,140
JBL TLX60	300	Bang & Olufsen Beovox RL6000	450	Lumley Reference LM4	375	Celestion Impact 35	529	Bandor Loudspeakers Mora	1,260
JPW AP3	230	Bang & Olufsen Beovox 4500	475	Lumley Reference Premenade SP2	399	Celestion 100	539	Bang & Olufsen Beolab 4500	1,200
JVC SX-SW10	300	Blue Room Mini Pod	400	Lumley Reference LM5	499	Celestion Impact 40	629	Bang & Olufsen Beolab 6000	1,450
KEF Q10	229	Bose 301 VM	380	Lumley Reference Premenade SP3	499	Celestion Impact 45i	670	Blue Room House Pod	895
KEF Coda 9	299	Bose 305	430	Mission 733	330	Carwin Vega VS12	550	Blue Room Techno Pod	1,295
KEF 70S	299	Bose A'mass AM3 II	500	Mission 751 Freedom	348	Carwin Vega VS15	700	Bose A'mass AM7	900
Kenwood LS-300G	300	Bose 401	500	Mission 734	499	Clements 600si	595	Boston Lynnfield VR40	1,000
Keswick Audio Aria II	299	Boston Acoustics SW10	449	Monitor Audio Monitor 9 Gold II	350	Dawn Audio Chorus FS	698	Canon S-75	1,000
Lumley Reference Premenade SP1	299	Boston Acoustics SubSat 6	449	Monitor Audio MA302	400	Epos ES14	675	Castle Howard S2	1,100
Micromega Minium MS1	300	Boston Lynnfield VR20	380	Monitor Audio MA202	450	Faraday FS10	795	Celestion SL600si	820
Monitor Audio Monitor 1 Gold	245	Boston Lynnfield VR500	450	Monitor Audio MA303	500	Fullers Sultan H.E.	625	Celestion 300	1,099
Monitor Audio Monitor 7 Gold II	299	Castle Tay (Standard)	330	Monitor Audio MA700 PMC	500	Fullers Pharaoh 1	749	Celestion 700SE	1,435
Monitor Audio Sub /W/200/92	300	Castle York	370	Mordaunt-Short MS40i	450	GLL Imagio IC130	530	Carwin Vega 1515	1,300
Monitor Audio MA201	300			Musical Technology Harrier	400	Harbeth BBC LS3/5A	699	Chord SysAudio Sig	850
				NAD 804	400	Harbeth HL-P3ES	799	Clements Reference 1	995
				Neat Critique	445	Heybrook Quartet	575	Epos ES22	1,185
				Neat Acoustics Critique	385	Infinity SM125	550	Fullers Pharaoh 2	1,400
				Origin Live OL-1AS	399	Infinity SM155	650	Gamma Acoustics Epoch Five	1,499
				Origin Live Monarch	399	Jamo BX-200A	550	Harbeth HL-K6	975
				Origin Live OL-2A	470	Jamo THX Surr One	550	Harbeth HL-K6	975
				Ortofon Concord 6	330	Jamo Classic 10	700	Harbeth HL-Compact 7	1,329
				Pentachord A	469	Jamo 507A	800	Heybrook Sextet	1,129
				Pioneer S-80	370	JBL TLX181	600	Impulse Kora	1,250
				Pioneer S-LC2	500	Jordan Watts JH200	510	Infinity Kappa 6.1i	995
				Polk RT8	400	Jordan Watts JHFLG	560	Infinity Kappa 7.1i	1,195
				Polk LS 1/x Surround	449	JPW Ruby 2	700	Jamo 707i	900
				Polk RT10	500	KEF Q50	529	Jamo Concert 8	1,300
				Prof Monitor Co TB1S	366	KEF LS3/5a	649	JBL L20	850
				Prof Monitor Co TB1SM	403	KEF Q70	729	JBL L40	1,100
				Prof Monitor Co TB1	410	Keswick Audio Volante	599	JBL L60	1,200
				Prof Monitor Co TB1M	447	Keswick Audio Volante	629	JBL L80	1,300
				Prof Monitor Co XB1	499	Lineaum LFX Wood	649	JBL L90	1,300
				QLN Projekt B4	320	Linn Keilidh Passive	700	Jordan Watts JH400	820
				QLN Projekt B3ii	329	Lumley Reference LM6	650	Jordan Watts JH400M	970
				QLN Projekt C3	330	Lumley Reference Premenade SP4	650	JPW Ruby 3	1,000
				QLN Projekt B MULTI	330	Manticore Minaret	580	JPW Ruby 4	1,300
				QLN Projekt D3	360	Meridian A500	695	KEF Model One	1,099
				QLN Projekt C3i	370	Mission 752	578	KEF Model Two	1,499
				QLN Qubic 222	400	Mission 735	650	Keswick Audio Torino	899
				QLN Projekt C3ii	400	Mission 753 Freedom	798	Keswick Audio Figaro Evolution	899
				QLN Projekt B5	400	Monitor Audio Studio 2	600	Keswick Audio Milano	1,099
				QLN Projekt C3iii	400	Monitor Audio 702PMC	799	Keswick Audio Alto	1,299
				QLN Projekt D3ii	440	Monitor Audio MAG901	800	Keswick Audio Amber	1,399
				QLN Projekt C4	440	Mordaunt-Short MS50i	550	Linn Sekrit Aktiv	850
				QLN Projekt C3iv	440	Naim Audio INTRO	596	Linn Tukan Aktiv	1,000
				QLN Projekt D3ii	470	Naim Audio NA PX03	705	Linn Keilidh Aktiv	1,200
				QLN Projekt D4	480	Naim Audio S-NAXO 3-6	719	Living Voice Auditorium	1,300
				QLN Projekt CMULTI	500	Naim Audio S-NAXO 2-4	719	Lumley Reference LM3	895
				Rega ELA	498	Neat Petite	595	Lumley Reference L/M3.5	1,050
				Rogers AB33	379	Neat Mystique	650	Magnepan SMG-C SE	990
				Rogers db101	399	Neat Petite II	745	Magnepan MG-0.6 SE	1,370
				Rogers db101 Series	399	Neat Acoustics Mystique	575	Magneplanar SMG-C SE	990
						Neat Acoustics Petite II	745	Magneplanar MG-0.6 SE	1,370



You must listen to...Mission's 731i.
 "A combatant truly worthy of the budget speaker challenge" - Alan Sircom, Hi-Fi Choice, July/August 1996
 Call 01480 451777 for more information or your nearest stockist.

MISSION

Atacama SE24 Support your local speaker!
And a pair of these are an ideal way to do it...



Manticore Matisse	1,390
Meridian Argent 1	995
Mission Freedom 5	1,298
Monitor Audio 703PMC	899
Monitor Audio Studio 6	900
Monitor Audio Studio 12	1,000
Monitor Audio 705PMC	1,499
Mordaunt-Short Performance 820	1,495
Naim Audio Credo	987
Origin Live Sovereign	975
Pink Triangle Ventrical	990
Pioneer S-400	950
Polk LS70	1,200
Proac Tablette 50 SIG	899
Proac Response 1S	999
Proac Studio 150	1,399
Prof Monitor Co LB1	935
Prof Monitor Co AB1	1,496
QLN Signature	1,000
QLN Prestige	1,500
QLN Sig Splitfield	1,500
Rega XEL	1,040
Rogers Studio 7	899
Roksan Ojan 3 Rosewood	995
Roksan Ojan 3X Black	1,195
Roksan Ojan 3X Rosewood	1,395
Royd The Albion	1,270
Ruark Broadsword II	899
Ruark Paladin	1,099
SD Acoustics SD5	1,395
Sonus-Faber Minuetto	898
Sonus-Faber M Amator	1,498
Spendor 2040	899
Spendor SP2/3	930
Spendor SP1/2	1,330

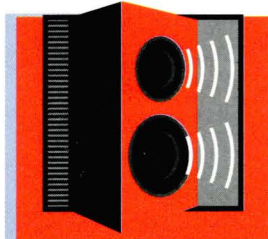
Tannoy D500	1,470
TDL Studio 1m	899
Technics SB-M1000	1,500
Thiel SCS	1,379
Thiel 2	1,499
Thiel CS-5	1,499
Totem Model One	1,195
Triangle Antal	1,099
Ukd-Opera Callas II	895
Ukd-Opera Callas II	950
Ukd-Opera Opera III	999
Ukd-Opera Callas Gold	1,050
Ukd-Opera Divina II	1,500
Vandersteen 2Ce	1,395
Visonik LB1	935

£1501 to £3000	
Acoustic Energy AE1 Sig	1,695
Acoustic Energy AE2 Sig	2,695
Allison I.C. 10	2,500
ATC SCM20 Tower	1,999
Audio Physic Spark 2	1,749
Audio Physic Tempo	1,999
Audiovector 5	2,500
B&W Matrix 804	1,595
B&W Matrix 803s2	1,995
B&W Matrix 802s3	2,795
Bandor Loudspeakers Bandora/Mora	2,800
Bang & Olufsen Beolab 8000	1,999
Bang & Olufsen Beolab Penta 3	2,500
Bbc Monitors LS5/9	1,531
Bose 901 V1	1,650
Boston Acoustics Lynfield 300L	2,000
Bravura Virtuoso	2,995
Castle Winchester	1,650

Celestion Kingston	2,500
Chord LS5/12A	1,593
Chord CEL 301	2,130
Chord CEL 201	2,840
Clements Reference 7	1,995
Credo SPB 003	1,820
Credo SPB 009	2,453
Dawn Audio Symphony	1,995
ECA Servo A.2	2,450
Epos ES25	1,655
Fullers Pharaoh 3	2,800
Fullers Sphinx 2	3,000
Gamma Acoustics Epoch Ref Five	2,999
Harbeth HL-5ES	1,799
Harbeth HL-S8	1,895
Helius Sirius II	2,395
Helius Sirius I	2,850
Horning Aristophane	2,600
Impulse Lali	1,850
Jamo Concert 11	2,000
Jamo THX System	2,500
JBL Ti 1000	1,600
JBL L100	1,800
JBL Ti 2000	2,000
JBL Ti 3000	2,700
Jordan Watts JH1 +1 Aspect	1,730
Jordan Watts JH1 +1 Aspect K	2,310
Jordan Watts Aspect JH1 +1	2,745
KEF 104/2 REC	1,799
KEF Model Three	1,999
KEF Model Four	2,999
Linn Kaber Passive	1,800
Linn Kaber Aktiv	2,440
Lowther Fidelio	1,999
Lowther Academy	2,399
Lowther Bel Canto	2,699
Lumley Reference LM2	2,795
Lumley Reference L/M 2	2,795
Magnepan MG-10 SE	1,650
Magnepan MG-1.5 SE	1,780
Magnepan MG-2.7 SE	2,650
Magneplanar MG-10 SE	1,650
Magneplanar MG-1.5 SE	1,780
Magneplanar MG-2.7 SE	2,650
Martin-Logan Aerius	2,288
Martin-Logan Stylos	2,993
Monitor Audio Studio 20SE	2,200
Mordaunt-Short Performance 860	1,895
Mordaunt-Short Performance 880	2,795
Naim Audio SBL Active	1,743
Naim Audio SBL Passive	1,876
Neolith NEO 1	2,999
Origin Live Conqueror	1,600
Pentachord P'column	1,649
Polk LS90	1,700
Posselt Albatros	2,200
Proac Response 2S	2,000
Proac Studio 250	2,249
Proac Response 2.5	2,700
QLN Reference	2,000
QLN Ref HDII	2,500
Rehdeko RK115	1,550

Rehdeko RK125	2,750
Rogers LS5/9	1,531
Rogers Studio 9	1,549
Ruark Crusader II	1,599
Ruark Equinox	1,849
Ruark Accolade	2,699
SD Acoustics SD1E	2,995
Shahinian Arc	1,675
Shahinian Obelisk	2,490
Silverado Silverado 1	1,995
Sonus-Faber Electa	1,790
Sonus-Faber Amator	2,992
Spendor SP7/1	1,990
Spendor SP100	2,030
Tannoy Sterling TW	1,750
Tannoy D700	2,100
Tannoy Edinburgh TW	2,700
TDL Studio Monitor m	2,449
TDL Studio	2,450
Thiel CS2.2	2,749
Totem Mann-2	2,795
Triangle Zays	1,650
Triangle Altinis	2,250
Triangle Extan	2,950
Ukd-Opera Caruso II	2,250

Over £3000	
Acoustic Energy AE5	7,995
Allison I.C. 20	5,500
ATC SCM50	3,499
ATC SCM100	4,149
ATC SCM50A	4,999
ATC SCM100A	5,699
Audio Physic Virgo 2	3,199
Audio Physic Terra	3,499
Audio Physic Avanti 2	6,399
Audio Physic Caldera	9,999
Audiovector 6	4,600
B&W Matrix 801s3	3,795
B&W Silver Signature	5,000
Boston Acoustics Lynfield 500L	4,449
Boston Lynfield 500L	4,500
Chord LFS.12	3,620
Credo SPB 012	3,147
Credo SDP	5,353
Credo SDL 001	5,677
Definitive BP2000	3,600
Impulse Ta'us	3,100
Infinity ARS Epsilon	9,995
Jamo Oriel	7,000
JBL S2600	3,500
JBL Ti 5000	3,700
Jordan Watts JH2K	3,230
Jordan Watts Classic JH2KM	4,250
Jordan Watts Classic JH5K	4,875
Jordan Watts Classic JH5KM	5,860
Jordan Watts Classic JH10K	9,340
KEF 107/2 REC	3,999
Keswick Audio Zero2	6,000
Linn Keltik Aktiv	4,400
Living Voice RW24 Basebin sys	9,500
Lowther Delphic	3,999
Lumley Reference L/M 2 Signature	4,500
Lumley Reference LM1	8,500
Magnepan MG-3.5 SE	3,800
Magneplanar MG-3.5 SE	3,800
Martin-Logan Sequel SL3	3,349
Martin-Logan Sequel II	3,399
Martin-Logan CLS IIz	4,555
Martin-Logan Quest Z	5,350
Martin-Logan Monolith IHP	8,730
Meridian DSP5000	3,295
Meridian DSP6000	9,400
Monitor Audio Studio 50	4,000
Monitor Audio Studio 60	7,000
Naim Audio DBL Active	7,414
Neolith NEO 2	3,499
Neolith NEO 3	4,999
Proac Response 3.5	4,250
Prof Monitor Co MB1	4,370
Prof Monitor Co MB1P	4,681
Prof Monitor Co BB5	6,270
Prof Monitor Co BB5P	6,754
QLN Artec 1600	4,500
Quad ESL63	3,450
Rehdeko RK145	4,250
Rehdeko RK175	7,750
Shahinian Hawk	4,950
Shahinian Diapason	8,350
Sonus-Faber Extrema	5,991
Spendor SP9/1	3,400
Tannoy GRFM TW	3,500
Tannoy Canterbury 12 ^	5,500
Tannoy Westminster TW	6,000
Tannoy Canterbury 15 ^	7,000
TDL Ref Standard-m	4,999
Thiel CS3.6	3,899
Triangle Nemo Altir	3,850
Wilson WAP Puppy II	5,600
Wilson Puppy 5	7,290
Wilson WATT 5	8,800
Wilson WITT	8,88



AV Loudspeakers
Dedicated Centre Speaker

B&W CC3	150
B&W CC6	200
Boston Acoustics 404V	100
Boston Acoustics CR1	100
Boston Acoustics Centre 6	130
Boston Acoustics Centre 7	200
Boston Acoustics VR12	300
Canon S-C10	129
Canon S-C20	199
Celestion Centre 2	189
Jamo Centre 50.II	80
Jamo Centre 40	100
Jamo Centre 100.II	130
Jamo Centre 18	150
Jamo Centre 160	180
Jamo Centre 200	200
JBL MR Centre	100
JBL SC305	150
KEF 80C	129
KEF 200C	699
Kenwood CS-6	150
Keswick Audio Centrali	359
Martin-Logan Logos	1,949
Meridian M60C	1,125
Meridian DSP5000C	1,750
Meridian DSP6000C	4,900
Mission 75C	248
Monitor Audio CC200	200
Monitor Audio CC900	400
Polk CS200	170
Polk RM2500C	249
Polk CS250	250
Polk CS350	450
Rogers C33	222
Royd AV77	250
Sony SS CN15	40
Sony SS CN35	70
Sony SS CN65ES	130
Triangle Sat 1	375
Yamaha NS-C60	60
Yamaha NS-C105	80
Yamaha NS-C150	110
ZYP A1TAV	109

Dedicated Surround Speaker

B&W SCM8	550
Boston Acoustics CRX	200
Boston Acoustics VRS	429
Boston Acoustics 575X	450
Canon V-100	210
Jamo Surround 40	60
Jamo Surround rear	60
Jamo Surround 50	70
Jamo Surround 100	90
Jamo Surround 200	180
Jamo Surround 300	280
Kenwood RS-05	80
Kenwood CM-5ES	80
Kenwood CM7ES	100
Martin-Logan Stylos	2,872
Musical Technology Merlin	200
Musical Technology HOBBY	250
Musical Technology Osprey	250
Polk M3 II	220
Polk M5	300
Polk LS 1/x Surround	449
Sony SS SR65ES	170
Triangle SAT II	250

Subwoofer

Aiwa TS-W9	170
B&W Solid Powerbass	300
B&W AS6	500
B&W PCS8	750
B&W 800ASW	1,500
Boston Acoustics VR500	450
Boston Acoustics SW10	450
Boston Acoustics 595X	455
Canon S-B20	200
Canon VSB-100	250
Credo SDC 001	3,054
Jamo SW25	140
Jamo SW170.II	240
Jamo SW200.II	300
Jamo SW400E	330
Jamo SW300.II	370
Jamo SW505E	400
Jamo SW600E	530
JBL PS60	399



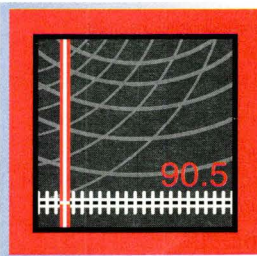
KEF 30B Packaged with the 60S surrounds and 80C centre, it has won two major awards this year.



Wilson benesch Turntable Deploys high-tech carbon fibre in the name of harmonious sound.

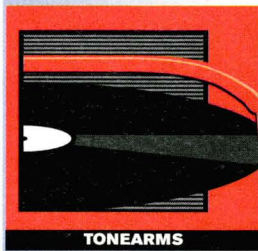
JPW Satellites	80
JPW Subwoofer	130
JVC SX-SC1VBK	60
KEF Model 20B	349
KEF 30B	499
KEF 40B	759
KEF AV1	2,499
Kenwood SW500	250
Linn Sekrit	298
Linn 5150	2,850
Meridian Sub 1	1,500
Meridian M2500	1,595
Mission 73PS	180
Mission 73AS	450
Mission 75AS	550
Polk PSW100	500
Polk PSW300	750
REL Strata 2	575
REL Storm	700
REL Stadium II	1,000
REL Stentor2	1,800
REL Studio2	4,000
Rogers AB33	379
Rogers ASB60	469
Solid Powerbass	300
Solid Verticale	400
Sony SA W101	230
Sony SA W301	330
Tannoy 625ALF	595
Triangle SATIII	650
Yamaha YST-SW40	140
Yamaha YST-SW80	180
Yamaha YST-SW150	280

Air Tangent Tangent 10B	7,777
Air Tangent Ref. Sig.	11,000
Audiomeca SL5	1,999
Decca LI Arm	49
Decca LIR Arm	99
Dynavector 507	2,200
Graham 1.5T	2,550
Helius Orion 4 Copper	549
Helius Orion 4 Silver	725
Helius Cyalene 2	1,495
Linn Akito	350
Linn Ekos	1,500
Manticore Musician	425
Manticore Magician1	750
Manticore Magician2	850
Moth Arm	95
Moth MkIII	146
Naim Audio ARO	992
Nottingham Analogue Space	350
Nottingham Analogue Mentor	750
Nottingham Analogue Alien	1,200
Rega RB250	109
Rega RB300	174
Rega RB900	598
Roksan Tabriz	320
Roksan Tabriz Zi	420
Roksan Artemiz	895
SME 3009 Ser II Imp	250
SME 3009 S2 Ser II Imp	273
SME Series II 3009-R	416
SME Series II 3010-R	426
SME Series II 3012-R	458
SME Series 300-309	558
SME Series 300-310	571
SME Series 300-309Gold	642
SME Series 300-312	649
SME Series IV	796
SME 300-309 Gld Pltd	1,024
SME Series IV Gld Pltd	1,261
SME Series V Gld Print	1,361
SME Series V	1,391
SME Series V Gold Pltd	1,649
Townshend Excalibur	1,499
Wilson Benesch ACT1	975
Zeta AS	469



TUNERS

Arcam Alpha 7	230
Arcam Alpha 8	280
Arcam Delta 280	399
Audiolab 8000T	800
Aura TU80	350
AVI S2000MT	599
B&W ST-3s	350
Day Sequerra FM Ref	5,937
Day Sequerra S B'cast Mon	14,640
Denon TU-260L	120
Denon TU-215RD	150
Denon TU-380RD	200
Grundig T12	170
Harman/Kardon TU930	180
Harman/Kardon TU950	200
Harman/Kardon TU9400	299
Kenwood KT-2080	130
Kenwood KT-3080	180
Linn Kudos Sneaky	500
Linn Kudos	775
Linn Kremlin	2,600
Luxman T-353	200
Marantz ST-57	150
Marantz ST-65	200
Mcintosh MR7084	1,550
Meridian 504	695
Meridian 604	1,350
Michi RHT-10	895
Micromega Minium FM	300
Micromega Tuner	700
Mission Cyrus FM7	400
Musical Fidelity E50	300
Musical Fidelity E500	499



TO NEARMS

Air Tangent IC	3,333
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NAD T 4210RDS	180
NAD 412	190
NAD 414RDS	250
Naim Audio NAT03	566
Naim Audio NAT02	1,028
Naim Audio NAT01	1,645
Onix TU39	800
Onkyo T-409	230
Onkyo T-411RDS	280
Onkyo R-811RDS	420
Pioneer F-203RDS	130
Pioneer F-204RDS	140
Pioneer F-303RDS	180
Pioneer F-304RDS	190
Pioneer F-504RDS	250
Quad FM66	554
Rega Radio	229
Rotel RT-990BX	500
Sony ST-SE200	100
Sony STS-E300	120
Sony ST-S261	140
Sony STS-E700	180
Sony STS-A3ES	250
TEAC T-R400	120
TEAC TB-X10	400
Technics ST-GT350L	150
Technics ST-GT550L	200
Technics ST-GT650L	250
Thorens TRT-2000	450
Yamaha TX-480L	120
Yamaha TX-590RDS	180

