

HI-FI

THE FINEST HI-FI MAG

WE PICK THE YEAR'S BEST BUYS

...AND YOU CAN WIN THEM!

OVER £12,000

OF KIT UP FOR GRABS IN OUR
MONSTER GIVEAWAY

SEE OVER
FOR DETAILS



JANUARY 1996 £2.99 US\$7.40 C\$8.95

HOW TO WIN £12,000 OF HI-FI

IT'S SO EASY!

WE HAVE NOT ONE, NOT ONE AND A HALF, BUT TWO ULTRA-GENEROUS GIVEAWAYS IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

The Best Buy Bonanza

We're celebrating 150 issues of *Hi-Fi Choice* by giving away every hi-fi component* that's been awarded a Best Buy this year. A full list of all the goodies can be seen on pages 86 and 87 of this month's magazine, but suffice it to say that there are 39 superb prizes on offer.

You could win anything from a 99p Maxell *UR* cassette tape to the mighty JBL *L90* speakers worth £1,300. Other highlights include Mission's superb *Cyrus III* amplifier, the acclaimed Sony *CDP-561E* CD player, a pair of Atacama's noted *SE24* speaker stands and the legendary Yamaha *KX-580* cassette deck.

And that's not all. On pages 52 and 53, we are giving away 20 pairs of Vivanco infra-red headphones worth £3,000 — ideal for music lovers who can't sit still! In total we are giving away hi-fi worth over £12,000!

How to enter

Because there is so much amazing hi-fi gear up for grabs, we've split the competition into eight different categories. You can go for as many categories as you like, but you must enter separately for each one. The quickest way to enter is to phone one of our special competition lines listed below, give your name and address, and answer the oh-so-simple question:



HOW MANY ISSUES OF HI-FI CHOICE HAVE THERE BEEN?

a) 100 b) 150 c) 200

TO ENTER, PHONE THESE NUMBERS NOW!

CD PLAYERS	0891 866931
AMPLIFIERS	0891 866932
SPEAKERS	0891 866933
CASSETTE DECKS	0891 866934
SPEAKER STANDS	0891 866935
SPEAKER CABLES	0891 866936
INTERCONNECT CABLES	0891 866937
BLANK TAPES	0891 866938

■ Calls cost 39p per minute cheap rate and 49p per minute at all other times.

■ Each call should take no longer than two minutes.

■ If you would rather enter by post, see instructions on pages 86 and 87.

■ *Hi-Fi Choice* regrets that this competition is open to UK residents only.

■ Entering this competition is subject to the Competition Rules printed on pages 86 and 87 of this magazine.

* In the case of Best Buy products that have been discontinued, the replacement model will be substituted as a prize.

THE REVIEWS

64 Best of the Best Buys

We round up every Best Buy and Recommended product that has been reviewed over the last year. Find out which amps, CD players, speakers, cassette decks, stands and cables have won the most coveted laurels of 1995.

FEATURES

26 Christmas Presents

Find out what fine hi-fi toys will grace the best-dressed Christmas stockings this year.

36 150 Glorious Issues

Paul Messenger takes a rose-tinted walk along memory lane, with *Choice* through the ages.

44 The Trichord story — revisited

Trichord Research says it has improved the *Clock 2* with a power supply. Find out what Paul Miller and his virtual lab feel about this.

56 CD players — in plain English

Everything you ever wanted to know about CD players, but were afraid to ask. Dave Berriman takes you on a bit-by-bit tour of the inner sanctum of digital audio.

READER SERVICES

91 Factsback

Benefit from our instant (well, nearly) access to features and reviews from recent issues, brought to you by return of fax.

97 Readers' Classified

Buy or sell your classic, pre-loved, second-hand audio products here.

153 Next Month

Find out just what is going to happen in the 151st issue of *Hi-Fi Choice*, where every issue is a birthday issue (get a grip — Ed).

SPECIAL OFFERS

88 Mail Order

Loads and loads of superb audio accessories, exclusive to *Hi-Fi Choice* readers.

THE DIRECTORY

103 The Directory

The latest version of the most comprehensive hi-fi product listing around. Includes all the products that have been reviewed in *Choice*.



16

Everything from retro amps to speakers with the Open University logo on the front can be found in Sessions.

WIN!