Sony PS-J10	90
Sony PSLX-300H	150
Systemdek I/920	136
Systemdek IIX/900	230
Systemdek I/920/Moth	235
Systemdek IIXE/900Ap	388
Systemdek 960	500
Technics SL-BD20	160
Technics SL-BD22	180
Technics SL-1210MkII	500
Technics SL-1200MkII	500
Thorens TD-180 AT91	190
Thorens TD-180/S500	200
Thorens TD-280 IV/UK	200
Thorens TD-166 VI/UK/BC	200
Thorens TD-280 IV UK AT95E	209
Thorens TD-180 Stanton 500	219
Thorens TD-166 VI/UK/AT	270
Thorens TD-166 VI/UK/RB	300
Thorens TD166 VI REGA 250	400
Thorens TD-311H TP50	500

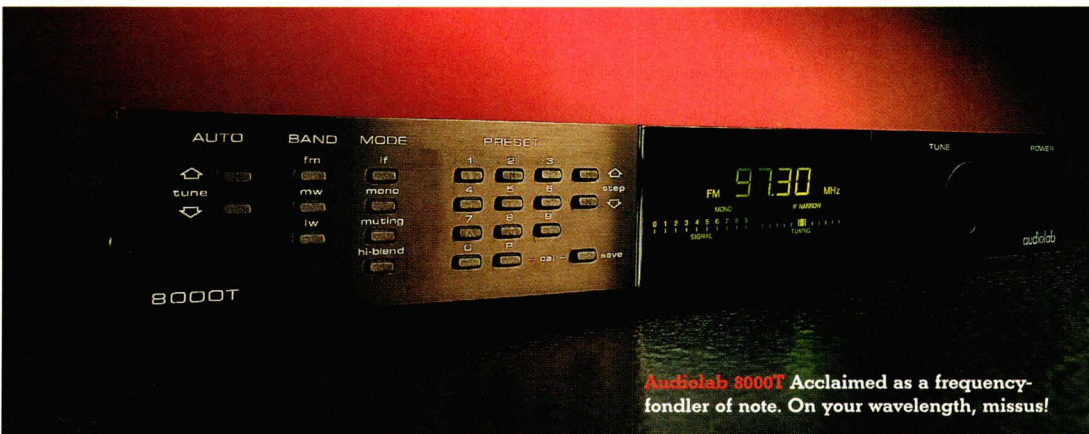
Over £500

Audiomeca Romance	1,675
Audiomeca J1	2,500
Audiomeca J1/SL5	4,250
Basis Basis 2001	2,750
Basis Ovation II	4,800
Basis Debut Gold Std III	7,200
Basis Debut Gold Vacuum	9,250
DNM Rota 2	4,800
Dnm Reson Rota 1	3,500
Impulse Moskito	695
Linn LP12 Basic	1,050
Linn LP12 Valhalla	1,200
Linn LP12 Lingo	1,750
Lumley Reference Strotosphere ST1	6,250
Manticore Mantra	950
Manticore Magister	3,990
Marantz TT-1000	6,000
Michell Mycro/arm	577
Michell Gyrodek	825
Michell Gyrodek/arm	967
Michell Orbe	1,950
Nottingham Analogue Spacedeck	600
Nottingham Analogue Illusion	600
Nottingham Analogue HyperSpacedeck	1,200
Nottingham Analogue Graphic	1,200
Nottingham Analogue Mentor	2,200
Nottingham Analogue Mentor Ref	4,800
Pink Triangle Export	948
Pink Triangle Anniversary	1,797
Pink Triangle Anni/DC PSU	2,173
Pro-Ject 6/Sumiko	850
Rega Planar 9	1,598
Roksan Xerxes 10	1,295
Roksan TMS	2,750
SME Model 20	3,240
SME Model 20/2A	3,941
SME Model 30	8,652
SME Model 30/2A	9,836
Technics SL-1200LTD	1,000
Thorens TD-146 V1 TP50	550
Thorens TD-3001BC	630
Thorens TD-2001 TP90	700
Thorens TD-2001	700
Thorens TD-3001/UK	770
Thorens TD-520	900
Thorens TD-520 SME	1,050
Townshend MkIII Rock	1,499
Well Tempered Record Player	1,850
Well Tempered Classic	2,980
Well Tempered Super	3,900
Well Tempered Reference	5,300
Wilson Benesch	1,550

TURNTABLES

Up to £500

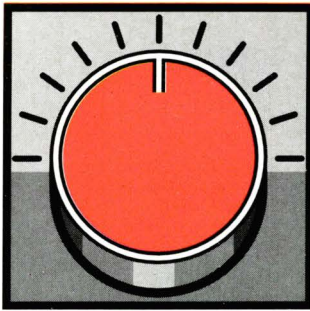
Akai AP A950	179
Ariston Pro-1200	160
Dual CS3700/3701	85
Dual CS435	130
Dual CS503-2	170
Dual 905-4 UK	200
Dual CS750-1	350
Dual Golden II	500
Genexa Lab-710	60
Genexa Lab-810	70
Grundig TT1	180
Kenwood KD-492F	100
Michell Mycro	435
Moth Alamo	175
Moth Turntable	199
Moth Kanoot MkI Arm	249
Moth Kanoot MkIII Arm	299
NAD 533	220
Pioneer PL-J2500-C	80
Pioneer PL-225	120
Pioneer PL-990	130
Pioneer PL-335	150
Pro-Ject 0.5 (OM10)	160
Pro-Ject 1(510)	200
Pro-Ject Project 2 MC10	300
Pro-Ject Project 6(MC15)	450
Rega Planar 78	214
Rega Planar 2	214
Rega Planar 3	274
Rega Planar 3 Colour	289
Roksan Radius3	470
Sony PS-LX56	70
Sony PSLX-150H	90



Audiolab 8000T Acclaimed as a frequency-fondler of note. On your wavelength, missus!

Remember that all entries printed in RED refer to hi-fi products that we have reviewed. Turn to page 122 for a full summary of test results!





Amplifiers

The amplifier sits at the heart of the system, processing the outputs from the various music sources as necessary and then driving the loudspeakers. These two (quite separate) functions are integrated into a single box at the low-to-middle price points; but become separated into preamps and power amplifiers. Even separate power supplies become increasingly common as one moves upmarket. Bear in mind that output power and sound quality are not necessarily

related. Some of the finest amplifiers available have outputs as low as 12 Watts, but team them with high efficiency loudspeakers and you can achieve loudness aplenty. Power output is equally no indication of sound quality.

B

Best buy

R

Recommended

KEY

LINE INPUTS: Amount of input sockets for non vinyl sources such as CD players, tuners and cassette decks.
MM PHONO INPUT: If an amp has a vinyl phono input for moving magnet (normal output) cartridges.
MC PHONO INPUT: If an amp has a vinyl phono input for moving coil (low output) cartridges.
REMOTE CONTROL: If an amp is couch potato ready.
HEADPHONE SOCKET: If an amp is can friendly.
POWER OUTPUT (W): Lab tested power output in Watts per channel.
RECEIVER: If an amp has a built in radio tuner.
FACTSBACK NUMBER: The Factsback reference for ordering a fax copy of the review. Use the contents page to find the Factsback information page.
BACK ISSUE: The issue of Hi-Fi Choice in which the original review appeared.

INTEGRATED AMPLIFIERS

Product	Price(£)	Comments	LINE INPUTS	MM PHONO INPUT	MC PHONO INPUT	REMOTE CONTROL	HEADPHONE SOCKET	POWER OUTPUT(W)	FACTSBACK NUMBER	ISSUE NUMBER
Alchemist Maxim APD30A	299	Vivid and colourful sounding amp that's just too bold and brassy	5	●				30	1737	154
AMC 3050	220	Low-price NAD-alike amplifier that is polite and modest but rather wooden. Phono better than line	4	●			●	45	1738	154
AMC CVT3030	529	Attempt to mix transistors with valves only shines with simple musical styles	6	●			●	30		116
Arcam Alpha 5 Plus	240	Detailed improvement on predecessor, but lacks 'air'	5	●			●	40	1109	149
Arcam Alpha 6 Plus	350	Very mid-band oriented sound that was bright, yet lacks detail. Good for smaller speakers	6	●	●	●	●	50	1739	154
Arcam Delta 290	500	Combines dry restraint with detail, dynamics and musical colour	6	●	●	●	●	75		116
Audio Innovations Alto	300	Probably because of a lack of deep bass, this stylish amp sounds open, natural and relaxed	6					35	1540	138
Audio Innovations S700	1,199	Turns the roughest of digital sounds into understated and graceful music	5					25		116
Audio Note Ongaku	56,000	A single ended, zero negative feedback triode, line-level amplifier and a half. Probably the best amplifier in the world	3					26		091
Audio Note Oto SE	1,500	Transparent, dynamic, clear and subtle, but limited power	4					24		126
Audiolab 8000A	500	The 8000A remains a highly disciplined and mature sounding amp	5	●	●		●	60	1581	140
Audiolab 8000S	650	Informative in every sense, only a slight lack of bite detracts. Perhaps Audiolab's best yet!	6			●	●	60	1740	154
Aura VA100 II	330	Big, smooth yet slightly disjointed sound was equally familiar	5	●			●	70	1541	138
Cambridge Audio A1	100	Dull musically - but at this price, Hobson's choice	4	●			●	35	1463	149
Chimera X-80	800	Stonking looks, powerful, but ultimately lacking in dynamics. Tested in Sessions	5					80		138
Copland CSA-14	1,099	Great sound and looks, but watch out for high capacitance cables	4	●				60	1416	148
Creek 4240	279	Bearing no relation to earlier Creek designs, this radical rethink is more successful via MM than CD	4	●			●	40	1127	134
Creek 4240SE	350	At best, bland and plodding, at worst grainy, shouty and honky. Best on simple rock	5				●	35	1741	154
Denon PMA-250 III	160	High resolution amp, can loses its grip but is engaging and enjoyable	4	●			●	30		121
Denon PMA-350 II	230	Modifications give this amp a powerful up-front and compelling performance	5	●			●	50	1128	134
Denon PMA-450SE	280	Based on the original '450 and offers a fast, furious and entertaining sound	5	●			●	60	1258	142
Denon PMA-725R	350	Warm, bold, up-front presentation but musically unexciting	5	●	●	●	●	97	1802	157
Densen Beat B100	600	Seriously well controlled amp that does everything well. Very slightly shut-in sounding	6					60	1742	154
DPA Renaissance	595	DPA's first integrated amp is typically innovative, but a little too 'crisp 'n dry' for our tastes	5	●			●	40	1582	140
EMF Audio Sequel	349	Relaxed and restrained design from Mike Creek	5	●			●	50		109
Exposure XX Super	700	Rather transistorised, unexciting sound. Good coherence and rhythm. Best played loud	6					55	1743	154
Gamma Acoustics Gemini	699	Genuine single-ended triode design, but low power, mundane sound and poor build	3					12	1416	148
Grundig Fine Arts V-11	160	Rhythmically dull. Never gets out of first gear	5	●			●	55	1803	157
Harman/Kardon HK610	200	Lively and friendly sound, but could prove too exciting for the faint hearted	6	●			●	30	1465	149
Harman Kardon HK1200	300	Big sound with little bite. Becomes confused with complex music	7					45	1804	157
Harman/Kardon HK1400	400	Relaxed, confident sound is only troubled by the most dense of recordings.	5	●	●			40	1011	129
Harman/Kardon HK640	450	Breezy, nimble sounding amp lacks grip and fortitude - it can sound artificial and insubstantial	6				●	55	1542	138
John Shearone Phase 2	649	Either a natural-sounding superstar or nasal and hard to listen to — make up your own mind!	5					50	1744	154
JVC AX-V4	200	Respectable performance for a Pro-Logic AV amplifier. Lacks resolution and sparkle, though	5	●			●	63	1805	157
JVC AX-R5	200	Versatile, and lots of even-handed, articulate detail; but let down by superficiality	5	●			●	45	1466	149
Kenwood KA-3020SE	200	Not a brilliant phono stage, but this is a lively, exuberant sounding amp via CD	5	●			●	50	1130	134
Kenwood KA-3060R	230	Classy engineering, but sound is over-dry, often frustratingly restrained and rather unsophisticated	5	●			●	45	1260	142
Kenwood KA-5050R	350	A listenable but neither particularly communicative nor captivating amplifier	5	●			●	95	1012	129
LFD Integrated Zero	499	Lively and brisk, but at the same time cold and unsympathetic	6					50	1584	140
Linn Majik-1 (Phono)	725	The cornerstone of Linn's modular hi-fi system is innovative, but sounds vague and confused	5	●	●		●	33	1013	129
Magnum IA170	270	Gives a realistic sense of instruments playing within a very believable acoustic, preserves colour & dynamics well	6				●	96	1260	142
Magnum Quartet	329	An integrated model that incorporates four monoblocks optimised for bi-wiring, but sound is sandy in the treble	5	●			●	36		121
Magnum Class A	599	Lashings of rich and compelling music, but the Class A trades lushness for accuracy.	4	●	●			60		116
Marantz PM-44 MKIISE	200	Two generations on from the PM-40SE, this new model gives a disappointingly grey view of music	5	●			●	40	1131	134
Minium Amp	350	Excellent musical performance but doesn't like high levels or low impedance speakers	6	●			●	40	1806	157
Mission Cyrus III	500	The classic Cyrus II sounds convincing, masterful and musical	6	●	●		●	50	1585	140
Musical Fidelity E10	300	Smooth and high-endish sound that is marred by a lack of dynamics and a touch of grain	5	●			●	40	1746	154
Musical Fidelity E100	599	Beautifully crafted with a vibrantly colourful, almost dramatic sound	5	●			●	70	1586	140
Myryad MI 120	530	Despite an ultra-modern appearance, the old-fashioned cold, dry transistor sound	5				●	60	1747	154
NAD 310	100	Fleet and sure of foot, it seems likely to set all appendages tapping with itsblend of enthusiasm and artfulness	5					20	1468	149
NAD 314	260	Lively if coloured presentation that is musically engaging and easy on the ear	6	●			●	53	1807	157
Naim Nait 3	550	Distinctive and highly musical sounding integrated. Perhaps too distinctive for sme tastes	5					30	1748	154
Onix OA21S	430	CD input sounds dead, but via MM disc, this amplifier has a fresh, vibrant sound	4	●	●			50		97

ISSUE NUMBER
FACTSBACK NUMBER
RECEIVER
POWER OUTPUT(W)
POWER SOCKET
HEADPHONE CONTROL
REMOTE CONTROL
MC PHONO INPUT
MM PHONO INPUT
LINE INPUTS

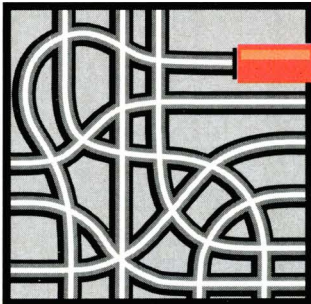
INTEGRATED AMPLIFIERS

Product	Price(£)	Comments	5	4	3	2	1	0	60	1587	140
Onix OA31	480	Eager to please, dynamic and fresh sounding, but it's grip is wafer thin	5	●	●				60	1587	140
Ortelie SA-100	449	A musically rewarding amplifier that grows on you. Trace of coarseness in treble	5						50	1749	154
Pioneer A-303R	200	Fresh and uncomplicated sound bests much of the audiophile competition	5	●	●				45	1129	134
Pioneer A-300X	230	This revamped version of the A300 sounds more confident via CD than MM, yet our panel was unmoved	5	●	●				40		116
Pioneer A-400X	300	On second audition, this amp was tonally unchanged but less compelling	6	●	●				50	1545	138
Pioneer A-503R	300	Best via MM disc, the dull and claustrophobic sound is otherwise deeply uninspiring	5	●	●	●			70	1544	138
Pro-ject Model 7	259	A minimalist amplifier brimming with good intent, but too quirky for its own good. Either MM or MC	5	●					40	1264	142
Quad 77	650	Stylish remote driven amp, bright and lively. Tested in Sessions	4	●	●				50		139
Rega Elex	398	Minimalist amplifier sounds forward, hard and unforgiving	4	●					50		116
Rotel RA920AX	120	Commendable performance at the price. Tuneful, robust bass	4	●					32	1808	157
Rotel RA970BX	300	Lively, fresh and perky with plenty of power, but not so clever with complex recordings	6		●				60	1546	138
Sonic Frontiers SFC-1	1,795	Smooth, sophisticated Canadian valve amp with a decent direct input and more features than average	6						50		126
Sony TA-F448E	250	Confused and coloured sounding, it needs a large dose of delicacy adding to its presentation	5	●						1809	157
Technics SU-A600 Mk2	230	An amplifier that's great fun to be with, but a little untidy from time to time	5	●	●				37	1472	149
Technics SU-A900 Mk2	450	Jeckyl and Hyde amplifier with a dismal-sounding phono stage but transparent CD input	5	●	●	●			90	1547	138
Woodside ISA230 Disc	899	Smooth and inoffensive valve amplifier, though it lacks the sparkle and euphony required for a truly entertaining sound	3	●					30		116
Yamaha AX-490	250	Widgets aplenty, but unemotional sound evoked an uncertain response from panel	5	●	●	●	●		85	1473	149
YBA Integre	1,199	Audiophile spec French integrated with good resolution and nice phono stage	5	●					45		121
Preamplifiers											
Alchemist Kraken/Pre	380	Quirky Class A design with an equally warm and colourful sound	4								124
Audio Innovations L1	369	Reviewed with S800 Anniversary — Explicitly detailed, conveys the message of the music as a whole	4							1300	145
Audiolab 8000C	520	Distinctive, stark neutrality that will not appeal to all. Good value engineering.	5	●	●						97
Audiolab 8000Q	1,000	Tested with 8000M monoblocks	6		●	●				1301	145
Conrad-Johnson PV-10A	1,250	Beautiful imaging, superb detail, plenty of gain on the phono input; classy build too. Tested in Sessions	4		●						1560
Conrad-Johnson Premier 7	11,000	The 7 is designed without compromise, and is clearly one of the finest (valve) preamplifiers money can buy	5								C91
Copland CTA-301MKII	1,349	Sweet sounding - but never gets bogged down in audio treacle	4	●						1630	151
Creek P42	279	Tested with bridged A42 power amps, an articulate and open combo with tight tuneful bass (optional phono stage & remote)	6					●			155
Cyrus Pre	650	Tested with Cyrus Power. High tech design Punchy, light footed character with a sense of substance and natural warmth	5	●	●						155
DPA DSP200S	495	Dramatic but detailed and transparent sound belies modest power rating (tested with DPA-200S)	6								124
EAR 802MC	2,599	Tested with £3499 509 Mk II - see comments in power amp section	4	●	●						63
ECA Vista	760	Wind up the volume and blow a breath of fresh music into your system (tested with Lectern)	5							1302	145
Exposure XVII	849	Superbly rhythmical; maybe a tad overpowering in the midband. Tested in Sessions with XVIII Super	5	●	●						142
Jadis JP-30MC	5,978	French tubes, JP-30MC has beautiful build, nostalgic styling and delightful midrange. (tested with JA30)	5	●							60
Krell KRC-2s	4,190	This is an exquisitely refined and transparent design (tested with KSA-50S in Statements)	6			●					141
Meridian 501	695	Tight, positive sound, but dispassionate; intense at high levels. Tested with 555	5	●				●		1303	145
Meridian 562V	995	Transparent and capable preamp, also features 6 digital inputs	9	●				●			140
Moth 30 Passive	149	Modular system gives cracking results. Passive preamp and power amp warrant Best Buy (tested with 30/Stereo 60)	4								109
Moth 30 Active	249	Tested with 100W monoblocks. While demonstrating solid, even balance it proved adept at delivering vital musical qualities	4								155
Musical Fidelity E200	599	Weighty, luxuriant but hardly scintillating. Tested with MF E300	7			●	●			1304	145
Rose RV-23	450	You can pay more to get a more transparent sound, but it's hard to criticise at the price	3	●							77
Rotel RC970BX MkII	175	Confident, consistent sound. reviewed (in Sessions) with RB970BXMkII power amps	5					●			144
Rotel RC980BX	375	Tames enthusiastically recorded material with a laid back and occasionally smeared sound (tested with RB980BX)	5	●	●			●			155
Sumo Athena IIB	767	Tested with Polaris III. Big, natural and tidy sounding with very natural reproduction of acoustic and electric instruments	6							1305	145
Thorens TTP2000	500	Minimalist shoebox preamp, rhythmical, warm balance. Tested in Sessions with TTA2000	4	●				●			139
Woodside SC26 Phono	1,931	Synergistic with STA35, with a cool, controlled sound, good focus and transparency (tested with STA35)	5	●	●						100
YBA 3 Pre	1,250	See-through, ethereal stereo images, but more convincing towards centre of soundstage (tested with £1199 3 Pwr)	4	●							72
YBA 2 Pre	1,699	Superbly finished, good space and transparency. Needs transformer for MC cartridges (tested with £2150 2 Pwr)	4	●							56
YBA 1 Pre	3,750	Tested with £4250 1 Pwr - see power amp section for comments	5	●							62
Power amplifiers											
Acurus A150	1400	Price includes RLL11 preamp with which it was tested. Powerfull remote control US combo with a slightly forward inclination	1						150		151
Alchemist Kraken/Pwr	399	Hardly accurate, but entertaining nevertheless	1						60		124
Art Audio Quintet	1,393	Switchable triode, ultralinear output stage. In triode mode, these are 15 of the sweetest Watts around. Surprisingly gutsy	1						15		109
Audio Innovations S800 Anni	1475	Reviewed with L1 — Explicitly detailed, conveys the message of the music as a whole remarkably well	1						25	1300	145
Audiolab 8000M	750	Strong, controlled sound; confident bass, but colourless. Tested with 8000Q	1						125	1301	145
Audio Research VT60	2,645	Ranks as 'must try' American cultural item (tested in Statements). Tube design	1						35	1179	136
Copland CTA-505	2,099	Grown up amplifier with a refined, yet never over-civilised air	1						67	1630	151
Creek A42	279	Tested with bridged P42 pre in bridged mode. Articulate and open combo with tight tuneful bass	1						100		155
Cyrus Power	450	Tested with Cyrus Pre. Punchy, light footed character with a sense of substance and natural warmth (bridgeable)	1						50		155
DPA 200S	750	Dramatic but crisp, open sound belies power rating (tested with DSP-200S)	1						60		124
EAR 509 Mk II	3,499	Combining sonic strengths of transistors and valves, this amp warrants attention (tested with £2599 802)	1						100		63
ECA Lectern	880	Tested with Vista. Wind up the volume and blow a breath of fresh music into your system	1						50	1302	145
Exposure XVIII Super	849	Slight dullness and hardness, but great 'boogie factor'	1						70		142
Jadis JA-30	2,880	French tubes, JP-30MC has beautiful build, nostalgic styling and delightful midrange (tested with £5978 JP30)	1						30		60
Krell KSA-50s	3,690	Stretches the performance margins of difficult speakers - state of the art at the price	1						50		141
Meridian 555	750	By providing an open window on the music, this amp is wide open to RF and low level IM distortions	1						60	1303	145
Moth 30 Stereo/60	549	Tested with 30 Passive. Modular system gives cracking results	1						60		109
Moth 30 Series Monoblocks	879	Tested with Active Preamp. While demonstrating solid, even balance it proved adept at delivering vital musical qualities	1						100		155
Musical Fidelity E300	699	Tested with E200. Weighty, luxuriant but hardly scintillating	1						100	1304	145
Musical Fidelity F18	3,999	Belongs to the rarified group of refined, high resolution amplifiers	1						220	1508	133
NAD Monitor 208	1100	Truly a beefy amplifier, but no mad cow!	1						250		124
Rotel RB-970BX MkII	225	Tested with RC970BX MkII in Sessions (see preamp section)	1						60		144
Rotel RB-980BX	475	Tames enthusiastically recorded material with a laid back and occasionally smeared sound (tested with RC980BX)	1						120		155

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RECEIVER
POWER OUTPUT(W)
REMOTE CONTROL
HEADPHONE SOCKET
MC PHONO INPUT
LINE INPUTS

POWER AMPLIFIERS (CONTINUED)

Product	Price(£)	Comments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Sumo Polaris III	898	Tested with Athena IIB. Big, natural and tidy sounding with very natural reproduction of acoustic and electric instruments	1												164	1305	145
Thorens TTA2000	550	Tested with TTP2000 (see preamp section) in Sessions	1												35		139
Woodside STA35	1,323	Synergistic with SC26, with a cool, controlled sound, good focus and transparency. More poise than grunt (tested with SC26)	1												35		100
YBA 3 Power	1,199	Tested with £1250 3 Pre - see preamp section for comments	1												45		72
YBA 2 Power	2,150	Superbly finished, but with slightly softened bass (tested with YBA 2 Preamp)	1												70		56
YBA 1 Power	4,250	Well finished pre/power amp with front rank imaging and transparency (tested with YBA 1 Preamp)	1												85		62



Cables

Cables are not accessories, but an integral part of a system. Inevitably some cables are better than others. The best cable for your system will only be found through trial and error, but by combining our recommendations with those of a dealer, you will end up with something suitable. Generally speaking, budget to spend about ten per cent of the total system cost on cables.