86

Over £9,000 worth of 1995 Best Buy products must be won.



WIN! WIN! WIN!



£3,000 worth of super Vivanco infrared headphones must be won.

52

Over the years he'll take your car, your hard earned cash and years off your life. Do you really think it will be any different with your Arcam?

We can confidently predict that you will enjoy the top quality sound of your Arcam Hi-Fi separates for many years to come.

It's a simple enough prediction, when you consider just how hard we work to produce Hi-Fi of the highest quality.

Like any good parent, we ensure that our little treasures go out into the world with every advantage.

So, before we bid a tearful farewell, the Hi-Fi produced at our Cambridge factory must pass the most rigorous set of tests, checks and double checks. This means that each Arcam separate is blessed with a long, active and productive life.

Then again, sonic excellence and reliability are bound to feature on all Arcam products, since we design them in from the outset.

A very pleasing aspect of all this dedication is that year after year our products make us rather proud with lots of top Hi-Fi industry awards.

So, do keep a close eye on Junior. He also knows quality when he hears it. (Well, you can't really blame the little angel for inheriting your good taste!)

On the other hand, you could invest in a lesser Hi-Fi system than Arcam...

But why deprive yourself, never mind future generations?

ARCAM

Return the coupon below to: Arcam, Pembroke Ave.
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all of this will
be yours”

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In Canada: Emerald Audio Resources, Sussex P.O. Box 19016,

720 Spadina Avenue, Suite 100A, Toronto, Ontario, M5S 3C9. Tel: (416) 596 7657.

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: AudioInflux Corporation, P.O. Box 381, Highland Lakes, NJ 07422. Tel: (201) 764 8958.

Update

MALCOLM STEWARD PUTS HIS EAR TO THE GROUND OF THE HI-FI JUNGLE, AND REPEATS TO US THE RHYTHM HE PERCEIVES

Just a Minium

Digital doyen Micromega has established a new brand called Minium, that brings the French company's electronics expertise down to affordable price levels. Designed and manufactured in the Micromega plant, the first offerings from Minium are a low-cost, high-quality CD player, amplifier and tuner featuring minimalist styling.

The £379 CD player (imaginatively dubbed *CD*) uses a selected CDM12.2 transport, and comes with a system remote control that will also switch power and display on the tuner and amplifier. The latter, (imaginatively dubbed *Amp*) also costs £379, delivers 40 Watts per channel and has six inputs including MM phono. It provides full remote control operation and incorporates a discrete headphone amplifier.

Last but not least, the £299 FM tuner (you guessed: *FM*) has twenty presets.

For those who fancy an all-Minium rig, there's a loudspeaker. Not called *Speaker* as you'd expect, the *MS1* is a high-sensitivity (90dB) bookshelf two-way that sells for £299. Other Minium products destined to follow include the £299 *AVP* AV Processor. ☎ (0181) 502 1416.

M-S Goes Pastel

Vincent van Gogh would have had a field day with Mordaunt-Short's Decormatch concept. Research showed that many customers were attracted to loudspeakers that would integrate completely with domestic decor. Accordingly, Mordaunt-Short enlisted the help of paint specialists Dulux to develop a cabinet material that could be successfully decorated with household emulsion.



For all budding Kandinskys; Decormatch.

The first model to receive the 'add your own colouration' treatment is the *CS-1* home theatre speaker, which in colour co-ordinating guise sells for £150 per pair. You can also buy a package of five Decormatch *CS-1*s and an *SW-1* subwoofer for £465.00.

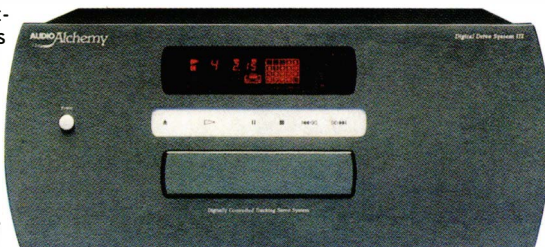
The finishing touch on these speakers is the self-assembly grille whose cloth can be cold-water dyed to complement or contrast with the cabinet hue. ☎ (01705) 407722.

Driven to Disc-traction!