■ Analogue interconnects are the leads that connect source components to amplifiers and pre to power amps. The cables in this section are priced for a one-metre terminated pair.

■ Digital interconnects connect CD transports to DACs, and are traditionally coaxial with a 75 Ohm impedance. They come in optical and electrical varieties, the former being made of plastic or glass. The prices shown are for a terminated linear metre.

■ Speaker cables are used between the amplifier and speaker. Our prices are per unterminated metre. Termination (plugs and soldering) costs vary with brands.



KEY

SYMMETRICAL: A twisted pair of conductors.
COAXIAL: A central 'hot' conductor and a shield that carries the negative signal.
STRANDED: Multiple strands with no intervening insulation.

SOLID CORE: single or multiple individually insulated strands.
COPPER: Material used for conductor.
SILVER: Material used for conductor.
DIG CABLE TYPE: O - optical digital, E - electrical digital.

FACTSBACK NUMBER: The Factsback reference for ordering a fax copy of the review. Use the contents page to find the Factsback information page.

BACK ISSUE: The issue of Hi-Fi Choice in which the original review appeared.

CABLES

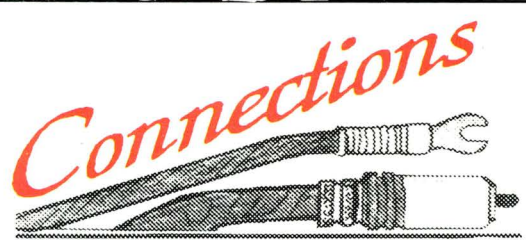
ISSUE NUMBER
FACTSBACK NUMBER
DIG CABLE TYPE
SILVER
COPPER
SOLID CORE
STRANDED
COAXIAL
SYMMETRICAL

Product	Price(£)	Comments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Analogue Interconnects																	
Audio Note AN-A	29.50	Not especially impressive, warm but well rounded balance that restricts 'air' but is not unclear	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	108
Audio Note AN-C	59.50	Neutral but lacking in subtle texture and unable to distinguish fine detail															1687 131
Audio Note AN-S	139	Up-beat and enthusiastic sound with satisfyingly deep and grumbly bass	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	1687 131
Audio Note AN-V	219	15 individually insulated silver strands make up this very clean and dynamically unchallenged cable	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	1687 131
Audioquest Turquoise	40	A fit and forget cable that sounds distinctly lazy	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	160
Bandridge AL421	5	Light and airy sound lacks authority, splashy treble															1688 131
Bandridge AL426G	10	Gold plated plug OFC version of AL421 with same ineffectual sound quality															1688 131
Bandridge SG AL4720	13	4N OF copper, full smooth balance but a little plodding and relentless, lacks panache															1688 131
Bandridge SG+ AL4820	25	4N OF copper, distinctly teutonic, thrusting detail forward but still plodding and relentless															1688 131
Bandridge ProfiGold PG301	65	A perfect cable for enlivening a system, but too cold for most systems															160
Cable Talk Studio 2	65	A first-class performer from tonal, dynamic and rhythmic standpoints	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	160
Cambridge Audio Studio Ref	40	Dynamic cable with strong soundstaging and only a slight lack of detail															160
Chord Chameleon	68	Anomalous treble with a dry but vaguely sibilant quality, sometimes sounds smooth, sometimes harsh!															108
Chord Solid	99	Thin but ve y stiff with excellent resolution of subtle timbral detail and fine dynamics															108
Connections Midas HD	39	Canary yellow cable with excellent plugs and an open sound. Slight treble glare	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	160
DNM TCC75	34	Price for 0.75m length. High resolution cable, but best in short runs due to higher than average series impedance															1690 131
DPA Slink	41	Slightly bright and zingy sound with flat soundstaging and hollow sounding bass, vocals and strings sound convincing though															1690 131
DPA White Slink	75	Highly expressive, very easy on the ear and attractively detailed though not entire characterless at high frequencies															1691 131
DPA Black Slink	220	Initially dark and meaty but becoming lucid and transparent with running in. Quad geometry, Gore-tex dielectric	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	1691 131
Ixos 104	20	Open and detailed presentation, full bass and silky if overly smooth treble															1692 131
Ixos 103	40	Even handed and generous sound, bass has a well rounded, bouncy quality															1692 131
Ixos 102	60	A tad bright and undynamic, this cable is nevertheless a good all-rounder, whose faults are largely subtractive															160
Ixos 101	100	A cable with personality, its veiled and shut in quality brings an earthiness to vocals and rhythm guitar alike															1693 131
LFD Spirolink I	35	Price for 0.7m length. Dynamic but smoothly detiled performance, but gives the impression of looking down on the music															1694 131
LFD Spirolink II	70	Price for 0.7m length. Strong and confident sound enhancing bass depth and subtlety, concentrates of nthe meat of the music	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	1694 131
LFD Trilink	150	Price for 0.7m length. Warm and luxurious sound but a little too fruity in balance, treble is a little subdued, bass detached	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	1695 131
Linn Phono to Phono	47	Encourages a delicate performance underpinned by a strong and authoritative bass															1695 131
Monster Interlink 200	20	Colourful in an appealing rather than contrived sense, bass is slightly over-blown, large and ingratiating sound stage	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	1696 131
Monster Interlink 300	30	Richer, smoother more civilised sound than 200 with improved articulation and reduced sibilance	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	1696 131
Monster Interlink 400	40	Compromised by a grainy top end, treble and vocal range sound particularly sharp and untidy	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	1697 131
Monster Interlink 500	50	Sounds rather good, providing a livelier and more interesting account of music than most sub £100 cables	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	108
Monster Interlink 800	80	Not as bright or aggressive as the 400 but streble is trangelly lumpy, muted and manipulated - odd cable	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	1697 131
Monster Interlink Reference 2	100	Easy on the ear but rather contrived, slightly clanky treble fails to integrate with the smoother but splodgy midband	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	1697 131
Moth Ley Line Black	100	Offers a full and big sound, neutral yet very solid and confident in delivery. Expansive imaging retains music's energy	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	108
Moth Ley Line Grey	200	Detailed enough but there's a sense of distance between the music and the listener, vox are course rather than liquid	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	108
Nordost Black Knight	55	Flat black cable that is distinctive, but slightly coloured — but not in a wholly negative manner	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	160
Panasonic RP-CA910	50	Uncongested and even handed balance if slightly flat imagewise, retains impact but has a vaguely untransparent quality															108
Silvertone Ex-Static	35	Pleasantly unfatiguing and competitively priced cable that lacks detail and insight															160
Sonic Link Silver Pink	35	Dynamically sensitive and muddle-free. Unsure about the flesh-coloured finish though...	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	160
SonicLink Black	49	Encourages an upbeat and snappy sound that's driven by leading edges, full and rumbustious bass maintains an even tempo															1699 131

SYMMETRICAL
COAXIAL
STRANDED
SOLID CORE
COPPER
DIG CABLE TYPE
FAXBACK NUMBER
ISSUE NUMBER

CABLES (CONTINUED)

Product	Price (£)	Comments	SYMMETRICAL	COAXIAL	STRANDED	SOLID CORE	COPPER	DIG CABLE TYPE	FAXBACK NUMBER	ISSUE NUMBER
Tara Labs Prism 11	45	Very compatible cable that wins through with a naturally balanced and realistically dynamic sound. 6N purity copper	●				●	●	1699	131
Tara Labs Prism 22	56	Delivers a fresh and detailed sound with clear and bright treble giving it a free, quick and dynamic character			●		●	●	1700	131
Tara Labs Quantum CD	75	Lacking in obvious vices, neutral and transparent, there's also a good solid bass. Vox are not always as intimate as possible	●				●	●		108
Tara Labs Prism 33	90	A pedestrian cable that sounds lively but muddled. Quite dynamic, quite rich, quite smooth but also quite indistinct			●		●	●	1700	131
Transparent Audio Music Link	119	No aggressive nasties to tax the ears, neither does it sparkle with inspirational detail. Only suited to low output impedances			●	●		●	1701	131
van den Hul The Storm	25	Price for 0.8m length. Rich and warm but bass is rolled off, however there's plenty of drive and high frequencies are clear			●		●	●	1701	131
van den Hul Source HB	50	(Priced for 0.8m) Hybrid carbon-fibre/copper cable that is a paragon of naturalness. Airy and well controlled			●	●		●		160
van den Hul The First	210	Using 12,000 carbon fibres, a gentle and subtle sounding cable that conveys oodles of information but lacks dynamic punch			●	●			1702	131
van den Hul The Second	225	Wonderfully open and relaxing but also intimately detailed, slightly softens percussive dynamics	●			●		●	1702	131
XLO Type 150	50	A restrained but useful cable for taming lively CD players, dynamics lack freedom, treble lacks clarity			●	●		●	1703	131
XLO Type 0.1	180	Unusual but highly expressive and detailed with a hint of graininess on powerful vocals					●	●	1703	131
Digital Interconnects										
Audio Note AN-V	110	Ostensibly an analogue cable but gives a meaty and natural performance when used for digital duty	●				●	●	E 1704	131
Audioquest Video X	40	A decent level of detail, imparts a gentle lift from vocal to high treble that can sound a little splashy			●		●	●	E 1705	131
Audioquest Video Z	60	The very best available, with an expressive sound, but generously priced	●	●	●	●	●	●	E	108
Audioquest Optilink Z	120	Good level of midband detail but frequency extremes lack depth and extension			●	●			O	108
Audioquest Digital Pro	100	A silver cable with all the drive of Video Z but lacking its clear cut transparency							E	108
Bandridge AL4900G	40	Lacks deep rounded bass and treble is coloured with a spittiness, a little rough and ready				●		●	E 1705	131
Chord Codac	32	A connection with a stranded inner core and a sound that lacks integration			●	●		●	E	108
Chord Prodac	50	Price for 0.6m length. Lively detailed treble, drives music along confidently with no hint of fizz			●		●	●	E 1706	131
DPA Opti-link	20	Very similar to Bandridge AL560; sound is lacklustre							O	108
DPA Digi-link	28	Can seem slightly impassive but there's no avoiding its exceptionally detailed sound			●	●		●	E	108
Ixos 105	25	extended but soft edged treble that's mercifully free of fatiguing colourations, plenty of weight, smooth vox			●		●	●	E 1707	131
Kimber Kable Opti-link	70	Hardly cheap for what appears to be a bog-standard PMNA fibre, yet it sounds a little brighter and livelier than most							O	108
LFD DigiLink Copper	30	Slightly grainy highly compatible cable with coherent and forward dynamic quality			●		●	●	E 1708	131
Monster Interlink LS100	45	Well constructed stepped-index fibre with polished ends and connectors. Lean, fuzzy, engaging performance							O	108
Monster Datalink 100	45	Price for 0.5m. A colourful coaxial interconnect with an equally colourful and up-beat sound. Very compatible			●	●		●	E	108
MoTh Leyline Datalink	140	A thin, coaxial version of Leyline Black with a rather hard and unforgiving character. Too expensive			●	●	●	●	E	108
QED DigiFlex	20	A top performance, low-loss 75ohm coax with a very open, almost liquid quality			●	●	●	●	E	108
Siltech HF-6	150	Sounds detailed, very clean and very extended, but bass is less well resolved - a treat for high end systems			●		●	●	E 1709	131
SonicLink Green	60	Spacious, positive and engaging if a tad over crisp at times, very compelling however			●		●	●	E 1709	131
van den Hul MC Videolink 75	48	An AV-cum-digital cable that nearly beats QED's DigiFlex, but emphasises sibilants			●				E	108
van den Hul The First	120	Exceptionally natural albeit slightly dark or cautious compared to some, plenty of subtle information and beautiful integration			●	●			E 1710	131
Loudspeaker Cables										
Audio Note AN-D	4.50	Supplied in linear, non-polarised lengths that should be twisted into stereo pairs. Sounds rather grippy and forward					●	●		109
Audio Note AN-B	16.50	Well suited to valve systems, elastic bass, methodical but unintrusive and musical				●		●		1711
Audio Note AN-L	29.50	Fruity bass and expressive vocal rendition was appreciated by the panel which was happy to accept its foibles	●				●	●		1712
Audio Note AN-SP	125	A calm and civilised presentation, very quiet in the way it reveals subtle low level detail. Great poise and clarity	●				●	●		109
Audioquest F-14	1.95	Ideal for laying under carpets, F-14 encourages a slightly warm and vibrant sound					●	●		109
Audioquest Type 4	4.95	Four 18-gauge OFHC copper conductors wound in a Litz-type fashion increases capacitance but restrains the cable's 'bite'			●	●		●		109
Audioquest Cobalt 2	45	A rather polite and anemic sound that bubbles gently with detail and is largely uncoloured and cautiously spacious			●	●		●		133
Bandridge SF LC1070	42p	Basic figure 8 bellwire, lightweight balance and a softness that dilutes even the strongest bass			●	●		●		1713
Bandridge SF LC1259	1	Fresh and open, bubbly and naturally colourful soundstage that's neither forced or unduly edgy. Treble is slightly messy			●	●		●		1713
Bandridge Highflex LC2604	3.50	Substantial 6mm ² conductor produces weighty but ploddy music that lacks transparency			●	●		●		1714
Bandridge LC7409	3.85	Detailed and up-beat cable. A bit too steely for classical strings				●		●		1800
Cable Talk 4.1	4.25	Smooth and cultured sound that lacks fine detail and is a bit too restrained				●		●		1800
DNM LSC8500	5.95	High impedance can influence the treble response, but this was a winner on sound per pound. Bi-wire					●	●		1716
DPA Black Sixteen	90	Unflappable resolution of fine musical details, there's no dampening of dynamics simply oodles of taut information	●				●	●		1717
Gale XL315	2	A little lacking in detail but plenty of life and excellent value				●		●		1800
Gale XL160-2	2.50	Rhythmic and bouncy sounding bi-wire cable. Slightly manipulative sounding				●		●		1800
Heybrook Heywire	4	This well-meaning facsimile of earlier ribbon cables ends up sounding lumpy and uneven					●	●		109
Ixos 603	2	Big and expansive sounding cable, full and engaging while retaining a high degree of neutrality					●	●		1718
Ixos 604	5	Midrange is detailed and surprisingly smooth but treble is hard and synthetic and the bass no better					●	●		1719



Tel: 0181 348 5676 (2.00-7.00 pm)
Fax: 0181 341 9368

Esoteric High Fidelity CABLES

Dealers in: Absolute, Audio Note, Audioquest, Deltec, Electrocompaniet, Harmonix, Kimber, Mandrake, MIT, Siltech, Symo, Transparent, Van den Hul, WBT and others.

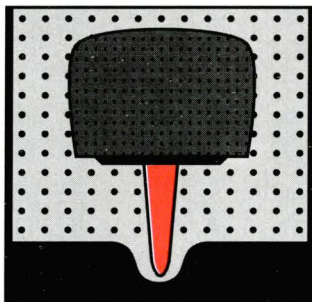
... the RIGHT cables
... in YOUR system
... for YOUR ears
... in YOUR home

Contact us by phone, fax, or letter and we'll do our best to help you achieve your goal.
(Auditions may be subject to a handling charge)

CONNECTIONS 13 John Princes Street, London W1M 9HB (A division of Connection 90' Travel Ltd.)

CABLES (CONTINUED)

Product	Price (£)	Comments	SYMMETRICAL		STRANDED COAXIAL		SOLID CORE		COPPER		FAXBACK NUMBER		ISSUE NUMBER	
			▲	▼	▲	▼	▲	▼	▲	▼	▲	▼	▲	▼
Mission Quartet	7.90	Mixed, inoffensive sound, adds guttural resonance to vocals and could be generally more coherent. Bi-wire							●	●		1722	133	
Monster Cable XP	1.50	XP offers plenty of slightly soft bass and a slightly rounded treble, a relaxed cable whose indiscretions are not bothersome			●		●		●			1723	133	
Naim NACA 5	5.11	Described as a 'dinosaur of a cable', this stiff wire rod doesn't belong outside Naim systems. But it works a treat in them					●		●				109	
Ortofon SPK100	3	Grey sounding and strips instruments of their natural richness and resonance, a bit bass shy too					●		●				133	
Ortofon SPK300	8	Tremendously open and atmospheric with robust full blooded bass, and dynamic too if slightly bright at times							●	●			133	
Puresonic 7845	1.95	Big, weighty sound — but too messy and bloated for its own good					●		●			1800	157	
Puresonic 7891	2.85	Chunky cable design, shame about the sound quality			●		●		●			1800	157	
QED Qudos	2.50	Despite high tech design and excellent Air-Loc plugs, the music failed to gel					●		●			1800	157	
QED Profile 8	5	Sophisticated flat cable that lacks decent bass and get up and go					●		●			1800	157	
SonicLink AST50	1.95	It may look like bell-wire, but AST50 sounds detailed, ordered and balanced							●	●		1800	157	
Tara Labs Rectangular SCM	725	Price for terminated 2m pair. Dynamics are exquisite, luxurious smooth sound, brimming with unforced detail							●	●		1725	133	
Transparent Audio Musichord	11.42	Sweet, open and refined treble, a bit of breathy exuberance and can sound slightly lackadaisical							●	●		1728	133	
Transparent Audio Wave	22.84	Very close to the sound of 'no cable', one of the very best. Slightly softens treble detail			●				●	●		1728	133	
Tech + Link OFC79	1	Bargain basement cable that sounds cosy, but suffers from a wobbly bass					●		●			1800	157	
van den Hul The Clearwater	6	Despite its evocative title, the Clearwater turns out to be a disappointingly murky sounding cable					●		●	●			109	
van den Hul CS122	19	Smooth and articulate with superb focus and control, its sheer coherence makes it a winner (tested in Sessions)					●		●	●			153	
van den Hul The Magnum	31	Touted as vdH's most prestigious twinlead cable, Magnum sounds soft and old fashioned					●		●	●			109	
van den Hul The Wind	35	'The Wind' kicks up a storm with its lush midrange and bone-crunching bass!							●	●	●		109	
van den Hul Revolution	64	Silver plated OFC combined with carbon fibre prompts a sombre character with an easy and relaxed treble					●		●	●		1726	133	
X O Pro Type 625	4	Lively but natural and relaxed sounding but a hint of congestion at frequency extremes					●		●	●		1726	133	



Cartridges

Cartridges fall into two groups: high output MM (moving magnet) models, capable of working directly into most phono inputs; and generally more expensive low and very low output MC (moving coil) models. MC cartridges usually have better mechanical integrity, tighter tolerances and give better performance. Many amplifiers are no longer equipped with the necessary phono input for a cartridge, and a separate phono stage

is necessary. Phono input equipped valve designs need a transformer to cope with MC cartridges.

Cartridge/amplifier interfacing can be very subtle, but even basic high output MM designs benefit in overall balance from optimised amplifier capacitance loading.