An all-new Sony-based CD mechanism lies at the heart of Audio Alchemy's *Digital Drive System III* CD transport. Another feature of this new £699.95 device is a concentric chassis design that provides mechanical and electrical isolation for the mechanism and controller. A digitally-controlled tracking servo system continually adjusts the laser system — apparently, this even compensates for the variable refractive index of individual discs!

The *DDS III* provides both digital and analogue outputs; the latter derives from an 18-bit resolution, one-bit DAC, while the digital output is buffered and jitter-optimised. The player comes with full remote control and has a detachable mains lead with integrated line filtering.

☎ (01494) 441736.



Audio Alchemy's highly intelligent DDS III transport.



The Bigger Silverado

The distinctive looking *Silverado* loudspeaker has evolved during its eighteen-month existence, from a compact two-way into a 35kg heavyweight. The cabinet material is now 25mm MDF, resulting in front and rear-panels two inches thick; while the sand-filled 'sandwich' sides have grown to two-and-a-half inches. PVA resin and 150 screws hold the assembly together, while lead and rubber bonded to the top and base, along with 8mm metal studs, aim to reduce cabinet colouration even further.

The driver complement of two Dynaudio units remains unchanged, but the external crossover now comes in a resin-filled MDF enclosure. Finished in hand-painted Lapis Lazuli Marble effect or Piano Black lacquer, the *Silverado* costs £1,995. Other models in the range include the Morel-derived *Raider* (from £495 according to finish) which can be partnered with the *Shotgun* subwoofer. ☎ (0181) 567 0260.

In brief

Citizens of Chester have a new dealer specialising in top end British audio. They'll find Acoustica at 17 Hoole Road, Chester. ☎ (01244) 34427.

Musical Images is starting 1996 with a series of musical evenings at its Covent Garden shop in London. Manufacturers involved include Arcam, Quad, Cyrus, and Kenwood. ☎ (0181) 958 8777.

Monitor Direct is a new service selling speaker and interconnect cables by mail. A catalogue and information are available by calling ☎ (01420) 476767.

The Home Cinema Studio, 5 East Street, Colchester, is a new dealership dedicated solely to demonstrating and selling AV components and systems. ☎ (01206) 796096.

The Professional Monitor Company has moved to larger premises at Unit 72 Haslemere Industrial Estate, Tewin Road, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL7 1BD. ☎ (01707) 393002.

The *Conqueror*, *Quest* and *Conquest* valve amplifiers make up Audio Note UK's new Compact range. Prices start at £1,599. ☎ (01273) 220511.

Beyerdynamic has three new, lightweight headphones designed specifically for use with portable equipment. The *DT111 Alpha* costs £14.95, the *DT111 Beta* £19.95, and the *DT111 Gamma*, which has an in-built volume control, £24.95. ☎ (01273) 479411.

QLN has taken over distribution of Nordost *Flatline* speaker cable, interconnects and *MoonGlo* digital cables. ☎ (01352) 730251.

Europe wants to outlaw 4mm plugs but Insert Audio has still developed two wide-entry versions of its IA4 banana connectors — to suit existing equipment, obviously, *Votre Honneur*. Designed ▶▶

SE me, touch me, hear me

Teac has joined the Special Edition club with an SE version of its widely praised *VRDS-10* CD player. The *VRDS-10SE* naturally uses the vibration and damping control system of the original model, but the *CMK-3* transport bridge has been redesigned and mounted on a new heavy duty plate. The major change, however, is in the audio electronics: the *10SE* employs the same twin-DAC7 DAC and type of PCB layout found in the *DT-1* DA converter. The player sells for £849.95.

Also new is the *V-610* cassette deck. This entry-level design comes with Dolby B, C and HX Pro, a centre mounted transport, hard Permalloy head, auto tape type selection and a full complement of logic functions for £129. ☎ (01923) 819630.



Nuke 'em!

TDL enters the home cinema fray with its Nucleus *SBR* and *CCS* speakers. The *SBR* is a transmission line supplementary bass radiator designed to act as a subwoofer in conjunction with TDL's *Near Field Monitors* or similar compact speakers. The *CCS* is a dual-transmission-line centre-channel speaker.

When purchased separately, the *SBR* costs £199.95 and the *CCS* £149.95, though discounts are available to complete system buyers. For instance you can buy a *CCS* and *SBR* with either two pairs of *NFMs* or one pair of *RTL2s* and a pair of *NFMs* for £499.95. ☎ (01628) 850111.