Best buy

Recommended

KEY

MM: Moving magnet cartridge with a normal output suitable for all vinyl disc amplifier inputs.
MC: Moving coil cartridge with a low output only suitable for high

sensitivity vinyl disc amplifier inputs.
REPLACEABLE STYLUS: Most MM cartridges have a stylus that can be removed and replaced

OUTPUT (MV): Cartridge output in millivolts.
MASS (g): Cartridge mass can affect arm choice.
FACTSBACK NUMBER: The Factsback reference for ordering a fax

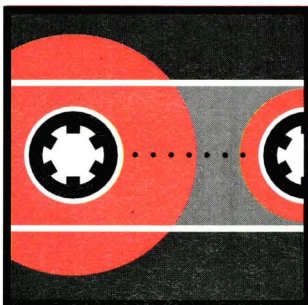
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CARTRIDGES

Product	Price (£)	Comment	REPLACEABLE STYLUS		OUTPUT (MV)	MASS (g)	FAXBACK NUMBER		ISSUE NUMBER	
			MM	MC			▲	▼	▲	▼
Arcam C77	30	A sensible moving magnet package with good bounce at a competitive price			●	●	4.0	6	48	
Arcam C77MG	40	Punchy, with plenty of energy to liven things up. The solid body is well worth the extra £10			●	●	4.0	6	67	
Arcam E77MG	60	Our sample had a disappointing stylus, but gave a coherent, rich and laid back sound			●	●	4.0	6	48	
Arcam P77MG	73	Preferred to its cheaper partner thanks to a better tip. Channel balance poor			●	●	4.0		48	
Audio Note Jo IIV	1,395	One of the best, giving an extraordinarily relaxing midrange clarity. Needs a transformer			●		0.1		100	
Audio Technica AT-95E	19	Clear and dynamic, though richly balanced			●	●	2.8		48	
Audio Technica ART-1	944	This is a delicate and very fluid-sounding MC that tracks well			●		0.4	9	72	
Audioquest 404L	599	Slight harshness detracted from the performance of this otherwise clear-sounding and detailed cartridge			●		0.5	6	84	
Audioquest 7000NSX	1,495	Stunning stereo imaging and detail spoiled by poor tracking and high sensitivity to arms			●		0.4	6	91	
Denon DL130	70	A fine all-rounder, this high output MC model is likely to perform well			●		1.0	6	48	
Denon DL160	90	Although listeners just preferred the 110, its brother here survived lab tests and is still 'thoroughly competent'			●		0.1	6	43	
Denon DL103	100	Good performance in bass and good 'life' is seriously let down by its spherical stylus which kills subtle detail			●		0.1	6	103	
Denon DL304	200	Uncoloured, detailed, tracks superbly. Top notch altogether and a top notch bargain too			●				103	
Dynavector Karat 17D2 mk2	449	Clean and controlled sound with taut, tuneful bass. Detailed and musically cogent			●		0.15	5.3	158	
Dynavector XX-1L	998	Very clear, very detailed; a response lift around 20kHz seems to do no harm			●		0.25	12	84	
Dynavector XX-1	998	Good, but not immensely competitive at the price, and not helped by comparison with the low output version.			●		2.0	12	84	
Goldring Elan	17	A lightweight and frisky-sounding MM apparently based on Nagaoka MM4 body			●	●	5.0	7	67	
Goldring 1012GX	65	Slightly harsh but plenty of life and detail. Some high frequency colouration apparent			●	●	6.5	7	85	
Goldring 1022GX	85	As with 1012, a touch harsh; detail and transient purity improved			●	●	6.5	7	85	
Goldring Eroica LX	100	Not the most subtle cartridge in the world: can sound edgy at times, but lively and informative			●		0.5	8	84	
Goldring 1042	105	Not terribly subtle, and not such good value alongside 1012 and 1022. Quite lively though			●	●	6.5	6	91	
Goldring Elite	200	The basics are right, and it will cheerfully tackle any source material, but its sound has a certain dirtiness			●	●	0.5	8	103	
Grado Prestige Gold	150	Rich sounding with an unusually refined top-end for a moving magnet-type cartridge			●	●	4	6	158	
Linn K5	65	Not as crisply focussed as the other Linn magnetics, but the K5 is smoother			●	●	4.5	6	67	
Linn K9	150	Linn improved this model by beefing up the Basik's bodywork and adding a super stylus			●	●	4.5	5	Col	
London Decca Maroon	199	Now manufactured under the London brand name, this Decca cartridge is as iconic/classic as ever.			●		5.0	6	67	
London Decca S Gold	339	Immediate and detailed, but coloured, nonlinear with a questionable effect on records			●		5.0	6	84	
Lyra Lydian	699	Superbly capable all-round musical performer that improves markedly when its body cover is removed			●		0.3	7	158	

CARTRIDGES (CONTINUED)

Product	Price (£)	Comment	REPLACEABLE STYLUS MM	OUTPUT MC	FACTSBACK NUMBER FAXBACK NUMBER ISSUE NUMBER
Lyra Clavis Da Capo	1,069	A stable tracker, and one of the finest cartridges we've heard		●	0.1 7 143
Milltek Aurora	299	An overall feeling of relaxed ease characterised this clear and atmospheric Kiseki-built cartridge		●	2.0 0.1 299
Ortofon 510/P	32	For the price, a good blend of virtues - weight, clarity and neutrality	●	●	3.0 5 85
Ortofon 520/P	55	Sensitive to load capacitance, the 520/P has a lively, effervescent sound	●	●	3.0 5 6
Ortofon MC10 Super	85	'What a delightfully sweet-sounding cartridge this is....' we said		●	0.3 7 48
Ortofon MC3 Turbo	110	The 3 Turbo is bright, cheerful and bouncy, but unsubtle - take it as it comes.		●	3.3 4 103
Ortofon MC15 Super II	110	A good all-rounder, with outstanding resolution, if slightly bright and clus up		●	0.35 7 103
Ortofon MC25E	160	An excellent upgrade for a mid-price turntable		●	0.5 11 139
Ortofon MC25FL	210	A bit too stark and honest, but faithful to what's on the LP		●	0.5 11 139
Ortofon MC30 Supreme	450	Highly detailed and even-sounding cartridge that has a special affinity with female vocal recordings		●	0.5 10.7 158
Ortofon MC3000II	950	A real eye-opener. Nothing to criticise anywhere, one of the very best		●	0.12 10 84
Ortofon MC5000	1,500	Limited tracking ability, bright and forward sound, but good stereo		●	0.12 10 91
Rega Bias	34	Difficult to mount in some arms due to its shallow build, the Bias offers a gentle, refined sound	●	●	5 4 67
Rega Elys	74	Clearly superior to the Bias, the Elys is both more detailed, accurate and convincing	●	●	5.0 5 67
Roksan Corus Black	130	Recognisably related to the Corus Blue, but more civilised and smoother	●	●	6.5 5 91
van den Hul MM-1	250	If woody midrange could be tamed, imaging and security would pull it through	●	●	5.5 6 103
van den Hul DDT	699	Outstanding stereo imaging and neutral balance are appealing but rhythmically the DDT-II is a bit lazy		●	0.35 7.6 158
van den Hul MC-10	799	A neutral, balanced performer gives, fine depth and focus and a firm, extended bass		●	0.4 6 60
van den Hul MC-One	999	This extended all the positive qualities of the '10, but added greater authority and scale - worth all the extra money		●	0.4 6 60
van den Hul MC-Two	1,349	MC-Two rewards with a highly dealed yet fluid and musically convincing portrayal.		●	0.4 6 72
van den Hul G' hopper III GLA	2,999	Undoubtedly one of the finest cartridges available, it has tremendous bandwidth, energy and finesse		●	0.4 6 122
Wilson benesch Matrix	689	Extraordinarily well balanced cartridge: neutral and detailed yet lively and rhythmically assertive		●	0.58 6 158



Cassette Decks

The compact cassette is still the world's most versatile and ubiquitous music storage medium. Buffs may wrinkle their noses, but they all use it.

There should be no problems in connecting a cassette deck to any normal amplifier, but some care needs to be taken in choosing the best tapes for a specific machine. (Trial and error is one effective technique, but many decks have manual bias adjustment and some match up to the tape automatically.) Twin decks offer the option to dub tapes and play two cassettes

sequentially. Autoreverse is a useful feature, but usually implies some mechanical compromise. The sort of facilities that are useful include tape monitor switching and Dolby S.



KEY

DOLBY C: A rather extreme noise reduction system not usually associated with high sound quality.
DOLBY S: A desirable derivative of the Dolby SR professional noise reduction system.
DOLBY HX PRO: System designed by B&O to extend headroom

for cassette recording.
3-HEAD: If you want to monitor a recording whilst you are making it a third head is essential.
TWIN DECK: Contains two decks for dubbing and continuous play, in most instances only one deck will record.

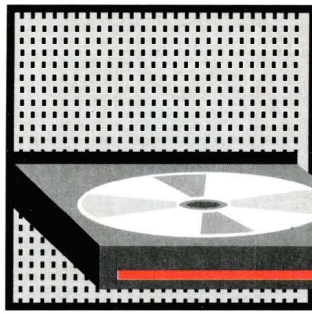
AUTOREVERSE: Automatically plays both sides of the cassette.
AUTO CALIBRATION: The deck will automatically set up bias and EQ for any tape.
ADJUSTABLE BIAS: Bias can be manually set to suit the tape being used.

FACTSBACK NUMBER: The Factsback reference for ordering a fax copy of the review. Use the contents page to find the Factsback information page.
BACK ISSUE: The issue of Hi-Fi Choice in which the original review appeared.

CASSETTE DECKS

Product	Price (£)	Comments	DOLBY C	DOLBY HX PRO	DOLBY S	3-HEAD	TWIN HEAD	AUTOREVERSE	AUTO CALIBRATION	ADJUSTABLE BIAS	FACTSBACK NUMBER	ISSUE NUMBER
Aiwa AD-F450	120	Basic but well designed budget deck, astonishing value; only the poor metering gives the game away	●								1513	136
Aiwa AD-WX727	170	High class twin for those who want bells, whistles - and music									1377	146
Denon DRM-550	160	There are some technical limitations, but this remains a fine sounding deck, and excellent value	●								158	
Denon DRS-640	200	Drawer loading deck, with simple facilities and smooth, well adjusted sound	●								1591	140
Denon DRM-740	270	Breathed-on DRM-710, with good external treatment offers good, if somewhat detached sonics	●								1514	136
Denon DRS-810	310	Drawer loading deck, carefully designed yet lacking in subtlety on audition	●									127
Grundig CCF3	200	Simple, sensible and well built twin, but lack of pitch stability compromises performance									1379	146
Harman/Kardon TD420	280	Minor inconsistencies detract from a well conceived, minimum features design	●								1592	140
JVC TD-R472	200	Excellent auto-reverse deck which doesn't suffer the usual disadvantages and is very sharply priced	●								158	
JVC TD-V562BK	220	Ultra-sophisticated transport at a silly price; sound quality is stable but slightly opaque	●									123
JVC TD-V662BK	270	Assured, clean and agile sounding recorder, if not quite the most refined in its class.	●								1380	146
Kenwood KX-5060S	235	Well engineered transport and Dolby S star in this refined and detailed design	●	●							1593	140
Kenwood KX-7060S	329	Although slightly dull sounding with prerecorded tapes, this is a well equipped and fine sounding deck	●	●							1381	146
Luxman K-322	140	Gives best value results with lower bias tapes, helped by a successful Dolby C installation	●								1382	146
Luxman K-373	350	Decent performance, but a little costly. Includes microphone inputs	●									158
Marantz SD-53	200	Modestly equipped player is short-changed by a rough transport, and dull prerecorded quality	●								1383	146
Marantz SD-63	270	Poor pitch stability is a major snag in an otherwise nondescript design	●									158
NAD 602	199	Minimalist deck for the audiophile market. Unfortunately engineering is minimalist too	●									127
NAD 613	230	Rough and ready, but enjoyable sound, though marred by mechanical motor noise	●									158
NAD 616	320	Double deck whose music sounded shut in and prosaic, as though its energy content had been ironed flat	●								1648	152
Onkyo K-611	430	Cute drawer loading mini-size component with 3-heads and dual capstan transport.	●								1384	146
Pioneer CT-S830S	500	High class mechanism, if lacking in battleship externals, and superb sound	●	●							1385	146
Sony TC-KE600S	300	Mild setting-up problems notwithstanding, this UK-tweaked design has a smooth, open and un-cassette-like sound	●	●								158
Technics RS-AZ7	300	Thin-film head gives a solid, almost CD-like bass and midrange. A clear advance in the state-of-the-art	●								158	
Yamaha KX-490	199	Electrifyingly transparent and capable deck, whos only flaw is a trace of audible wow and flutter	●									158
Yamaha KX-580	250	Stable and clean, if bright. Play Trim helps wake up recalcitrant recordings	●								1388	146

CD Players



All CD players offer a basic selection of facilities, and some can keep you entertained for hours as you programme in disc names and track orders. All but the excessively inexpensive feature remote control. Most CD players can be upgraded by adding an outboard DAC (see below). To do this the player needs a digital output of either electrical or optical persuasion; sonically the former is preferable.

A CD player can be split into two basic components: the disc drive or transport, and a device which turns the digital bitstream coming off the disc into an analogue audio signal. This is called a digital to analogue convertor, or DAC. Although most players are contained in a single box, expensive players are usually two-box affairs.

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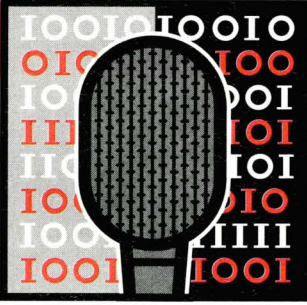
KEY
ELECTRICAL DIGITAL OUTPUT: For electrical connection to an outboard DAC.
AES/EBU ELEC DIG OUTPUT: Balanced digital output to be used with similarly equipped DACs.
OPTICAL DIGITAL OUTPUT: For optical connection to an outboard DAC.
AT&T OPT DIG OUTPUT: High speed optical output to be used with similarly equipped DACs.
BAL ANALOGUE OUTPUT: Balanced analogue output for amplifiers equipped with balanced inputs.
HEADPHONE SOCKET: For can users.
VARIABLE OUTPUT: Remotely adjustable volume controlled output.
MULTI-DISC: Equipped with a carousel or multi-tray system for continuous play of multiple discs.
DAC TYPE: Digital to analogue convertor. BS - Philips Bitstream, MB - multibit, Hyb - hybrid of multibit and bit-stream technologies, 1bit - single bit types such as MASH, bitstream, PWM etc
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CD PLAYERS

Product	Price(£)	Comments	AES/EBU ELEC DIG OUTPUT	OPTICAL DIGITAL OUTPUT	AT&T OPT DIG OUTPUT	BAL ANALOGUE OUTPUT	HEADPHONE SOCKET	VARIABLE OUTPUT	MULTI-DISC	FACTSBACK NUMBER	ISSUE NUMBER
AMC CD6	349	Based on Rotel's RCD-965BX, but has a raunchier, beefier but less transparent sound	●	●						BS	124
Arcam Delta 270	800	Dry, tightly-focussed sound will either beguile or aggravate, depending on taste!	●							Hyb	124
Audio Innovations Alto	399	Refreshing piece of audio sculpture belies inconsistent audio behaviour	●							BS	1635 151
Cambridge Audio CD4	150	Basic appearance and sluggish track access/track search belies its up and at 'em sound quality.	●							Hyb	1268 147
Cambridge Audio CD6	300	A sharp, lively and articulate player, a real thoroughbred in fact, perhaps too sharp and lively for some systems	●							BS	159
Denon DCD-625	200	DCD-615 replacement is generously equipped but lacks sophisticated sound of its forebear	●							MB	1269 147
Denon DCD-825	240	Despite extensive revisions, this latest player still sounds like a typical 18-bit Denon, which is no bad thing!	●							MB	1531 137
Denon DCD-1015	350	Excellent, middle range player - fast, fluid and lean	●							MB	1599 141
Dual CD1000RS	170	Old fashioned sound and appearance, though well suited to light classical music	●							BS	1562 139
Eclipse CD101a	80	If you want to know the sound of high order distortion, this is probably as good a place to start as any	●							MB	144
Goodmans Delta 700	110	A 16-bit alternative to the CD650II that furnishes a colourful and animated sound	●							MB	128
Harman/Kardon HD710	250	Player of integrity, but can sound a tad hard and rough when extended, and is somewhat amplifier fussy	●							1bit	159
Harman/Kardon HD7425	349	Needs a touch of Oxy-10 to clean up its complexion	●							MB	1600 141
Harman/Kardon HD7525	400	Glorious sounding player, if slightly inconsistent	●							MB	1636 151
Harman/Kardon HD7625	550	Crisply styled, well equipped and slick, sound quality is fast and assured, if slightly 'obvious'	●							MB	1761 155
Harman/Kardon HD7725	800	This flagship implementation of RLS sounds impressively bold and dynamic	●							MB	124
JVC XL-V284BK	140	Featuring a new set of bitstream innards, this flexible player has a refined, if occasionally unpredictable sound	●							1bit	1270 147
JVC XL-Z574	250	Strong resolving power and good midband and dynamics, but slightly raw and thin	●							1bit	159
JVC XL-Z674BK	300	Even handed, but glosses over the most intimate moments	●							1bit	1637 151
Kenwood DP-3080	170	Bold, dynamic and outgoing sound, though somewhat aggressive. Poor build quality and finish	●							1bit	159
Kenwood DP-7060	380	Fleet-footed, but will appear bright in lightweight systems	●							1bit	1601 141
Krell KPS 20i	9,900	Forthright, edge of the seat sound with outstanding bass performance (tested in Statements)	●							MB	1734 155
Linn Mimik	875	Useful multiroom features matched to strong bass, but poor imagery and transparency	●							Hyb	1762 155
Luxman D-322	200	Well bred player sounds smooth and cultured without appearing grey or boring.	●							BS	1272 147
Marantz CD-53	200	Looks identical to CD-63, but internal costs are cut, exposing a slightly ragged performer	●							BS	1565 139
Marantz CD-67	270	Dynamic, authoritative, and wide tonal response, but also shut-in and mid-forward balance	●							1 bit	159
Marantz CD-17	800	Fabulous packaging and an excellent all round performer: smooth, detailed and consistent	●							BS	1763 155
Meridian 506	995	Crisp, clean and detailed player now seems a little flat and mechanical: a dated balance	●							Hyb	1764 155
Meridian 508	1,685	Excellent partner for Meridian digital systems, and one of the best neo-high end systems (tested in system)	●							DS	140
Micromega Minium	350	Dynamically weak and some roughness offsets the pleasing tonal balance, articulate mid and strong bass	●							1 bit	159
Mission DAD7	900	Pleasant but not particularly exciting, but this remains a classy, sharply etched performer	●							MB	145
Musical Fidelity FCD	1,499	Remarkably coherent and three-dimensional performer, and an inspiring piece of audiophilia	●							BS	1051 131
NAD 512	250	Simple, well focused presentation, and articulate with it, though hard nosed quality is not everyone's cup of tea	●							1 bit	159
NAD 514	370	Boisterous sound, but undeniably attractive	●							BS	1639 151
Naim Audio CD3	978	The idiosyncratically packaged CD3 is solid and highly articulate. Always has its feet on the ground though	●							MB	1765 155
Nakamichi MB4s	350	Entry level Music-Bank player has plenty of dynamics and detail but little stereo depth	●							MB	1074 132
Onkyo DX-7210	260	Well-bred CD player features an unusual digital filter is smooth and cultured without appearing grey or boring	●							BS	1273 147
Onkyo DX-7510	400	Strongly flavoured, assertive sound	●							BS	1640 151
Orelle CD-100	500	Excellent information retrieval and convincing with a wide range of music. HF could be more natural though	●							MB	1628 151
Orelle CD-100SE	549	Articulate and solid performer, with a simple, purposeful; interface and attractive pricing	●							MB	1766 155
Philips CD-721	130	Surprisingly well sorted, articulate if slightly lousy and attractively presented sound. Captive signal lead	●							1 bit	159
Philips CD-740	170	One of several Philips players using hybrid DAC technologies. Still sounds insufferably boring, however	●							MB	1567 139
Pioneer PD-204	150	Generally easy on the ear, but can bite back, especially with complex high frequency music content. Well endowed	●							1 bit	159
Pioneer PD-S904	400	Too much legato - literally - in sound, but a very smooth performer	●							1bit	1641 151
Quad 77	850	This player knows how to sing. Pity the control system is so buggy.	●							Hyb	1767 155
Quad 67	875	Powerful, fluid and captivating sound reminiscent of Meridian's 206	●							BS	124
Rotel RCD-940BX	250	A sea change in transport and DAC technology lies behind this untidy-sounding and irritating player	●							MB	1535 137
Rotel RCD-975	849	Bright and superficially detailed, this deck can sound coarse and inarticulate	●							BS	1767 155
Sherwood CD-4030R	180	Easy on the ear, smooth sounding player, with limits set by the slightly soft, compressed quality - and messy facia	●							BS	159
Sony CDP-361	150	Bantamweight it capable and resolute machine with no serious shortcomings at the price	●							BS	1628 151
Sony CDP-XE500	160	Fine all-rounder, and a good match for middle ranking systems. Jog dial works well, but display is messy	●							BS	159
Sony CDP-761E	250	Tarted up CDP-561E with less widgets and a slightly overcooked but nonetheless fine performance	●							BS	1267 147

CD PLAYERS (CONTINUED)