TDL enters the home theatre with a bang.

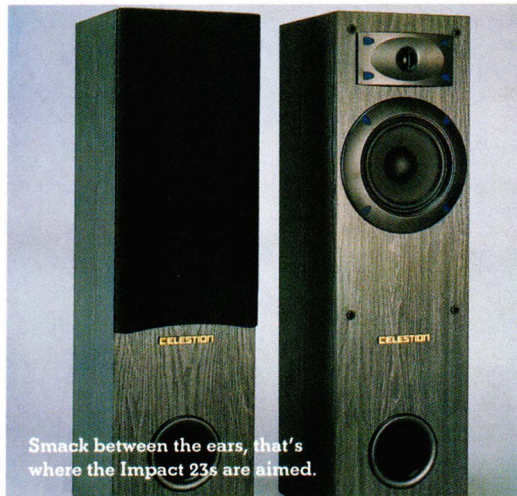
Make it so, Number One

The *Interspace* turntable from Nottingham Analogue Studio is shovelling more coals onto the vinyl resurgence fire. Aiming to deliver audiophile performance at an "affordophile" price, the *Interspace* uses the same motor unit found in the *Space Deck*. This, and a "first class" bearing, fit into a solid fibre-board plinth. The 'very damp platter material' — that's how they described it — comes topped with a *Space Mat*.

Suggested tone-arms to partner the £450 deck include the Rega *RB250* and *RB300*, NAS's *Space arm* or its new *Paragon No.3*. The latter, a parallel tracker, also sells for £450. ☎ (01773) 762947.

Sudden Impact

Celestion has added an entry-level floor-stander to its recently-released Impact range. Like the rest of the series, the *Impact 23* is a high-efficiency design (90dB), which should ensure that its — ahem — impact isn't diminished when low powered amplification is used. Finished in black ash it sells for £299. ☎ (01473) 322222.



Smack between the ears, that's where the Impact 23s are aimed.

Definitively maybe

Definitive Technology's *BP2000* is a bipolar loudspeaker design that, according to its importers, will allow the assembly of some 'breathtaking' hi-fi systems for less than £5,000.

Taking most of the credit for this potential are the *BP2000*'s sideways-firing, fifteen-inch subwoofers driven by on-board 300W power amplifiers. The low bass is extracted by an integral electronic crossover which has level and equalisation controls; furthermore the bass section should be driven from the main amplifier's speaker connections, or via a line-level input.

The mid and high frequency drivers — configured as two three-driver arrays — draw their power conventionally from the main system amplifier. This needn't be extraordinarily muscular given the speaker's 92dB sensitivity.

If you'd like to experience "true stereo sub-bass" that descends to 15Hz, proceed to your bank and withdraw £3,600! ☎ (0589) 325363.

Back in the Studio

The latest arrival in ProAc's range is the *Studio 150*. This slim, metre-tall floor-stander uses a new cabinet design that employs differing material thicknesses and heavy damping. Each hand-built enclosure houses two polycarbon bass drivers — uprated versions of the *Tablette 50* woofer — and an improved version of the *Studio Three* fabric dome tweeter.

Supplied in mirror-image pairs, the *Studio 150* promises solid stereo imagery allied with bass whose extension is said to be quite out of proportion to the size of the cabinets. A wide range of standard and special-order finishes is available, with prices starting at £1,399. ☎ (0181) 207 1150.



No strangers to city life, ProAc's Studio 150s remain calm.

My head goes surround and round

Feeling down because you can't enjoy surround sound extravaganzas late at night? AKG now offers a solution in the *K290* surround sound headphone, whose circumaural cups contain two pairs of drivers aligned to provide a "100 per cent surround sound experience". Ahem. For straightforward stereo listening an adapter is supplied.

The optional but recommended *K290* switchbox allows users to channel the system's output either to the loudspeakers or to two pairs of headphones — it also contains impedance-matching circuitry to connect the headphones to the speaker outputs of an AV amplifier. Prices are £149 for the *K290* and £100 for the switchbox. ☎ (0181) 207 5050.

Grand NAD, we love you



St Winifred's school choir has a lot to answer for.

NAD's Home Cinema range has expanded with the release of a new AV receiver and an AV integrated amplifier.

Priced at £479.99, the remote-controlled AV713 receiver provides 50W to the left, centre and right channels and 30W to the surround speakers. For straightforward stereo operation it's rated at 60W. It features Dolby Pro-Logic and Hall Surround Sound modes along with two video, three line and a phono input. The FM/AM tuner section has thirty presets. There's also a CDR facility — Controlled Dynamic Range — to perk up late-night, low-volume listening sessions.

The AV316 integrated is based on the AV713 but without a tuner. Its all-discrete output stages deliver 60W to the front channels and 30W to the rear, or 75W in stereo mode. It has two video, four line and one phono input(s), and comes with remote control and the NAD Link control bus. The price is £449.99. ☎ (0181) 343 3240.

Q the music

Q-Bass is the latest sub-bass system from subwoofer supremo REL. Unlike other REL subs, this new model is a closed-box, rear-firing design. Its fifty litre cabinet contains a 300mm doped paper-cone driver powered by an on-board 40W amplifier. Active Bass Control circuitry allows the £349.95 unit to be tailored to its own particular room and speakers, while a Set-Safe circuit protects the speaker from being over-driven. ☎ (0181) 207 5050.



JVC's UX-D66: a mini that kicks butt!

JVC's Bad Mutha System

The UX-D66 is, we're told, the most powerful micro system JVC has produced. Helping it deliver more dynamic, richer bass than its compact proportions would suggest possible are a 2 x 20W amplifier and speakers incorporating the Dynamic Axial-Drive Woofer System. This uses two 10cm woofers mounted back to back with a metal bar linking their magnets. The micro's Active Hyper Bass Pro System has a new Q-control circuit that dynamically controls the range of boost frequencies, extending bass without causing a sag in the midrange.

Apart from this the £380 price includes a one-bit CD player with digital output, an AM/FM tuner with thirty presets, and an auto-reverse, Dolby B cassette deck. ☎ (0181) 450 3282.

Isis down for a full house

After a ten-year stint, Castle's *Trent* has sailed down the river to be replaced by a loudspeaker with an equally fluvial name, the *Isis*. A completely new design, this port-loaded, bi-wired two-way uses the company's new 25mm composite dome tweeter and a 130mm bass driver with specially profiled polypropylene cone. Sensitivity is given as 88dB, much of the credit for which goes to the generously specified magnet systems.

The *Isis* costs £229.90 in standard finishes — black Ash, Cherry, antique, medium or natural Oak, Mahogany and Walnut; or £269.90 in Yew or Rosewood. ☎ (01756) 795333.

ML's hampers of Ampères

Mark Levinson has launched a trio of new power amplifiers based on its famous No. 33 Reference Monaural design. The No. 331, 332 and 333 are smaller, dual-mono, DC-coupled offerings rated at 100, 200 and 300W respectively.

All three models provide balanced operation using new voltage-gain circuits that eliminate the need for a buffer stage at the inverting input. The output stages use selected bipolar transistors, current-rated to supply at least ten times the amplifier's nominal output into two-Ohm loads. In the 333, for instance, which pumps out 1200W into two Ohms — roughly 25A — the output stage devices are rated for a total of 256A. Along with variable bias circuitry and independent, heavy-duty power supplies, this topology is said to deliver "effortless" dynamics.

Naturally, this amount of beef doesn't come cheap. The 331 costs £4,495, the 332 is £6,495, and a 333 will set you back £8,495. ☎ (01494) 441736.



High end muscle courtesy of Mark Levinson.

In brief

to accommodate heavy cables, both screw and solder varieties cost £3.95 per pair. ☎ (0181) 336 0110.

Acoustic Energy has moved to new, larger premises at 16 Bridge Road, Cirencester GL7 1PU. Neil Truckell has left GLL to become the company's Sales and Marketing manager. ☎ (01285) 654432.

The Bristol Hi-Fi Show, now renamed Sound & Vision Bristol, will take place at the Marriot Hotel between 23 and 25 February, 1996.

If you're within striking distance of Watermillock-on-Ullswater and fancy hearing the ATC200A active monitors being demonstrated on December 2 or 3, call Lakeland Home Music. ☎ (017684) 86235.