Product	Price(£)	Comments	AES/EBU ELEC DIG OUT	OPTICAL DIGITAL OUT	AT&T OPT DIG OUT	BAL ANALOGUE OUT	HEADPHONE SOCKET	VARIABLE OUTPUT	MULTI-DISC	FACTSBACK NUMBER	DAC TYPE	ISSUE NUMBER
Sony CDP-XE900E	300	Refined and analytical disc scavenging tool, but there are some distinctive colourations making auditioning vital					●				BS	159
Sony CDP-XA2ES	400	Strong-willed, heavyweight sound; not for the faint-hearted	●	●				●		BS 1642	151	
Teac CD-P3200	150	A primitive looking CD player, housing 16-bit electronics delivering an equally primitive and uninspiring sound.	●	●				●		MB 1277	147	
Teac CD-5	350	Bright, breezy and up-beat - but short in the trouser department	●	●				●		BS 1643	151	
Teac VRDS-7	599	Although bold and outgoing, this player can sound both intrusive yet lacking fine detail	●	●						BS 1769	155	
Teac VRDS-10	770	A basic analogue stage compromises performance. Lacks bass energy	●	●						BS	119	
Technics SL-PG480A	140	Full driving sound, but somewhat uneven in balance with a unsubtle, slightly harsh top end							●	1 bit	159	
Technics SL-PS770A	250	A mellow sounding player that never quite rouses from its slumber to really tackle the music at hand	●	●				●		BS 1278	147	
Thorens TCD 2000	900	Lacks midband separation and clarity and is short on dynamics but looks great (tested in Sessions)	●	●						BS 1729	155	
Thule CD100	849	A little muddled via single ended output, but the sound comes alive when balanced connections are used	●	●			●			BS 1770	155	
Trichord Genesis	549	Modified Pioneer PD-S504 that's a bit like a Williams Renault Clio — astonishing at the price (tested in Sessions)	●	●				●	●	BS 1753	155	
Yamaha CDX-490	170	Big, blowsy sound, is undermined by lack of precision and focus				●			●	1 bit	159	
TRANSPORTS												
Arcam Delta 250	750	Arcam's best effort yet is a new design based on Philips CDM9 transport. Specification includes Sync Lock facility	●	●				●		-	1491	130
Audiomeca Kreatura SE	1,450	Superb combo for those who like the sound of valves (tested with Elixir DAC in Sessions)	●	●						MB	141	
Audiomeca Mephisto	2,100	Tested with Trichord Pulsar, the duo provides a highly composed and tactile sound	●	●						-	1320	144
Linn Karik	1,750	Based on early Linn transport, the Karik is dry but very positive, detailed and engrossing	●	●						-	1323	144
Meridian 500	1,245	Used with the 563 DAC, the combination is thin, brash and uncomfortable	●	●						-	1103	133
Mission Discmaster	1,500	Powerful performance - large and beefy without sounding fierce or aggressive (price includes Dacmaster)	●	●						-	1104	133
Pink Triangle Cardinal	875	Sound quality is warm but over-polished compared to PT Ordinal (tested with DaCapo and DC PSU)	●	●						-	1324	144
PS Audio Lambda	2,250	With Ultralink Two, sound positively sparkles with colour and resonant detail	●	●	●					-	1106	133
Teac VRDS-T1	550	Superb quality engineering is mated to tidy and composed sound (tested with D-T1)	●	●						-	1325	144
Teac P-700	900	Tested with D-700, low resolution sound is warm, bubbly and entertaining	●	●						-	120	
Teac P-2S	4,000	The latest version of Teac's luxury P-2 transport sounds as over-engineered as it looks	●	●						-	1493	130
Theta Data Basic II	2,298	Uses a Philips CDM-9 Pro mechanism a works a treat with more lively DACs	●	●						-	1494	130
Wadia 8	3,195	Budget version of Teac's VRDS mechanism in a fancy case; just too expensive for the performance on offer	●	●	●	●				-	1495	130
DACS												
Arcam Black Box 500	750	Sophisticated unit with Sync Lock and discrete DAC. Early samples sounded grubby and restrained									BS	1519 136
Audio Alchemy DAC-in-a-Box	230	This giveaway DAC may still rescue the oldest of players from obsolescence									MB	127
Audio Note DAC1	600	Oddball DAC with manual de-emphasis switch. Needs a high preamp input impedance or bass will suffer									MB	127
Audiolab 8000DAC	800	Just as smooth and refined as its predecessor yet, sadly, still manages to obscure the passion or fire of music									BS	127
Audiomeca Elixir	745	DAC was tested with Kreatura SE - see below									BS	141
Cambridge Audio DACMagic 2	200	Superb value DAC that makes the jump from good to outstanding if balanced outputs are used (tested in Sessions)						●			Hyb	1521 136
DPA PDM256	2,995	Highly advanced, with adjustable dither. but the different settings only lead to compromise									BS	133
Linn Numerik	1,400	A new 20 bit DAC and revised Karik transport have cleaned up; but sounds a tad dry and humourless.									MB	1323 144
Meridian 563	795	Warmer but no less detailed than the earlier 200-series, the 563 flies with a top rate transport									DS	1103 127
Mission Dacmaster	1,500	Powerful performance - large and beefy without sounding fierce or aggressive (price includes Discmaster)									MB	1104 133
Pink Triangle Ordinal	925	The cheapest dual-differential DAC7 converter available offers top-flight sound quality									BS	1524 136
Pink Triangle DaCapo	1,765	With Cardinal and DC PSU, the DaCapo is best with its 22bit option. It is warm but over-polished									BS	1324 144
Pink Triangle DC Supply	1,750	Battery power supply for Cardinal and DaCapo									-	1324 144
PS Audio UltraLink 2 HDCD	2,590	With Lambda transport, the sound positively sparkles with colour and resonant detail									MB	1106 133
PS Audio Ref Link	4,550	Consolidates reputation of PS Audio for high performance digital electronics						●			MB	1069 132
QED Digit Plus	139	Bearing in mind its expensive but very forgiving performance, the Digit is almost embarrassingly cheap									BS	113
Teac D-T1	500	Teamed with VRDS-T1 for test, this superb quality unit is tidy and composed.									BS	1325 144
Teac D-700	600	With P-700, the D-700 may lack the resolution, but is bubbly and entertaining									MB	120
Trichord Pulsar Series One	1,395	Richly detailed and honest sound from a very capable and natural DAC. Switchable phase, dither etc									Hyb	1320 144
Woodside DAC2	509	Sharp, dynamic sound is captivating for its lack of grain and 'tizz'									MB	101
Woodside DAC1	909	Fine but slightly dated and costly package in performance terms - but flexible, musical and well built									MB	87



Digital Recorders

Digital recorders come in a variety of different guises, but have yet to make much of an impact on the domestic market. At present there are four types to choose from: DAT (digital audio tape), MD (Mini Disc), and DCC (digital compact cassette) and CD-R (CD Recordable). DCC is backwards compatible inasmuch as the machines can play regular audio cassette. MD's claim to fame is its optical disc format, which offers instant track access and can't be worn out like a tape. DAT has been on the market for quite some time now, but has never

really 'made it' as a consumer medium due to the dearth of pre-recorded material. However it has begun to carve itself a niche in the top end of the market, replacing reel-to-reel as the audiophile's tape based medium. Home CD-R is coming into its own with Pioneer's PD-R05 machine attempting to set a trend.

B Best buy

R Recommended

KEY	ADC TYPE:	ELECTRICAL IN/OUTPUTS:	BACK ISSUE:
FORMAT: Type of recorder, see above for descriptions.	Analogue to digital convertor types as per DACs.	Digital socketry for electrical cable.	The issue of Hi-Fi Choice in which the original review appeared.
DAC TYPE: Digital to analogue convertor: BS - Philips Bitstream, MB - multibit, Hyb - hybrid of multibit and bitstream technologies, 1bit - single bit types such as MASH, bitstream, PWM etc	PORTABLE: Can be run off batteries but not necessarily personal stereo size.	FACTSBACK NUMBER: The Factsback reference for ordering a fax copy of the review. Use the contents page to find the Factsback information page.	
	OPTICAL IN/OUTPUTS: Digital socketry for optical cable.		

DIGITAL RECORDERS

Product	Price(£)	Comments	DAC TYPE	ADC TYPE	PORTABLE	ELECTRICAL IN/OUTPUTS	FACTSBACK NUMBER	ISSUE NUMBER
Philips DCC170	250	Good sound quality for a portable that records as well, beating competition from MD in its group	DCC	BS	BS	● ● ● ● ●	1237	141
Philips DCC951	280	Offering 18-bit record and replay this does an impressive job in many ways but PASC is still a limitation	DCC	BS	BS	● ● ● ● ●	139	
Pioneer D-05	800	Second generation 96kHz DAT recorder can offer startling realism with the right software - ie first generation	DAT	BS	BS	● ● ● ● ●	1652	152

DIGITAL RECORDERS (CONTINUED)

Product	Price(£)	Comments	FORMAT	DAC TYPE	ADC TYPE	PORTABLE	ELECTRICAL I/O/OUTPUTS	FACTBACK NUMBER	ISSUE NUMBER
Pioneer D-07	1,150	96kHz double sampling mode gives this deck a sense of naturalness missing from most DAT recorders	DAT	BS	BS		● ●	1089	133
Pioneer PDR-05	1,300	CD recorder that uses domestic blanks only (limited to 62 minutes), write once but excellent sound quality	CD-R	BS	BS		● ●	1652	152
Pioneer D-C88	2,000	State of the art portable 96kHz DAT recorder, the size of a lap-top computer this Nagra country on the cheap	DAT	BS	BS	● ● ●	● ● ●	1431	150
Sharp MD-M11	450	Slick MD personal with recording capabilities and rapid track access but less stunning sound quality	MD	BS	BS		● ● ●		139
Sony MDA-IA3ES	800	Full width MD recorder that makes a decent job of recordings but is less impressive with pre-recorded material	MD	BS	BS		● ● ●	1216	152



Headphones

There are a variety of different approaches to headphone design. Among the more expensive models, electrostatic drivers are used in open-backed phones. Most models feature dynamic (moving coil) drivers in circular, open or closed-back designs. The advantage of open backs seems to be a correspondingly open sound, but one can also hear external noise, of course. Closed-back designs are useful in situations where it is necessary to block out noise.

There are three styles of headphone: circumaural models enclose the ear; supra-aural designs feature a flat pad which presses on the outer ear; and intra-aurals (in-ear) rest inside the ear itself, à la personal stereos. For best results a separate headphone amplifier is recommended.



KEY

TYPE: Operating principle: D - dynamic, E - electrostatic.	CLOSED BACK: Keeps out external noise.	3.5MM JACK ADAPTOR: Can be used with mini-jack-equipped components such as personal stereos.	to find the Factsback information page.
SUPRA-AURAL: Style where a flat pad presses on the outer ear.	WEIGHT (G): Mass in grams	FACTSBACK NUMBER: The Factsback reference for ordering a fax copy of the review. Use the contents page	BACK ISSUE: The issue of Hi-Fi Choice in which the original review appeared.
CIRCUMRAURAL: Style which encloses the ear.	IMPEDANCE (Ω): Load offered to the headphone amplifier. The higher the impedance the louder the sound for a given amplifier output.		
OPEN BACK: Offers an open sound but lets in noise.			

HEADPHONES

Product	Price(£)	Comments	SUPRA-AURAL TYPE	CIRCUMRAURAL	OPEN BACK	CLOSED BACK	WEIGHT(G)	IMPEDANCE(Ω)	3.5mm JACK ADAPTOR	FACTSBACK NUMBER	ISSUE NUMBER
AKG K240 Monitor	82	Something of a classic, these AKGs are very user-friendly in all respects; sonically on the warm side of normal	D	●	●	●	240	600			63
AKG K1000	646	One of the best dynamics on the market, hooks directly into speaker outputs	D	●	●	●	270	120			99
Audio Technica ATH910PRO	80	The closed back 910s are an improvement on the 909s, with a nice rhythmic quality rarely found with headphones	D	●	●	●	280	40			55
Beyer DT100	152	Rugged, modular professional design, but bass is woolly and treble lacks detail	D	●	●	●	350	600			157
Beyer DT311	49	Uncharacteristically tight, unrefined sound quality from this otherwise well engineered 'phone	D	●	●	●	124	40	●	1098	133
Beyer DT331	82	Tonally bright and deficient in bass, but exceptionally comfortable, articulate, detailed and refined	D	●	●	●	210	40	●	1801	157
Beyer DT411	69	A reasonable but not very thrilling headphone that doesn't really offer enough at the price.	D	●	●	●	120	250			111
Beyer DT531	129	A good buy for serious, heavy-duty music making	D	●	●	●	245	250			144
Beyer DT911	219	Probably too revealing for many headphone amps, these are very subtle and fine, if expensive cans	D	●	●	●	275	250			111
Denon AH-D550	80	A competent 'phone with integrity, but little panache or charisma. Hard headband causes brain strain	D	●	●	●	200	35	●	1801	157
Grado SR-80	110	Clear, open and dynamic with pedantically open mid-band. Crude physical design, rough frequency extremes	D	●	●	●	60	8	●	1801	157
Jacklin Float Model 1	75	Whilst very unusual in appearance, the Floats give remarkable sound quality and openness at a reasonable price	D	●	●	●	400	200			55
Jacklin Float Model 2	99	Helmet shaped, but open sounding and comfortable in long term, despite lack of adjustment	D	●	●	●	400	200			63
JVC HA-D910	65	Broadly acceptable if unexciting design with low level losses and some colourations	D	●	●	●	220	32	●		121
Kenwood KH-1000	20	First step up from a true mini: a near miniature which is cheap, comfortable and inoffensive	D	●	●	●	30	32	●		121
Maxell HP-3000	30	Solid, smooth sounding supra-aural headphone, but congested and undynamic. Includes in-lead controls	D	●	●	●	120	32	●	1099	133
Pioneer SE-400D	37	Acceptable, if unexciting all-rounder, this supra-aural phone has good long-term comfort levels	D	●	●	●	185	35	●	1099	133

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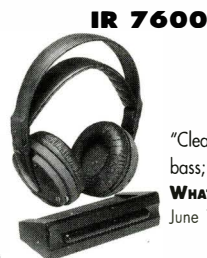


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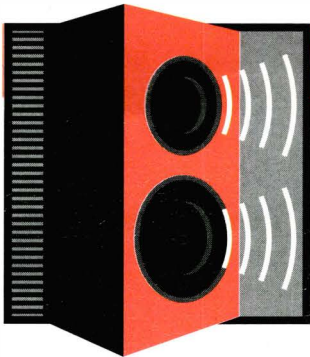


vivanco

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Tel: 01442 231616 Fax: 01442 2355421

HEADPHONES (CONTINUED)

Product	Price(£)	Comments	CIRCUM-AURAL TYPE	OPEN BACK	CLOSED BACK	WEIGHT(g)	3.5mm JACK ADAPTOR	FACTSBACK NUMBER	ISSUE NUMBER
Ross RDH-300CD	17	In-lead controls are the highlights of this shoddy, sometimes aggressive sounding design	D	●	●	155	8	●	133
Sennheiser HD445 II	40	Still the one by which others at the price are measured, though now slightly leaden sounding, with a cold treble	D	●	●	125	52	●	121
Sennheiser HD455	50	Inoffensive, if nondescript sound, modular, but can become dislodged from head	D	●	●	185	60	●	1801 157
Sennheiser HD565 Ovation	140	Wide bandwidth design which is refined, expressive and extremely comfortable	D	●	●	255	150	●	1801 157
Sony MDR-CD770	100	Neutrality and comfort make the Sony easy to live with. Technically correct sounding too, yet musically unrewarding	D	●	●	-	-	●	1801 157
Stax Lambda Pro	449	Tested with SRD-7B PSU, this is an industry reference, and is frighteningly revealing	E	●	●	325	-		55
Stax Lambda Sig	549	With SRM-T1. Electrostatic - the Signature must be the most transparent headphone available	E	●	●	325	-		72
Technics RP-HT700	70	Well-finished but physically crass and grubby sounding	D	●	●	255	-	●	1801 157
Vivanco SR606	40	Although slightly overblown at times, this model is easy on the ears and essentially enjoyable	D	●	●	225	32	●	1101 133
Vivanco SR650	50	Unusually comfortable 'phone with excellent detail resolution but aggressive, thanks to tweeter resonance	D	●	●	175	-	●	1801 157
Vivanco SR750	60	Cossetting physical design, attractive sound an pricing, though suffers overhang and lacks ultimate dynamics	D	●	●	188	-	●	1801 157
Vivanco IR7100	120	Infra-red phones that work well but suffer from the limitations of the medium ie compression and hiss(Sessions)	D	●	●	265	-		149



Hi-Fi Loudspeakers

As the last item in the hi-fi chain, the loudspeaker is merely the slave of what has gone before; it is only as good as the signal it is fed. Nevertheless, the distortions introduced by loudspeakers (and rooms) tend to be the most obvious. The average loudspeaker consists of an enclosure plus a couple of drive units behind a removable grille. Inside the box lurks a simple electrical circuit known as a crossover, which divides the incoming (full range) signal into the right bits for the drivers to handle. The designer's primary

task is to balance the 'sensitivity' of the loudspeaker (how loud it goes for a given electrical input) against the bass extension (how low it goes), for the given box size.

Subwoofers augment the bass and come in passive and amplified active form, they are less sensitive to placement than regular speakers.

B Best Buy **R** Recommended

KEY

SIZE WxHxD (cm): Width by height by depth in centimetres.
 FLOORSTANDER: As opposed to requiring a dedicated stand.
 SENSITIVITY (dB/W): Efficiency: how much volume you get for a given input; the higher the louder

IMPEDANCE (Ω): Measured in Ohms impedance it is a measure of how hard a loudspeaker is to drive: the lower the number the more powerful the amplifier needs to be.
 BASS FROM (Hz): The lowest frequency that a speaker can

reproduce, based on in-room measurements.
 FREE SPACE: Speakers should be placed away from walls.
 CLOSE TO WALL: It is recommended that these speakers be placed close (between 3 and 12cm) to the rear wall.

FACTSBACK NUMBER: The reference for ordering a fax copy of the review. Use the contents page to find the Factsback page.
 BACK ISSUE: The issue of Hi-Fi Choice in which the original review appeared.

HI-FI LOUDSPEAKERS

Product	Price(£)	Comments	SIZE WxHxD(CM)	FLOORSTANDER	SENSITIVITY(dB/W)	IMPEDANCE(Ω)	BASS FROM (Hz)	FREE SPACE	FACTSBACK NUMBER	ISSUE NUMBER
Allison AL100	100	Loud and lively budget wall-mount is big and beefy, but lacks sparkle and refinement	24,33,19		90	4	30	●	94	94
Allison AL105	170	Pretty enough in appearance; sonically the AL105 doesn't really make the grade at the price	24,37,21		90	4	45	●		78
Allison AL110	220	Compact bookshelf model is a little dry and mid-forward, but bass is extended and solid	24,40,23		90	4	28	●		102
Allison AL120	420	Pretty well balanced if slightly mid-forward, but sound quality is disappointing at the price	28,61,29	●	90	4	30	●		98
ATC SCM20	1,499	Massively built, invariably informative but the rather forward presentation can be uncomfortable	24,44,31		83	8	28	●		86
Audio Innovations Alto	329	Styling makes competition look old-fashioned, but sound is thin and cold	20,38,26		88	6	45	●	1653	152
Audio Note AN-J/B	799	Light damping and local unevenness adds some colouration, but doesn't spoil the very speaker	38,58,25		93	8	25	●		110
Audio Note AN-E/B	1,299	Coherent dynamic and transparent, with extended bass and high sensitivity - but ugly!	36,84,28	●	94	8	20	●		106
Audio Physic Tempo	1,999	Tall and unusually styled floorstander has stunning stereo but suspect bass tuning	22,107,47	●	88	8	28	●	1344	143
Audiovector 3X	1,500	Superior time coherence, a wide dynamic range and exception bass/mid balance	19,32,98	●	89	8	20	●	1345	143
B&W DM302	130	highly competent and neutral all rounder; clever Prism enclosure	19,32,22		88	4	45	●	1778	156
B&W DM601	200	Great main driver for the price, entertaining dynamics	20.5,35.5,23		88	6	30	●	1779	156
B&W DM602	300	Prefers tall stands and space, but offers impressive midband dynamics and musical tension	24,49,31		90	8	30	●	1654	15
B&W CDM1	600	Gorgeous stand-mount delivers unusually good bass for its size	28,38,28		88	6	30	●		160
B&W Matrix 805 V	995	Stylish, remarkable imaging, good balance and low colouration	33,33,21		87	8	30	●		98
B&W Matrix 801S3	3,795	Lacks transparency and the drama of the best dynamics, but acoustically a tour de force	44,100,56	●	87	8	20	●		81
Bose 305	430	Fine dynamic liveliness and a good room match counter strange imaging and treble	23,45,28		-	8	40	●		78
Bose 401	500	Cheaply built but distinctively styled, the 401 suffers from heavy midband	30,30,76	●	-	4	28	●		110
Boston Acoustics HD5	139	Pretty miniature lacks boxiness, but is short of drama and dynamic drive	16,25,18		89	8	30	●		110
Canon S-30	180	Moulded design has lively coherence, with 'wide imaging stereo'	23,27,24		90	6	50	●		114
Canon S-75	1000	Unique 'wide image' floorstander has great charm despite some sonic flaws	25,79,25	●	87	4	26	●		160
Castle Isis	230	Expressive with a full upper bass, tonally colourful with a big, dynamic sound (tested in Sessions)	17,35,19.5		87	8	60	●	1729	154
Castle Durham 900	300	Lovely veneer and lots of engineering create a very upfront, coherent and exciting sound	22,40,23		90	8	60	●	1162	135
Castle York	370	Real wood compact has an engaging transparency: fine balance and timing, but could use some authority	26,43,22		89	8	50	●		110
Castle Severn	500	Light and bright, but sound is open and communicative. Looks good too	23,77,20		88	8	47	●	1655	152
Castle Chester	700	A brilliant throwback, using a horn type approach to provide startling dynamics and coherence	23,91,25	●	90	8	44	●		98
Castle Harlech	800	Handsome big-sounding floorstander, great value and dynamic midrange	20,96,33	●	88	8	28	●		160
Castle Howard S2	1,100	Ably fills the gap between Chester and Winchester; has a rich, laid back balance	26,104,41	●	90	8	40	●	1078	132
Castle Winchester	1,650	Large for its bass extension but engagingly agile, open and airy	42,108,23	●	90	8	35	●		90
Celestion 1	99	It sounds a bit scrappy and untidy, but its heart is in the right place	16,27,21		86	8	50	●		114
Celestion 3 MKII	139	Smooth and polished by budget speaker standards, if a bit laid back for some tastes	21,31,18		88	8	45	●	1036	130
Celestion Impact 23	300	Big, cheap and loud. Sounds coloured and old fashioned, lacks subtlety	28,82,29		89	8	30	●	1656	152
Celestion 15	389	Big box and but short on subtlety and control though long on both enthusiasms	21,100,25	●	89	8	28	●		114
Celestion Impact 25	400	Both capable and enjoyable these rock boxes are real contenders in the bang-for-the-buck stakes	27,82,29	●	90	8	43	●	1758	155
Celestion SL6Si	429	This stereotype luxury compact can sound a bit dull and congested; favours CD	20,38,27		84	8	30	●		94

HI-FI LOUDSPEAKERS (CONTINUED)