The second batch of VideoCDs from Polygram includes *Tommy - The Movie*, Dire Straits — *Live on the Night*, The Who - *30 Year Maximum R&B Live*, Abba — *More Abba Gold*, and Wet Wet Wet — *Greatest Hits*. Buyers will also receive a free Polygram VideoCD Music sampler. ☎ (0181) 910 5000.

Sidney Shure, founder of Shure Bros., the world's largest microphone and phono cartridge manufacturer, died recently at his Chicago home aged 93.

Audio Enhancement's spiked *Sempre* plinth is built to order from 1.25-inch marble and 2mm stainless steel. A 24-inch-square model, suitable for supporting large amplifiers, retails for £599.99. ☎ (01784) 244944 or (0181) 759 2169.

Sevenoaks Hi-Fi will host three musical evenings in Croydon, Watford and Essex during February, featuring products from Meridian, Cyrus, Audiolab and Monitor Audio. ☎ (01732) 742299.

Vivanco has a new range of soft, waterproof bags for carrying personal CD and cassette players, CDs and tapes. They come in black, navy and dark red, and cost between £6.99 and £13.99. ☎ (01442) 231616

Alphason's £39.95 RS-1 stand is designed to support rear channel speakers, and is adjustable in height between 30mm and 1.2m. ☎ (01942) 678000.

Harman Kardon's latest AV amps and receivers all use fully discrete amplifier stages, the latest Dolby decoder chips and provide line-level pre-outs. The 35W AVR10 and 60W AVR21

IF WE NEED MORE MONEY WE WON'T BUILD MORE SPEAKERS. WE'D RATHER RAISE OUR PRICES.

Rumour has it there are companies which turn out a hundred thousand speakers a month. For any truth-loving Dane, this is a worst case scenario. After all, the 14 people who build our cabinets are qualified master carpenters. The last time these guys heard the word assembly line was at school.

In our workshop you won't find machines spitting out cabinets like popcorn. Instead, a true old-world-craftsman, our Hugo Nielsen, saws and cuts, sands and veneers for three days on just one Confidence 3 (the one our company raccoon Knudsen is walking away from in the pic). And stout chief tester Erik 'The Ear' Nielsen checks the legendary oversized voice-coils, the flat membrane geometry and the minimization of phase



problems as well as our famous superfast Esotar tweeters (whose backwards-radiated energy is completely absorbed for echo-free sound reproduction). Each speaker is controlled 86 times before it's officially declared fit for sale.

The result? Every Dynaudio is a perfect, precious instrument, meticulously handcrafted, from truly superior materials, in extremely limited numbers. To create beautiful, true music, and nothing else. If you want to experience the

Dynaudio effect, please call us at 708 288 1767 or fax us at 708 288 1853 for the addresses of the few true

dealers and a free copy of our justly famous

"Book of Truth". It gives a priceless performance, too.

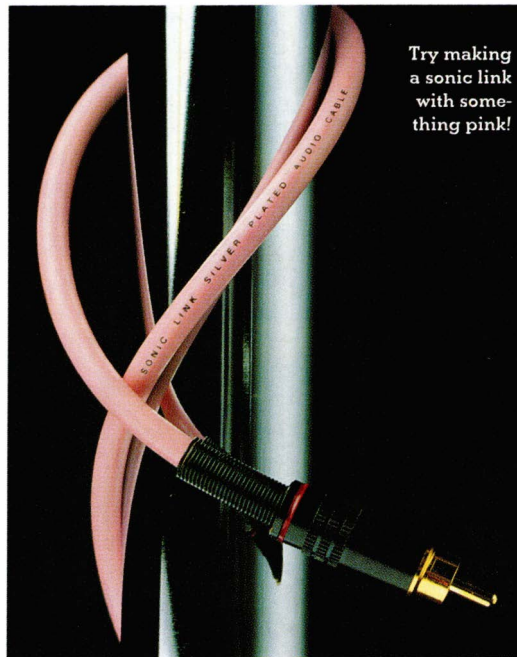
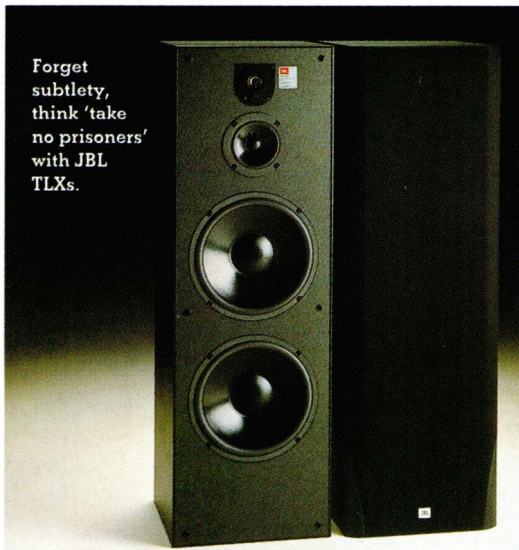
DYNAUDIO
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DANES DON'T LIE.™