SIZE WxHxD(CM) SENSITIVITY(DB/W) IMPEDANCE(Ω) BASS FROM (Hz) FACTSBACK FREE SPACE ISSUE NUMBER

Product	Price(£)	Comments	SIZE WxHxD(CM)	SENSITIVITY(DB/W)	IMPEDANCE(Ω)	BASS FROM (Hz)	FACTSBACK FREE SPACE	ISSUE NUMBER
Celestion 300	1,099	Splendid bass extension and fine panel-like openness, but dynamics and timing are suspect	21,97,33	● 84	8	20	●	118
Cerwin-Vega VS10	350	Not all that refined but ballsy as heck, these rock boxes have no shortage of gung ho	33,70,29	● 95	6	37	●	1758 155
Dali 104B	370	Lively, rich sounding and communicative. Shame about bland styling and dull balance	22,86,27	● 93	4	28	●	1657 152
Dawn Audio Chorus FS	698	Compact floorstander with superb coherence but rather forward midband. Would suit smaller rooms best	26,88,21	● 89	8	30	●	114
Epos ES12	500	High quality luxury stand-mount has great midband and stereo imaging	20,38,25	● 85	8	45	●	160
Epos ES14	675	Substantial stand mount delivers delightful midrange focus and delicacy with good bass control	23,49,29	● 87	8	25	●	98
Epos ES22	1,185	Elegant floorstander with 'safe' balance that can be enlivened with the right cable and energetic material (Sessions)	21,88,25	● 87	6	58	●	1629 151
Epos ES25	1,655	Handsome floorstander with a rather uneven and bass heavy balance	24,90,35	● 88	6	22	●	1346 143
Faraday Siren	445	High mass concrete cabinet is let down by imbalance of ageing driver combination	25,27,46	● 90	4	48	●	94
Gale Model 4	200	Low cost floorstander; sounds a bit edgy, with detached bass	19,79,22	● 87	8	28	●	1780 156
GLL Imagio IC130	550	Lots of speaker for the money, but sound is decidedly dull and shut in	22,112,29	● 88	4	20	●	160
Harbeth BBC LS3/5A	699	Still a classic miniature, though not to every taste, and none the better for the recent update	19,30,18	● 82	10	80	●	66
Harman/Kardon LS0200	149	Laid back to a fault but entertaining nevertheless, and a big box for the price	21,35,30	● 87	8	30	●	1037 130
Heybrook Prima	139	Fine pace and timing, but balance is forward and bass is tight	20,29,18	● 87	6	50	●	110
Heybrook Solo	199	Untidy bass and treble, but handles complex rhythmic material well	23,36,23	● 89	6	28	●	90
Heybrook Trio	373	HBS1 drivers in real wood enclosure give a sweeter and more forgiving sound	24,47,25	● 89	8	45	●	118
Heybrook Heylo	389	Good vocal reproduction, but sounds thin and bass seems an afterthought	23,73,19	● 88	8	30	●	1658 152
Heybrook Heystak	499	Elegant, highly detailed and level-headed sound, but could use injection of life	22,98,28	● 89	8	38	●	141
Heybrook Quartet	575	Solidly large bookshelf model with good sensitivity and a lively, forward sound	24,41,22	● 90	8	48	●	122
Heybrook Sextet	1,129	Coherent and highly analytical, partly due to distinct upper-mid forwardness	27,90,20	● 88	8	25	●	102
Infinity Reference 1i	150	Although not to our tastes, this is a competent speaker, and decent material value	20,34,20	● 89	6	50	●	1403 148
Infinity Kappa 6.1i	995	Good extension, but bass is fat and slow, and dynamics are unconvincing	31,95,25	● 89	6	25	●	1080 132
Jamo Cornet 40.4	150	Pretty presentation and a strong box, but poor driver fixing. Decent if bright sound	20,32,22	● 89	8	48	●	1038 130
Jamo BX100A	370	A cracking output for their size these rock boxes can be a tad bright but have decent bass	31,5,54,28	● 91	8	40	●	1758 155
Jamo Classic 8	430	A lot of speaker for the money; good when playing quietly, but boom 'n tizz character sounded crude	22,90,29	● 90	4	28	●	1659 152
Jamo 477	500	Very prettily styled, but build and sound quality are disappointing at the price	19,77,28	● 88	4	40	●	1549 138
Jamo 707A	900	Superb styling and cosmetics and decent balance apart from detached bass	26,38,104	● 90	4	25	●	1085 132
JBL Control One	115	Sub-miniature with forward midrange and real bass; price justified by build	24,156,14	● 87	4	100	●	90
JBL TLX70	400	Startling bass weight from party animal that is let down by rather bland high frequencies	27,88,28	● 88.5	8	50	●	1758 155
JBL L20J	850	Pricy, heavy and a bit laid back, but this is a fine rock 'n' roller which is dynamic and communicative	26,42,28	● 86	8	30	●	1550 138
JBL L90	1,309	A classic monitor which communicates with gusto and enthusiasm, though it can sound a tad crude	24,94,35	● 91	6	23	●	143
JBL Ti 1000	1,600	Performance compromised by over enthusiastic midbass output from port	20,30,13	● 89	4	45	●	118
Jordan Watts JH400	820	Piano finish hexagon has controversial sound, with uneven balance but delightful mid	28,38,21	● 86	8	50	●	106
JPW Mini Monitor	60	Ultra-cheap miniature works well in a limited way	18,27,17.5	● 86	8	50	●	1781 156
JPW Gold Monitor	80	More informative than Mini Monitor - but fiercer too	18,27,17.5	● 86	8	50	●	1782 156
JPW Sonata	120	Fine sound if limited bass and dynamic range, wood veneered at a silly price	23,32,22	● 87	8	70	●	71
JPW P1 Vinyl	150	Competent loudspeaker for the price, with a safe sound that won't disappoint	26,44,25	● 89	8	65	●	102
JPW P1	170	Longstanding design is remarkable material value (real wood etc) and sounds pretty too	26,44,25	● 89	8	65	●	1611 141
JPW AP2	200	Real wood finish, and performance is cleaner but similar to P1 Vinyl overall	26,44,25	● 89	8	65	●	106
JPW AP3	230	Good stereo and well balanced overall; character is well suited to vinyl replay	26,52,29	● 88	8	55	●	46
JPW Ruby 1	500	Very pretty but pricey luxury metal-cone miniature has good, if slightly edgy balance	19,32,21	● 87	6	55	●	1572 139
KEF Coda 7	130	Lovely open voice reproduction, but bass could be tauter; build tougher	18,30,23	● 88	6	50	●	1783 156
KEF Coda 8	190	Outstandingly well balanced, bass is deep but a little vague	20,32,5,29	● 86	6	28	●	1784 156
KEF Coda 9	300	Uneven budget 3-way floorstander with poor bass definition	20,86,28	● 89	6	30	●	1785 156
KEF Q30	379	Fine focus from Uni-Q driver, but lacks drive and time coherence	19,73,30	● 88	6	44	●	126
KEF Q50	529	Compact twin-driver floorstander with Uni-Q treble and a rather midbass, heavy overall balance	19,83,30	● 89	6	50	●	1573 139
KEF 104/2	1,799	A reference point for dynamics, best without KUBE, suited to many rooms.	28,90,41	● 92	4	50	●	60
Keswick Audio Aria II	329	Confident and dynamic sound, if a little crude and shut in	21,42,24	● 89	8	20	●	1405 148
Linn Koilidh Passive	700	Stunning timing and coherence, and awesome bass drive	20,83,28	● 87	4	22	●	1552 138
Linn Kaber Passive	1,800	Dry, bright balance emphasises dynamics and transients, but can sound unforgiving	20,90,28	● 87	4	25	●	118
Living Voice Air Partner S	27,000	Outstanding transparency and dynamics from remarkably solid and fast mega horn	64,160,90	● 108	8	40	●	138
Lumley Reference LM4	375	Metal diaphragm and wood veneer; balance uneven upper and has suspect timing	18,36,22	● 86	6	44	●	126
Lumley Reference LM3	895	Despite indifferent bass alignment, LM3 is fast, coherent, solid and informative	27,87,28	● 90	8	30	●	106
Meridian DSP6000	8,500	Sophisticated digital design, with a wide ranging, refined and detailed sound. Has onboard amplification	28,133,43	● -	-	35	●	1226 140
Meridian DSP5000	2,995	State of the active loudspeaker art, a high grade design with unique capabilities. Has onboard amplification	21,90,30	● -	-	35	●	1226 140
Mission 731	130	Much improved bass but dull top; likes to play loud	17,5,31,18	● 87	6	45	●	156
Mission 732	200	Attractive presentation but a rather dull and thick sounding speaker, and a tad pricey too	20,41,30	● 89	8	45	●	1613 141
Mission 733	300	Duller than before, though still an honest all-round package	20,5,87,30	● 87	8	45	●	1786 156
Mission 751	300	Gorgeous looking, very petite; boogies with a sting at the top	17,5,32,26	● 87	8	45	●	1788 156
Mission 734	430	Fine all rounder, and good value, but dynamically a bit lazy, and tweeter quality limited	21,84,33	● 90	8	43	●	1660 152
Mission 752	500	Brilliant style, engineering and sound	20,88,26	● 90	8	50	●	1553 138
Mission 753	700	Gorgeous presentation and potential for open transparency.	21,88,32	● 90	6	45	●	114
Monitor Audio MA201	300	Lively and coherent with good power handling, but also a bit shut in and coloured	22,41,40	● 90	8	40	●	1164 135
Monitor Audio MA202	450	Uneven, informative and easy-listening floorstander delivers decent scale	22,89,27	● 90	8	50	●	1575 139
Monitor Audio MA700 PMC	500	Good looking luxury compact with all-metal diaphragms, lovely midrange, but occasionally edgy	22,35,26	● 89	8	45	●	1661 152
Monitor Audio MA703 PMC	800	Lovely but pricey floorstander has up-front, coherent 'shiny' sound	20,89,27	● 88	8	50	●	160
Monitor Audio Studio 6	900	Metal diaphragm compact has transparent midband but lacks vigour and drive	22,35,25	● 88	8	45	●	118
Monitor Audio Studio 12	1,000	A real looker, but sound and content are a bit on the small side for the price	17,92,20	● 90	8	28	●	1349 143
Mordaunt-Short MS10i	140	Up front, bouncy and a whole lot of fun	18,5,30,5,20	● 86	8	50	●	1789 156
Mordaunt-Short SW1	150	Prettily finished and inexpensive passive subwoofer is only really useful with sub-miniature speakers	24,58,26	● 90	8	40	●	128
Mordaunt-Short MS30i	275	Slightly shut in and coloured quality is compensated by fine bass and impressive communication	25,43,28	● 90	8	28	●	1662 152
Mordaunt-Short Perf 860	1,695	Although a very neutral loudspeaker it can, with the right ancillaries, pack a serious punch (Statements)	26,86,35	● 90	6	35	●	1367 146

HI-FI LOUDSPEAKERS (CONTINUED)

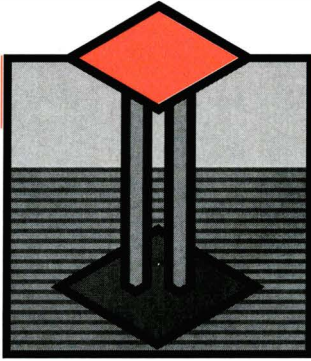
Product	Price(£)	Comments	SIZE WxHxD(CM)	SENSITIVITY(dB/W)	IMPEDANCE(Ω)	BASS FROM	FREE SPACE	FACTSBACK	ISSUE NUMBER
Morel 704/2	1,000	There's real potential here, but it's not fully realised	23,80,21	● 88	8 20	●	1350	143	
Musical Technology Harrier	400	Very pretty package, good measured performance and even sound. Sensitivity is low, and dynamics limp	25,80,23	● 86	8 25	●	1663	152	
Naim SBL Passive	1,878	Lively and punchy - smoother but more upfront than before	27,89,27	● 88	6 25	●	1352	143	
Neat Mystique	575	Elegant compact floorstander has good allround sound and value	20,85,18	● 84	8 25	●	160		
Neat Petite II	745	Compact design now utilising ribbon tweeter with a fine sense of timing and surprising musicality (tested in Sessions)	20,30,18	86	8 33	●	160		
Origin Live OL-2A	470	Fine dynamics and a good looking, well engineered package, though presence bland and treble restrained	19,80,19	86	8 45	●	1664	152	
Origin Live OL-1	499	Luxury miniature has very good overall balance, sacrificing sensitivity for bass	20,30,19	86	8 25	●	106		
Philips Legend FB720II	200	Liveliness, coherence and fine information retrieval justifies the odd looking baffle	21,37,31	90	6 50	●	122		
Pink Triangle Ventral	896	If you are after Quad Electrostatic type transparency but can't afford the price... (Sessions)	15,80,32	86	11	●	142		
Pioneer S-4UK	250	Latest version now balances pretty well, with a coherent lightweight bass	21,37,28	88	6 50	●	1157	139	
Polk LS50	800	No enthusiast tweaks here, but powerful and beautiful balance	27,83,29	● 89	8 25	●	1155	138	
Polk LS70	1,200	High sensitivity, but balance has too much midbass boom; mid-top is laid back	31,94,37	● 90	8 22	●	1084	132	
Proac Response 2.5	2,700	For aspirant high-enders looking for seriously good conventional boxes, this speaker should be first port of call	22,107,25	● 86	8 30	●	1457	149	
PMC TB1	500	Superb transparency, subtle laid back sound, well worth seeking out	20,40,31	87	8 45	●	160		
PMC LB1	998	Delightful smoothness and transparency, though bass and treble are both limited	18,53,25	89	4 33	●	110		
PMC AB1	1,598	Lovely panel-like transparency, slightly shut-in balance, needs a big room	26,79,43	89	6 22	●	114		
Polk RT16	800	Bass rich, lively and powerful, but suspect top end; big and not very pretty	22,105,39	● 91	4 22	●	160		
QLN Qubic 222	400	Ugly but good value floorstander with loads of bass and a smooth balance	21,87,29	● 88	6 25	●	160		
Quad ESL-63	2,860	Classic electrostatic lacks punch, but has strengths some can't live without	66,93,27	● 86	8 34	●	60		
Rega Kyte	198	Has splendid timing and coherence, sounds very explicit and informative	19,31,19	87	8 50	●	114		
Rega EL8	298	Kyle drivers in compact floorstander gives more bass but less coherence	17,72,20	● 86	8 55	●	122		
Rega ELA Mk II	498	Pretty and smooth, the latest incarnation has a superb midband and excellent communicative skills	30,80,20	● 87	8 40	●	1578	139	
Rega XEL	1,040	Looks and sounds great: balance bright but even, with delightful coherence and timing	20,82,30	● 89	6 40	●	1083	132	
Revolver Beretta	100	Great bass for the price, a bit crude further up	19,35,22	87	8 45	●	1790	156	
Revolver Colt	139	A good all-rounder, if a little bland, and excellent value for money	30,19,22	88	6 48	●	1407	148	
Revolver 260	350	A no nonsense presenter of rock with plenty of dynamics, not too refined (tested in Sessions)	21,5,91,6,30	● 89	6 40	●	1731	154	
Rogers LS1	149	High grade miniature	20,20,30	87	6	●	1408	143	
Rogers AB1	499	Designed as partner for LS3/5a or similar miniatures	19,57,16	● 82	8	●	1354	143	
Rogers Studio 3	499	Pricey LS3/5A derived miniature, excitingly coherent if lightweight, can't go loud	19,30,16	85	8 30	●	118		
Rogers LS3/5A	699	Clever AB1 stand/subwoofer helps the classic 3/5A monitor give its best shot.	19,31,17	● 82	12 45	●	1354	143	
Rogers Studio 5	699	Luxury finish bookshelf size model has genuine monitoring capabilities	25,25,48	89	8 40	●	1556	138	
Rogers Studio 7	899	Latest variation on classic BBC-monitor theme has beautifully voiced, laid back sound	30,63,30	90	8 30	●	122		
Roksan ROKone	600	Large stand-mount is musically very communicative if a little coloured	21,45,33	89	6 30	●	160		
Roksan Ojan 3 Black	795	Squat, stylish and black, great bass extension and somewhat uneven balance	28,76,46	● 88	8 20	●	1082	132	
Royd Minstrel	249	Not much wellie or loudness but fine coherence and timing, a bit bright	18,69,12	86	8 30	●	1167	135	
Royd Merlin	298	Invigorating and exciting design with plenty of upfront detail, but balance lacks warmth and a tad overpriced	20,31,18	86	8 33	●	1409	148	
Royd Doublet	450	Great value compact floorstander; lively and very informative, if a little uneven	18,93,19	● 90	4 28	●	160		
Royd The Sorcerer	595	Extremely musical and communicative speaker that fun to listen to. Aesthetics could use improving though	20,31,18	86	8 35	●	139		
Royd Abbot	665	Dynamic and fine transient qualities are hampered by a rather coloured mid-forward balance	20,81,30	● 90	8 43	●	118		
Ruark Templar	499	Striking baffle gives decent bass/mid but dull treble; could tame over-bright system	19,70,27	87	8 25	●	122		
Ruark Talisman II	749	Less ideologically committed than some, strength lies in fine all-round coherence	23,84,32	● 88	8 30	●	118		
Ruark Equinox	1,849	The primary strength of this speaker is its ability to remove itself from the picture	25,88,34	● 88	6 45	●	1227	140	
SD Acoustics SD3R	399	New SD3 has the agility and charm of a quality miniature, good bass and low sensitivity.	20,38,30	87	8 25	●	106		
SD Acoustics SD5	1,235	Bass suspect but forward midband is delightfully smooth. Has ribbon tweeter	20,110,30	● 88	8 30	●	1081	132	
Shahinian Arc	1,675	Occasionally wonderful small floorstanding omni; bright but coherent and revealing	35,69,25	88	6 24	●	110		
Spendor 2020	399	Utilising an oval drive unit in a stylish cabinet this is a neutral design with AV inclinations (tested in Sessions)	18,34,26	87	8	●	1756	155	
Spendor 2030	600	Discreet slimline floorstander with delicately coherent, laid back sound	18,89,27	● 87	8 30	●	160		
Spendor S20	760	Maintains Spendor's tradition for peerless mid-to-treble coherence and perspectives.	22,38,26	84	8 25	●	102		
System Audio 905	250	Fine coherence and remarkable dynamic freedom does something so small, though there's little real weight	15,27,21	89	8 60	●	1410	148	
Tannoy 631	149	Balanced, open, unboxy and quite lively, but lacks muscle	19,34,15	87	6 60	●	1616	141	
Tannoy 631SE	170	Very refined midband; maybe too laid back for some	13-19,34,16	86	7 45	●	1791	156	
Tannoy 632	189	Clever cabinet avoids boxiness and promotes focus imaging and bass	43,51,27	88	20 25	●	1168	135	
Tannoy 633/II	300	Impressive bass and balance from very compact floorstander. Upper midband could be cleaner	29,75,28	● 89	85 20	●	1665	152	
Tannoy 635	450	Beefy low-line floorstander packs real bass punch and an up-front balance	17-29,85,27	● 90	6 22	●	160		
Tannoy 638	599	Big value vinyl big box has good balance and lots of loudness, but needs a good amp.	33,96,32	● 91	6 25	●	1558	138	
Tannoy D500	1,470	Plenty of muscle and stereo, but short of poise and delicacy. Hard work for amps	31,93,34	● 91	6 20	●	1355	143	
Tannoy Westminster TW	6,000	These awesome horn loaded speakers are remarkably controlled and impressive	large	● 99	8 38	●	C93		
TDL Near Field Monitor	100	Despite low price, this is an unimpressive performer, poor low frequency resolution and analysis being main flaws	18,30,17	87	8 50	●	1043	130	
TDL RTL2	300	Spacious, weighty and enveloping sound if you can accept the laid back balance	20,73,22	87	8 25	●	1412	148	
TDL RTL3	400	Bargain price floorstander has rich, heavy and bright sound with a good scale	20,90,37	● 90	8 25	●	126		
TDL Studio 0.5	499	Tiny floorstanding transmission line lacks coherence or the balance of Studio 1	20,62,30	85	8 40	●	94		
TDL Studio 1	699	Genuinely extended bass from a compact enclosure, very detailed but a shade clinical	23,77,33	86	8 25	●	78		
TDL Studio 1m	899	Transmission line helps bring the best from metal cone driver	23,77,34	86	8 20	●	118		
Technics SB-M20	200	Well balanced with natural perspectives and fine midband coherence, but bass is a bit boxy and uneven	20,32,23	70	8 50	●	1413	148	
Technics SB-M500	450	This model offers a clean, open sound, offset by midbass heavy balance and low sensitivity	25,78,37	● 100	8 25	●	1666	152	
Thiel SCS	1,379	Class leading coherence and communication, but can sound shut-in and dark	23,92,41	● 87	4 45	●	114		
Totem Model One	995	Utterly delightful but exasperatingly expensive luxury miniature sets the benchmark for its size	17,31,23	87	4 28	●	122		
Vandersteen 2Ce	1,395	Elegant staggered baffle contributes to a refreshing freedom from boxiness	41,101,27	● 88	7 23	●	86		
Visonik David 6001	163	Sharp styling, but the complex grillwork worsens a sound which starts off with too much top and not enough bottom	13,20,12	87	8 130	●	74		
Wharfedale Valdus 400	199	Goes very loud with a minimum of amplification, but the sound is very thick and uneven, with a heavy upper bass	25,80,26	● 91	8 30	●	1414	148	
Wharfedale Valdus 500	299	Offering a large version of events these rock boxes can move plenty of air, albeit not as subtly as alternatives	25,108,26,5	● 91	4 40	●	1758	155	
ZYP AI	199	Cute metal cased micro-miniature is quite coloured but great fun	14,22,12	88	8 30	●	110		



SUBWOOFERS

SIZE WHX(DX(CM))
SENSITIVITY(OB/W)
FLOORSTANDER
IMPEDANCE(O)
BASS FROM (Hz)
FACTSBACK NUMBER
CLOSE TO WALL
FREE SPACE
ISSUE NUMBER

Product	Price(£)	Comments	SIZE WHX(DX(CM))	SENSITIVITY(OB/W)	FLOORSTANDER	IMPEDANCE(O)	BASS FROM (Hz)	FACTSBACK NUMBER	CLOSE TO WALL	FREE SPACE	ISSUE NUMBER
B&W AS6	500	Good material value with a fair amount of low bass from 100W active design	45,51,45,5	●			30	1736			154
Boston Acoustics SW10	450	A little thumpy but transparent with good timing and goes loud (active)	28,5,50,42	●			33				128
Celestion CS135	139	Compact hideaway passive sub lacks deep bass: for high sensitivity speakers	52,19,34	●	86	8	45	●			128
Infinity RS10	500	A very cute cube of an active sub but midbass is boomy with no real extension	34,34,34	●			38				128
Jamo SW600	530	Has some neat styling touches and remote control but deep bass is limited (active)	38,41,53	●			30				1736 154
KEF Model 30B	500	Commendably discreet with good sense of timing but limited extension (active)	38,5,37,43	●			45				1736 154
KEF AV1	2500	Works well, looks great, shakes the windows but costs a lot and is bulky	56,43,50	●			45				128
M&K VX-7B	450	Baby of a big range this active design delivers deep, plenteous bass albeit lacking in transparency	35,25,37	●			40				1736 154
Mordaunt-Short SW1	150	Fair value, can help sensitive small speakers but no serious extension to match upper bass	58,24,25	●	85		45				128
REL Q-Bass	350	Smashes the price barrier for deep bass performance	40,41,5,40	●			20				1670 154



Stands & Supports

Hi-fi furniture is more important than you might imagine. The effect it can have on the sound of your system is far from subtle. Hi-fi furniture can be split up into two categories — equipment supports and loudspeaker stands. It is not entirely clear what makes a great equipment support, but some are definitely more equal than others. There's a variety of approaches and materials used, including particle board, glass and all manner of steel tube and section.

Speaker stands come in a variety of sizes and styles to suit different models. Use dealer or manufacturer recommendations to narrow down the choice, but as a rule you want the tweeter at ear height.

Best buy

Recommended

KEY

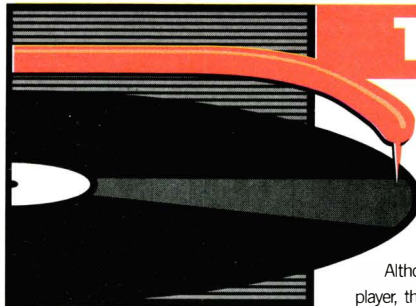
HEIGHT (CM): Height of stand or equipment shelf.	lead to increase mass, which affects sound.	rack or support.
TOP PLATE SIZE (CM): Dimensions of top plate on speaker stand or equipment support.	WELDED: The better stands and supports are welded rather than bolted together.	SHELF TYPE: Material that shelves are made of on an equipment rack. Wood generally means MDF
FILLABLE: Some speaker stands can be filled with sand and/or	NUMBER OF SHELVES: The amount of tiers on an equipment	FACTSBACK NUMBER: The Factsback reference for ordering a fax
		copy of the review. Use the contents page to find the Factsback information page.
		BACK ISSUE: The issue of Hi-Fi Choice in which the original review appeared.

STANDS & SUPPORTS

TOP PLATE SIZE(CM)
HEIGHT(CM)
FILLABLE
NUMBER OF SHELVES
WELDED
FACTSBACK NUMBER
SHELF TYPE
ISSUE NUMBER

Product	Price(£)	Comments	TOP PLATE SIZE(CM) HEIGHT(CM)	FILLABLE	NUMBER OF SHELVES	WELDED	FACTSBACK NUMBER	SHELF TYPE	ISSUE NUMBER
Equipment Supports									
Audiophile Furniture Base	480	Easy to set up, well ordered sound	40				4	Wood	1633 151
Fi-Rax R4	250	Lively, exuberant sound, slightly weak bass					5	Glass	1633 151
Mana Acoustics Ref. Table	350	King of its type, angle iron, chipboard and glass combined to make a significant difference to sound quality				●	1	Glass	1633 147
Mana Acoustics 5 Tier Amp Stand	600	Infinitely upgradable. Persuasive and thrilling glass and angle iron design that adds speed and bandwidth to components upon it				●	5	Glass	1633 151
Quadraspire Q4	200	Easy to live with, and tonally neutral					4	MDF	1633 151
Sound Organisation Z038	130	Too lively and lacking order - but cheap	50	40,84		●	5	Wood	1633 151
SoundStyle Select 6105	280	Respectable sonics, structurally solid and smart					5	Glass	1633 151
Stands Unique Sound Tower	249	Adds colouration, and lacks weight. Optional Isolation Platform	81	72,42			5	Glass	1633 151
Target B5	175	Free of colourations, fine grip and good value				●	5	Wood	1633 151
Speaker Stands									
Alphason NC I	45	Filled single column design without threaded spike holes that's appropriate for non-critical applications	40-60	16,16		●			1373 146
Alphason NCII	80	Tall, slim and elegant, though sound and value are unexceptional	40-60	17,17		●			159
Alphason Titan	120	Excels in the midband and allows voices to come across in a detailed and expressive fashion	40-60	16,16		●			1373 146
Apollo AZ6	80	Fine engineering value, but sound unexceptional and top-plate small	66	15,13		●			159
Atacama BD21	55	Good looking and good value but doesn't match the SE24's sound quality	56	15,17		●			159
Atacama SE24	70	Stand out from the budget crowd because of the consistency and overall quality of the performance	61	19,5,17		●	●		1373 146
AVF Tower 400	35	Ridiculously cheap and much better than no stand at all	54	17,20		●			159
Ixos Deadrock 903	50	Smooth and tonally even but short on definition. Deep bass is soft which doesn't help timing	60						1373 146
Gale Reference 600	60	Smooth sounding with impressive bass well suited to less civilised speakers					●	●	1373 146
Kudos S50	100	Better sound than the budget stands, particularly at the bottom end	60	15,21		●			159
Kudos S100	270	The best all round stand around... Probably.	63	15,21		●			159
Mana Soundframes	125	For use under floorstanders and equipment racks these make music effortless and natural, can be stacked for greater effect	5			●			1373 146
Partington New Merlin	60	Although light in weight, the stands performance seemed remarkably muscular but musical rendering lacked a little precision					●	●	1373 146
Partington Discovery	80	The depth and substance of the presentation truly added to the convincing nature of the system's portrayal					●	●	1373 146
Partington Trophy	100	Four column design with damped top and base plates, sound is tight and cogent with smoothly integrated detail					●	●	1373 146
Revolver RS1	70	A good blend of performance and appearance for the price	53	18,18		●			159
RMS/Stands Unique Vivas	550	Pricey carbon fibres give ultra-clean sound with exceptional voices	50	N/A					159
Soundstyle 124	100	Big, shiny and solid, with fine midband projection	65	17,16		●			159
Sound Style 2024	100	Three pillar triangular based design with high gloss finish. Enthusiastic sound suited to better systems	61			●	●		1373 146
Stands Unique HP	220	Real wood disguises high performance tuned technology	59	22,23					159
Sound Organisation Z124	80	Atacama style big pillar. A pleasantly balanced performer, tonally even with good timing and dynamics, but leaks sand!	61			●			1373 146
Sound Organisation Z129	110	Heavy four pillar design, extracts detail well and very little colouration together with an excellent sense of timing	74			●			1373 146
Target R1	280	Truly high mass four pillar design with superb weight and speed, giving music delicious attack and outstanding imagery	53	15,21		●	●		1373 146
Target TR60	67.50	Lively, dynamic midrange and detailed treble from a less than audiophile oriented twin column design	60	15,15		●			1373 146

Tonearms



Turntables at the cheaper end of the market tend to be supplied with a matching tonearm, and often include a 'starter' cartridge. Still better quality is found at higher prices among the separate motor units and tonearms. Careful partnering and set-up is essential for these components.

Although the turntable is the most important part of a record player, the tonearm is the second most important, and the quality of

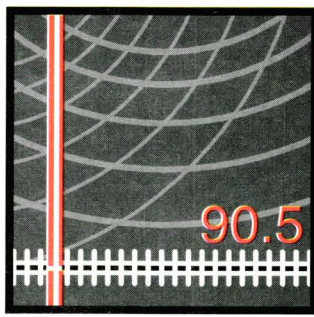
its construction and design have a significant bearing on sound quality. There are three basic types of arms listed in the key and each has its strengths, but pivoted designs are the most popular, for reasons both practical and economical.

B Best buy **R Recommended**

KEY	
EFFECTIVE MASS: This relates to cartridge compliance. Generally high mass arms are suitable for low compliance cartridges and vice versa.	PARALLEL TRACKING: An arm which allows the cartridge to track the disc in a linear fashion.
PIVOTED: Arms which allow the cartridge to describe an arc as they traverse the record.	UNI-PIVOT: Pivoted arms with a bearing that allows movement in two planes.
EFFECTIVE LENGTH (cm): Length of arm from bearing to cartridge mounting.	ADJUSTABLE HEIGHT: Important for accurate cartridge set-up.
FACTSBACK NUMBER: The reference for ordering a fax copy of the review. Use the contents page to find the Factsback.	BACK ISSUE: The issue of Hi-Fi Choice in which the original review appeared.

TONEARMS

Product	Price(£)	Comments	PARALLEL TRACKING	EFFECTIVE MASS	PIVOTED	UNI-PIVOT	ADJUSTABLE HEIGHT	EFFECTIVE LENGTH (cm)	FACTSBACK NUMBER	ISSUE NUMBER
Alphason HR100S	490	S-shaped arm sounds smooth, but nevertheless reproduces transients with fine attack.	Medium	●	●	●	●	229	●	86
Kuzma Stogi Ref	1,000	Large, solid and well made arm, gives exceptionally clear sound with just a hint of brightness	High	●	●	●	●	229	●	79
Linn Ekos	1,297	Superb, state of the art design which builds significantly on predecessor's strengths	Medium	●	●	●	●	229	●	6
Moth Arm	95	The ultimate budget arm? Refined, sweet, detailed and natural	Low	●	●	●	●	237	●	60
Rega RB300	139	Despite its modest price it sets exceptional standards and could be used on many high end turntables	Low	●	●	●	●	237	●	60
Roksan Tabriz Basic	275	Targetted at the Xerxes, this is a good alternative to the Rega arm in many cases - a touch bright though	Low	●	●	●	●	240	●	91
SME Series 300-309	657	Beautifully made and finished: fully adjustable and a highly neutral performer	Low	●	●	●	●	238	●	79
SME Series IV	936	Superb engineering and finish with a finely balanced sound, impressive stereo focus and low colouration	Low	●	●	●	●	233	●	60
SME Series V	1,391	Excellent in all respects, this arm arguably sets the standards for pivoted arms, regardless of price	Low	●	●	●	●	233	●	60



Tuners

The radio medium operates at a lower profile than TV, but in areas outside pop music the BBC service is the envy of the world. Live concerts rival all other sources from a hi-fi perspective. Though tuners might seem something of a hi-fi afterthought, the task they discharge is far from simple, since it requires the skills of RF (reception) and audio (signal processing) engineering. The importance of the former will depend on reception conditions, but a high-quality aerial system is

well worth having. Tuners come in two basic types. Analogue models tune gradually and can have analogue or digital displays; they are often preferred for sound quality. Digital tuners offer convenient automatic tune facilities and pre-set memories.

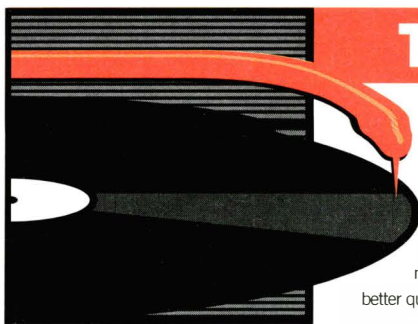
B Best buy **R Recommended**

KEY	
WAVEBANDS: Only the FM (VHF) bands give stereo hi-fi sound, though AM (MW & LW) are useful for receiving certain transmissions in the UK.	PRESETS: Number of station frequencies that can be stored.
RDS: (radio data system) was originally designed for in-car applications. Basically RDS tuners can identify and display the name of the radio station being received, but they offer a variety of other features as well.	REMOTE CONTROL: Couch-potato friendly.
SIGNAL STRENGTH METER: Indicates strength of signal from aerial, useful for aligning your 'twig' during installation.	ROTARY TUNING KNOB: The ergonomically attractive approach to dial-surfing.
FACTSBACK NUMBER: The Factsback reference for ordering a fax copy of the review. Use the contents page to find the Factsback information page.	BACK ISSUE: The issue of Hi-Fi Choice in which the original review appeared.

Tuners

Product	Price(£)	Comments	WAVEBANDS	PRESETS	RDS	SIGNAL STRENGTH METER	ROTARY TUNING KNOB	REMOTE CONTROL	FACTSBACK NUMBER	ISSUE NUMBER
Arcam Alpha 5 Plus	220	Selectivity modest and there is some susceptibility to front end overload, though basic sound quality is pretty good	FM,M,L	24	●	●	●	●	1254	142
Arcam Delta 280	399	Fine sound quality marred by mild synthesiser whine; RF performance only average. remote £60 extra	FM	20	●	●	●	●	120	
Audiolab 8000T	750	Unusually combination of fine sound quality and RF performance (inc AM), and superb ergonomics	FM,M,L	39	●	●	●	●	1254	142
Denon TU-260L	120	Careful minimalist design promises a surprisingly open and vivacious sound.	FM,M,L	20	●	●	●	●	93	
Harman/Kardon TU950	200	Sound quality is among the best in its price range, only exposing its rough edges at high playback levels	FM,M,L	30	●	●	●	●	1810	157
Harman/Kardon TU9400	299	This striking tuner exceeded our expectations. On stereo FM, it's HK's best yet	FM,M	24	●	●	●	●	1254	142
Linn Kremlin	2,600	Controversially good sound at a very high price. The reviewer's saving up but you should check it out for yourself	FM	80	●	●	●	●	1254	142
Magnum Dynalab FT101	825	Although fairly expensive given its minimum set of facilities, its excellent sound provided ample compensation	FM		●	●	●	●	72	
Micromega Tuner	700	Has digital output but even without the Micromega DAC, this provides exceptional sound quality. Looks good too.	FM	39	●	●	●	●	1810	157
Mission Cyrus FM7	400	Open, generous soundstaging gives the music plenty of foundation, if a touch shut in at the top	FM	29	●	●	●	●	1254	142
Musical Fidelity E50	300	Sounds involving if coloured and with a subjectively larger than life presentation	FM	20	●	●	●	●	1810	157
Naim NATO1	1,645	There may be better sounding tuners in the world, but we have yet to hear one	FM		●	●	●	●	1254	142
Onkyo T-430RDS	190	Pleasingly neutral, but rather undynamic and congested	FM/MW	30	●	●	●	●	1254	142
Quad FM66	554	Very pretty and compact but technically unadventurous. Sound is smooth, but only makes sense in Quad system context	FM	19	●	●	●	●	1254	142
Sony ST-SA3ES	250	Clean, lean presentation but needs a quality aerial to its best	FM,M,L	30	●	●	●	●	1810	157
Technics ST-GT350L	150	Decent RF performance is offset by sound quality more typical of a mini/midi system	FM,M,L	30	●	●	●	●	1254	142
Thorens TRT2000	450	Not exactly neutral sounding, it nonetheless makes listening fun	FM,M	59	●	●	●	●	1810	157

Turntables



Specialist turntables are what high fidelity sound is all about. CD players may offer silent backgrounds and flat frequency responses, but they can't match the dynamics and superlative timing that serious turntable users take for granted. Turntables at the cheaper end of the market tend to be supplied with a matching tonearm, and often include a 'starter' cartridge. Still better quality is found at higher prices among the separate motor units

and tonearms. Careful partnering and set-up is essential for these components, but many so-called 'sympathetic' combinations exist.

Because turntables are mechanical devices that are designed to retrieve modulations as small as a micron, engineering quality is of paramount importance. It is also the reason why turntables cost as much as they do, and require high quality support systems.



KEY

MANUAL: You do it all: put the needle on the record and take it off.
AUTO: The record player does it all.
SEMI-AUTO: You share the work: you put it on, it takes it off.
SPEEDS: In RPM to correspond with your platters.
SUSPENDED SUBCHASSIS: Sprung suspension to minimise

structural interference.
EXTERNAL PSU: Outboard power supply; generally it indicates high quality.
SUPPLIED WITH ARM: Many turntables require a separate arm to be fitted; if not, this tells you so.

SUPPLIED WITH CARTRIDGE: Most turntables do not come supplied with a needle.
FACTSBACK NUMBER: The Factsback reference for ordering a fax copy of the review. Use the contents page to find the Factsback information page.

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TURNTABLES

Product	Price(£)	Comments	MANUAL	SEMI-AUTO	SPEEDS	SUSPENDED SUBCHASSIS	EXTERNAL PSU	SUPPLIED WITH CARTRIDGE	SUPPLIED WITH ARM	ISSUE NUMBER
Alphason Sonata	835	Good sound in all areas - bass, clarity and neutrality all in top class (tested with HR100S MCS)	●					33	● ● ● ●	79
Clearaudio Reference	2,500	Opulent beast tested with Souther TQ-1 arm. Tends to gloss over detail with a fizzy character but is quite bold	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	1328 144
DNM Rota 2	4,800	Tonally slightly bleached, but extracts detail like few others. Works well on own table	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	1328 144
Dual CS503-2	170	Coarse and woolly sound - not inoffensive, but bettered by the CS-505-3			●			33/45	● ● ● ●	91
Dual 505-4 UK	200	Consistent sounding and well isolated turntable. It is slightly lacking in oomph			●			33/45	● ● ● ●	103
Kuzma Stabi/PS	1,200	(Tested with Stogi Reference) Solid oak plinth; sound is very clear, detailed and extended	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	91
Linn LP12 Basik	1,050	Trails the full LP12 significantly, but pace, rhythm, timing etc still top rank	●					33	● ● ● ●	103
Linn LP12 Lingo	1,750	The classic reference is improved by the Lingo, but charming character remains	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	91
Michell Gyrodek	765	Sweet and natural sounding player, well matched to Rega RB300 arm						33/45	● ● ● ●	55
Notts Analogue Spacedeck/Arm 1,125		No frills, just a first rate, outstandingly natural sounding deck that will last forever	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	159
Pink Triangle Anniversary	1,980	Possibly the most detailed, clear and neutral sounding deck around. Likeness to master tape is uncanny	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	91
Pro-ject 6/Sumiko	699	Don't think of this as a mid price deck with a good arm, but as a scaled down Oracle Delphi - it's that good	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	138
Rega Planar 2	214	A remarkable product at the price, surprisingly articulate and confident	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	48
Rega Planar 3	274	The '3 (with RB300 arm) sounds musical in a balanced and coherent manner, needs decent isolation	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	48
Rega Planar 9	1,598	Featuring the RB900 arm and a ceramic plinth this deck puts Rega into contention with the best decks available	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	151
Reson RS1	675	Supplied set-up and ready-tuned, this unconventional deck is packed with mid-band detail	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	159
Rivelin Eclipse	1,100	Tested with SME 309. Tends to simply things and add a slightly ragged edge to the proceedings	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	1328 144
Roksan Radius 3/Tabriz zi	890	Elegant looking turntable with a tidy, ordered sound. Bright and breezy if a shade lightweight	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	159
SME Model 20A	4,631	Supplied with Series V arm. Engineered to last a lifetime, giving excellent stereo and detail retrieval	●					33/45/78	● ● ● ●	118
Systemdek I/920/Moth	235	The motor is derivative of the Rega Planar 2 with a Moth arm. Uptempo, even bright at times but never lacks enthusiasm	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	115
Systemdek 2X2	499	Neutral, flexible and dynamic deck that begs to be used with a good arm and cartridge	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	159
Thorens TD166 VI/UK/RB	300	Refined and solid sound with well focussed imagery; suitable for use with good MM and budget MC cartridges	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	103
Thorens TD2001	700	Balances convenience and sound well, but deck lacks detail and bass could be better controlled			●			33/45	● ● ● ●	159
Thorens TD3001/UK	770	Excellent middle ranking esoterica, with strong all-round abilities rather than excellence in particular areas	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	103
Voyd 0.5	3,940	Cross between standard and Reference Voyds. Superb finish, colourful and dynamic	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	1328 144
Voyd Reference	6,962	Voyd's flagship, equipped with three substantial motors, is a strong contender for world's best	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	91
Well Tempered Record Player	1,800	Intriguing and challenging. Musically it is not ideal, but has a limpid quality and a lack of artificiality that sets standards	●					33/45	● ● ● ●	1180 136

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 GLL • Goodmans GLL • tel 01705 492777 • fax 01705 470875 • Dealers 250
 Goldring Products • tel 01284 701101 • fax 01284 750040 • Dealers 100
 Goodmans Industries • tel 01705 673763 • fax 01705 664333
 Grado • Goldring Products • tel 01284 701101 • fax 01284 750040 • Dealers 50
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 Grant Amplifiers • tel 01705 837392
 Grundig International • tel 01788 577155 • fax 01788 562354
 GT Audio • tel 01895 833099

H

Harbeth Acoustics • tel 01444 440955 • fax 01444 440688
 Harman/Kardon • Gamepath • tel 01908 317707 • fax 01908 322704 • Dealers 85
 Heliuss Designs • tel 01386 830083 • Dealers 5 + direct
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 Hørning • Definitive Audio • tel 0115 981 3562

I

Impulse Loudspeakers • tel 0181 766 0474 • fax 0181 766 0468 • Dealers 11
 Infinity • Gamepath • tel 01908 317707 • fax 01908 322704 • Dealers 85
 Interaudio • Bose UK • tel 01795 475341 • fax 01795 427227
 Ixos • Path Distribution • tel 0121 749 2240 • fax 0121 748 3838 • Dealers 700

J

Jadis • Absolute Sounds • tel 0181 947 5047 • fax 0181 879 7962
 Jamo UK • tel 01327 301300 • fax 01327 300511 • Dealers 300 +
 JBL • Gamepath • tel 01908 317707 • fax 01908 322704 • Dealers 85
 Jecklin • May Audio Marketing (UK) • tel 01943 864930 • fax 01943 863814
 John Shearne • tel 01438 740953
 Jordan Watts Acoustics • tel 0181 985 1646 • fax 0181 986 0112
 JPW Loudspeakers • tel 01752 607000 • fax 01752 607001 • Dealers 200
 JVC UK • tel 0181 450 3282 • fax 0181 208 3038 • Dealers 5000

K

KAL UK • tel 01303 245005 • fax 01303 221736
 KEF Audio • tel 01622 672261 • fax 01622 672939 • Dealers 240
 Kenwood • Trio-Kenwood UK • tel 01923 816444 • fax 01923 819131 • Dealers 1000
 Keswick Audio Research • tel 01977 671823 • Dealers 13
 Kimber Kable • RATA • tel 01539 823247 • fax 01535 823317
 Kiseki • Presence Audio • tel 01444 461611 • fax 01444 461510 • Dealers 10 + direct
 KLH Audio Systems • tel 01473 833228 • fax 01473 833448
 Koetsu • Absolute Sounds • tel 0181 947 5047 • fax 0181 879 7962 • Dealers 20
 Koss • HW International • tel 0181 808 2222 • fax 0181 808 5599
 Krell • Absolute Sounds • tel 0181 947 5047 • fax 0181 879 7962 • Dealers 17
 Kronos Distribution • tel 018687 48632 • fax 018687 48281
 Kudos • B&W Loudspeakers (UK Sales) • tel 01903 750750 • fax 01903 750694
 Kuzma • Audiofreaks • tel 0181 948 4153 • fax 0181 948 4250 • Dealers 12

L

LAT International • Audusa & Co • tel 0181 942 6241 • fax 0181 395 0793
 LFD • tel 01255 422533 • fax 01255 221370 • Dealers 7
 Lineaum • Absolute Sounds • tel 0181 947 5047 • fax 0181 879 7962
 Linn Products • tel 0141 644 5111 • fax 0141 644 4262
 Living Voice • Definitive Audio • tel 0115 981 3562
 London • Presence Audio • tel 01444 461611 • fax 01444 461510 • Dealers 10 + direct
 Lowther Voight • tel 0181 300 9166
 Lumley Reference • Reference International • tel 01435 868004
 Luxman • Hi-fi Direct • tel 0171 827 9827 • fax 0171 827 9009 • Dealers 23
 Lynwood Electronics • tel 01709 873667 • Dealers 25
 Lyra • Path Premier • tel 01494 441736 • fax 01494 461209

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 Magnepan • Audionord UK • tel 01235 813058
 Magnum • Hailey Audio • tel 01992 442425 • Dealers 6
 Magnum Dynalab • Reference Imports • tel 01435 868004 • fax 01435 864481
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 Manticore Audio Visual • tel 01767 318437 • Dealers 5 + direct
 Marantz Hi-fi UK • tel 01753 680868 • fax 01753 680428 • Dealers 200 +
 Mark Levinson • Path Premier • tel 01494 441736 • fax 01494 461209
 Martin-Logan • Absolute Sounds • tel 0181 947 5047 • fax 0181 879 7962 • Dealers 20
 Matisse • GT Audio • tel 01895 833099
 Maxell UK • tel 01923 777171
 McIntosh • MPI Electronic UK • tel 01483 454993 • fax 01483 454992
 Meridian Audio • tel 01480 434334 • fax 01480 432948 • Dealers 98
 Metaxas • UK Distribution • tel 01753 654531
 Michell Engineering • tel 0181 953 0771 • Dealers 8
 Michi • Gamepath • tel 01908 317707 • fax 01908 322704 • Dealers 18
 Micro-Seiki • Absolute Sounds • tel 0181 947 5047 • fax 0181 879 7962
 Micromega DA • tel 0181 502 1416 • fax 0181 502 1438 • Dealers 104
 Minstrel • Quantum Audio • tel 01563 571122 • fax 01563 571133
 Mission • Centralforce • tel 01480 451777 • fax 01480 432777 • Dealers 259
 Monitor Audio • tel 01223 242898 • fax 01223 214532 • Dealers 45
 Monrio • UK Distribution • tel 01753 654531
 Monster • Gamepath • tel 01908 317707 • fax 01908 322704 • Dealers 181
 Mordaunt-Short • tel 01705 407722 • fax 01705 400099 • Dealers 200
 Morel • Clere Electronics • tel 01635 297717 • fax 01635 297717
 Moth Marketing • tel 01234 741152 • Dealers 30
 Musical Fidelity • tel 0181 900 2866 • fax 0181 900 2983 • Dealers 145
 Musical Technology • tel 01494 793137
 Myriad Systems • tel 01705 265508 • fax 01705 231407

N

NAD Marketing • tel 0181 343 3240 • fax 0181 346 4925 • Dealers 380
 Naim Audio • tel 01722 332266 • fax 01722 412034 • Dealers 70
 Nakamichi • B&W Loudspeakers (UK Ltd) • tel 01903 750750 • fax 01903 750694
 Neat Hi-Fi • tel 01325 460812 • Dealers 15
 Nottingham Analogue • tel 01773 762947 • fax 01773 533566 • Dealers 4
 NVA • tel 01763 272707 • fax 01763 271694 • Dealers 3

O

Onix Electronics • tel 01273 517358
 Onkyo UK • tel 0181 343 2082 • fax 0181 346 4925 • Dealers 120
 Orelle Hi-Fi • tel 0181 908 4126 • Dealers 30
 Origin Live • tel 01703 442183 • Dealers 25
 Ortofon UK • tel 01753 888949 • fax 01753 889636 • Dealers 200

P

Panasonic UK • tel 0990 357357 • fax 01908 681931 • Dealers 3000 +
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 Partington • tel 01322 383712
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R

RCF Electronics • tel 01268 570808 • fax 01268 570809
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 REL Acoustics • tel 01656 766093 • Dealers 80
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 Rose Industries • tel 01235 847023 • Dealers 10

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 Rotel • Gamepath • tel 01908 317707 • fax 01908 322704 • Dealers 232
 Royd Loudspeakers Co • tel 01952 290700 • fax 01952 290190 • Dealers 65
 Ruark • tel 01702 601410 • fax 601414

S

Sansui UK • tel 01204 700139
 SD Acoustics • tel 0181 399 6308 • fax 0181 399 6308
 Sennheiser UK • tel 01628 850811 • fax 01628 850958 • Dealers 850
 Sentec • MAG Audio (UK) • tel 0181 555 1222
 Shahinian • Pear Audio • tel 01665 830862 • Dealers 15
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 Sherwood • Hi-fi Direct • tel 0171 827 9827 • fax 0171 827 9009 • Dealers 23
 Shun Mook • Audiofreaks • tel 0181 948 4153 • fax 0181 948 4250
 Shure • HW International • tel 0181 808 2222 • fax 0181 808 5599
 Siltech • Absolute Sounds • tel 0181 947 5047 • fax 0181 879 7962
 SME • tel 01903 814321 • fax 01903 814269 • Dealers 125
 Sonic Frontiers • MPI Electronic UK • tel 01483 454993 • fax 01483 454992
 SonicLink • Audiokits • tel 01332 674929
 Sonus-Faber • Absolute Sounds • tel 0181 947 5047 • fax 0181 879 7962 • Dealers 30
 Sony United Kingdom • tel 0181 784 1144
 Sound Organisation • Goldring • tel 01284 701101 • fax 01284 750040
 Sound-Lab • Audiofreaks • tel 0181 948 4153 • fax 0181 948 4250
 Soundstyle • Goldring Products • tel 01284 701101 • fax 01284 750040 • Dealers 170
 Spendor Audio Systems • tel 01323 843474 • Dealers 17
 Spica • Presence Audio • tel 01444 461611 • fax 01444 461510
 Stands Unique • tel 01933 461058
 Stanton • Lamba Electronics plc • tel 017278 40527 • fax 017278 37811
 Stax • Path Premier • tel 01494 441736 • fax 01494 461209
 Stemfoort Audio • Audio Synergy • tel 01924 406016 • fax 01924 410069
 Sugden • Audio Synergy • tel 01924 406016 • fax 01924 410069 • Dealers 12
 Sumiko • Path Premier • tel 01494 441736 • fax 01494 461209
 Sumo • Audusa & Co • tel 0181 942 6241 • fax 0181 395 0793
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T

Tannoy • tel 01236 420199 • fax 01236 428230 • Dealers 400
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 Target Audio Products • tel 01582 401244
 TDL Electronics • tel 01628850111 • fax 01628 850130 • Dealers 274
 Teac UK • tel 01923 819630 • fax 01923 236290 • Dealers 200
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 Tesserac Research • tel 0181 669 0011 • fax 0181 773 0406
 Theta • Absolute Sounds • tel 0181 947 5047 • fax 0181 879 7962
 Thiel • MPI Electronic UK • tel 01483 454993 • fax 01483 454992
 Thorens • Portfolio Marketing • tel 01494 890277
 Thule • Virtual Reality Audio Systems • tel 01277 227355 • fax 01277 224103
 Totem • May Audio Marketing (UK) • tel 01943 864930 • fax 01943 863814 • Dealers 6
 Townshend Audio • tel/fax 0181 979 2155
 Transfiguration • Reference International • tel 01435 868004
 Transparent Audio • Absolute Sounds • tel 0181 947 5047 • fax 0181 879 7962
 Triangle • Kronos Distribution • tel 018687 48632 • fax 018687 48281
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U

UKD-Opera • UK Distribution • tel 01753 652669
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V

van den Hul UK • tel 0181 810 9388 • fax 0181 810 9365 • Dealers 160
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 Visonic • Canford Audio • tel 0191 415 0205
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 VPI • Audiofreaks • tel 0181 948 4153 • fax 0181 948 4250

W

Wadia • Woodstock • tel 01865 883535, fax 01865 881012
 Well Tempered • Pear Audio • tel 01665 830862 • 01665 830051
 Wharfedale Loudspeakers • tel 0113 2601222 • fax 0113 2600267
 Wheaton • Audiofreaks • tel 0181 948 4153 • fax 0181 948 4250
 Wilson • Absolute Sounds • tel 0181 947 5047 • fax 0181 879 7962 • Dealers 7
 Woodside Electronics • tel 01934 520248

Y

Yamaha Electronics UK • tel 01923 233166 • fax 01923 244930
 YBA • Kronos Distribution • tel 018687 48632 • fax 018687 48281
 Yoshino • tel 01480 467788

Z

Zeta • Moth Marketing • tel 01234 741152 • Dealers 50
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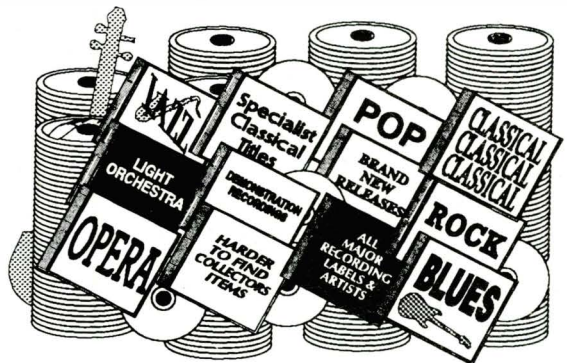
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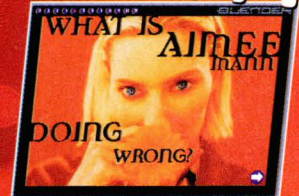
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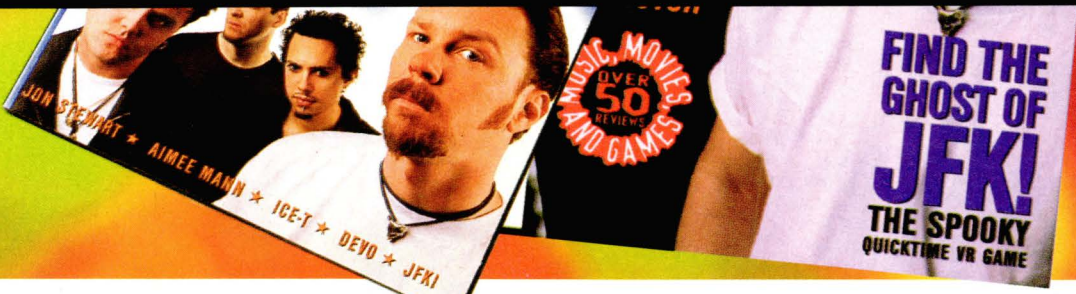
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"Funky graphics complement trendy music/lifestyle content... a spiky editorial slant and a few surprises". *Esquire*

"Blender, the first mainstream youth mag on CD-ROM provides hours of fun: interviews with the celebs actually talking; music... and film reviews". *Time Out*



Music, films, computer games reviews

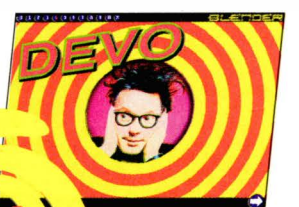
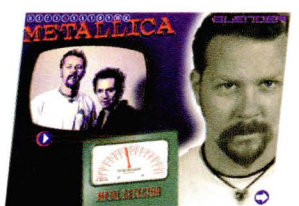


In this issue...

- Metallica Cuts Loose. Music from the new release. Plus music videos, guitar solos, the music video women, the imagery, the clothes.
- "Find the Ghost of JFK": Tour the site of his assassination (Dealey Plaza) in Quicktime Virtual Reality. Discover clues, 1963 facts, and other famous ghosts—Marilyn Monroe, Kurt Cobain, Jim Morrison, Andy Warhol. Find JFK and you could win an Apple Powerbook!
- Devo's Digital Rebirth: Their new *Adventures of the Smart Patrol* CD-ROM, and the Evolution /De-evolution of the band.
- "What is Aimee Mann Doing Wrong? Theories as to Why Her Albums Keep Tanking."
- Video interviews with Ice-T and Actor Martin Donovan—including movie clips.
- Search for collectibles from the future in Blender's "Jungle of Kitsch," an interactive search-and-find-against-the-clock game.
- Plus over 50 reviews—games, films, and music.

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 MCP2 strongly recommended
 Windows 3.1 (or later) with DOS 6.2 (or later)
 486 or Pentium PC required
 4 Megabytes FREE RAM (6 recommended)
 Sound Card (Most modules)
 13" VGA or SVGA monitor
 Quicktime 2.02 for Windows (supplied)
 CD-ROM drive (double speed or better recommended)

Macintosh
 Macintosh System 7
 68030 processor required
 60040 or better strongly recommended
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HI-FI CHOICE

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HI-FI



NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

DON'T MISS THE JANUARY EDITION OF HI-FI CHOICE!

If you've enjoyed this special issue of *Hi-Fi Choice*, make sure you don't miss our January edition! This fun-packed hi-fi extravaganza will feature a number of fine fidelitous attractions.



Teac's AB-X7R competes against 13 power-packed pretenders in the January issue.

JANUARY'S BIG TEST

Integrated Amplifiers — The Full Story

We've selected 14 top amps priced between £200 and £700 to find out which ones offer the ultimate performance — and the ultimate value!

SUPERB EQUIPMENT UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

■ Wilson benesch A.C.T. One speakers

A high-tech blend of carbon fibre and real wood.

■ Meridian 502/557 pre/power combination with MSR remote control

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Meridian 502/557.

NEXT MONTH'S INSTANT SYSTEMS

We do the leg-work and pick out two great systems for you!

■ At £600: Sony CDP-XE500 CD player, NAD 314 amplifier, Jamo 38 speakers.

■ At £4,000: Trichord Genesis CD player, Audiolab 8000Q pre-amp, two Audiolab 8000M monoblocks, Mission 753 speakers.

MULTI-CD PLAYERS RATED

Alan Sircom, our one-man juke-box jury, will present a special report on one of the hottest areas in hi-fi — multi-CD players! With exciting new machines from Pioneer, Sony, Marantz and Kenwood and more, this feature will be your VIP passport to multiplay heaven.

HIGH-END CD TRANSPORTS AND DACS TESTED

We compare:

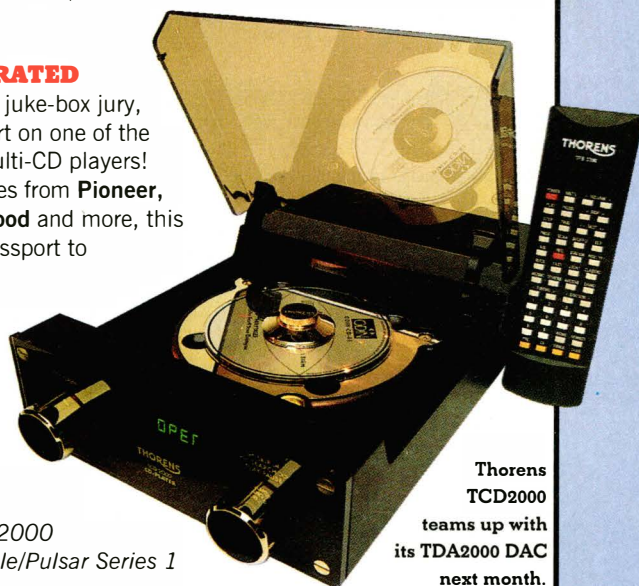
■ Audiolab

8000CDM/8000DAC

■ Roksan DP3/DA2

Thorens TCD2000/TDA2000

■ Trichord Digital Turntable/Pulsar Series 1



Thorens TCD2000 teams up with its TDA2000 DAC next month.

Ensure you never miss another issue by subscribing to *Hi-Fi Choice*! With prices starting from £14.97, and superb free gifts on offer, it's the ideal way to keep up to date with hi-fi. See page 74 for full details.

The January 1997 edition of *Hi-Fi Choice* will be on sale December 6, 1996 — don't miss it! And don't miss the February 1997 issue, which is on sale Friday January 3, 1997.

The Choicest Sound Bites

Some of the most memorable words written by our columnists this year!

On Hi-Fi Reviewing

■ “I’ve worked on *Hi-Fi Choice* since 1987, and I still haven’t found my dream hi-fi system!”

Jason Kennedy, January 1996

■ “For any reviewer or enthusiast, the arch-test for any component is how much you miss it once it’s gone.”

Paul Messenger, February 1996

■ “To sit staring at a black curtain, while the same music plays again and again, sounds like a torture dreamt up by a Cold War interrogator. In fact it’s the harrowing experience suffered regularly by the panellists who help us ‘blind-test’ loudspeakers.”

Paul Messenger, December 1996

On Hi-Fi Perspectives

■ “My first priority is not really sound quality as she is widely understood: my loyalty is due to the convincing way Naim amps reproduce transients, leading edges and dynamics.”

Paul Messenger, January 1996

■ “My Naim NAC52 pre-amp recently underwent a transplant operation. The drama of finding a temporary replacement while the loved one was under the knife, in addition to the angst of nursing the rejuvenated back to health, left me in some trauma...”

Paul Messenger, April 1996

■ “It’s strange, but after a Naim amp and a Linn Sondek LP12 vastly ‘improved’ my sound at home, my Brendel Schubert discs somehow didn’t sound so good...”

Jimmy Hughes, June 1996

On Future Technology

■ “Heaven help the hi-fi market if we have a new DAT-style scare which advises consumers to wait for the ‘revolutionary’ new Super Audio CD which is ‘just around the corner’.”

Barry Fox, February 1996

■ “These days you need Steve Austin’s bionic eyesight to predict which recorded-music format will dominate in years to come.”

Stan Vincent, October 1996

■ “Whether we like it or not, hi-fi is in the throes of having an AV dimension added.”

Paul Messenger, September 1996

On Ways To Tweak Your System

■ “The sound you seek may not always be found by pursuing what seems to be the most logical course.”

Jimmy Hughes, March 1996

■ “I know full well that the door to sonic satisfaction can be opened by writing the name of your cat on the back of a family reunion photo, slipping it inside a discarded sock with a 50p coin and depositing it in the safe box of a three-star hotel, but that doesn’t fill a column, does it?”

David Vivian, September 1996

■ “I still regard the *Isolation Platform* as Shun Mook’s simplest and most accessible component, but it only scratches the surface of wood-aided sound improvement...”

Jimmy Hughes, April 1996

■ “What would you say if I told you a set of three spiked wooden blocks was capable of transforming your hi-fi’s sound?”

Jimmy Hughes, October 1996

On Living With Hi-Fi

■ “I can quite see why some hi-fi first timers fail to be convinced. Far from not being able to differentiate between their old radiogram and a new-fangled separates system, they can hear the differences all too plainly. Clean and clinical can be a pain in the ear if you’ve been used to mellow and mellifluous.”

David Vivian, July/August 1996

■ “Some hi-fi is a pain to use, some ain’t exactly pretty and some is just plain weird. The DNM 3B pre-amp is all three.”

Jason Kennedy, September 1996



■ “If a system makes all but a tiny handful of recordings sound unacceptable, I’ll lay odds there’s something wrong with it.”

Jimmy Hughes, September 1996

■ “Hi-fi is not just about presenting the most complete picture of a musical performance. It’s about communicating the spirit of the performance.”

Stan Vincent, December 1996

■ “Ever wondered why, at hi-fi shows, it’s the small, modestly-priced systems that normally make the biggest impression? It’s not because they sound best, but simply because they exceed expectations rather than fall short of them.”

David Vivian, May 1996

The quotes above have been taken from ...

Paul Messenger	Personal Messages
Jason Kennedy	Ear Waxings
Barry Fox	21st Century Fox
David Vivian	Ultra Vivian Scene
Stan Vincent	Editor’s Notebook
Jimmy Hughes	The Jimmy Hughes Experience

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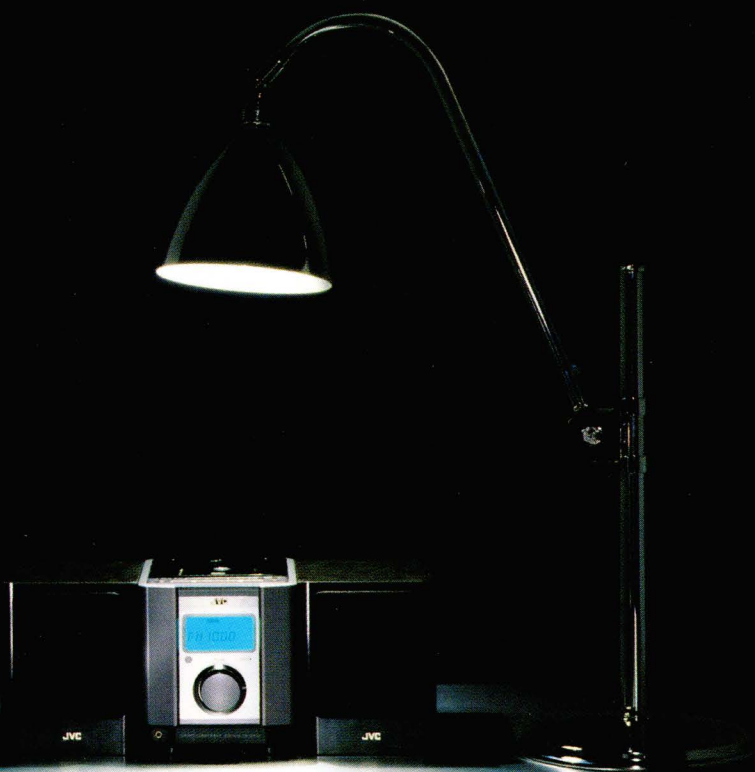
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P4

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