Extreme noise terror

JBL has three new big box loudspeakers that unashamedly aim to shove music 'in yer face, missus'. Fashioned with some of the company's more brutish professional designs in mind — JBL's description, not ours — the bookshelf *TLX50*, *TLX60* and floor-standing *TLX70* are rugged three-ways finished in black Ash vinyl. The *TLX50* costs £249.99, the *TLX60* £299.99 and the *TLX70* £399.99.

If you prefer small boxes to big boxes but still want a powerful PA punch, there are another six new models in the TLX series designed to provide dynamic dynamite. Prices for the *TLX111*, *121*, *151*, *161*, *171* and *181* range from £139.99 to £599.99; there's also a *TLX103* centre channel speaker for £129.99. ☎ (0181) 207 5050.



Think Silver Pink

Improve the clarity of your high frequencies with SonicLink's *Silver Pink* interconnects. £35 buys you a one-metre stereo pair of the new cables, which comprise nineteen strands of silver-plated copper wire, insulated with PTFE, wrapped in a silver-plated copper braided screen, and swaddled in a flexible pink outer sheath. A half-metre set of leads costs £30, while longer lengths for home theatre use are also available — five metres for £75 and ten metres for £125. All cables come with gold-plated phono plugs. ☎ (01332) 361390/674929

In brief

receivers sell for £379.99 and £499.99, while the *35W AVI 100* and *60W AVI 150* amps cost £299.99 and £449.99. ☎ (0181) 207 5050.

Canon has three new home-cinema kits. The £499.95 starter pack provides five speakers and decoder/amplifier, while the £699.95 enhanced kit includes a subwoofer and a higher-performance centre channel. The third kit, for upgrading existing hi-fi systems, costs £489.95, and includes a decoder, rear and centre channel speakers. ☎ (0181) 773 3173.

May Audio and Sequence Design have moved to Aireside Mills, Cononley, Keighley, West Yorks, BD20 8LW. ☎ (01535) 632700.

The Power Plant, "Brighton's premier hi-fi dealer", has opened the town's first Bang & Olufsen Centre at 67 Upper North Street. "In keeping with the Power Plant's policy of only stocking the best, it is now bringing Denmark's most stylish audio equipment to Brighton." Allegedly. ☎ (01273) 771888

The louder the better

Break out the ear defenders and bolt down your ornaments! Polk's *Signature Reference Theatre* speaker system comes with an SPL meter and a warning of extreme sound pressure levels in the area. Purporting to pump out 110dB at 30Hz, and over 120dB on broad-band material, it should satisfy all but the hungriest level freaks.

With a recommended price of £9,500, this system is hardly in the budget category, but you do get a veritable van-load of components for the outlay. This includes seven loudspeaker enclosures, a control box and remote control.

Two powered subwoofers double as supports for the left and right speakers, each of which contains an array of nine drivers configured to provide an expansive sound stage. A five-driver centre channel speaker and a pair of dipole surrounds complete the thirty-five driver line-up.

The *SRT Control Center* gives extensive control over the subwoofers, and allows users to program separate settings for music and video.

Back in the real world, Polk's more modest *RT3*, *5* and *7* were designed primarily for music, but magnetic shielding and extended bass response also makes these new speakers suitable for AV use. Prices have been set at £189.90, £249.90 and £299.90 respectively for these 89dB two-way designs. ☎ (01727) 827311.

True Dynaudio Dealers.

HiFi Experience, 17 Coniscliffe Rd, Darlington, 01325-481418
 Music Matters, 351 Hagley Rd, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 0121-4292811
 Music Matters, 93-95 Hobs Moat Rd, Solihull, Birmingham, 0121-7420254
 Harrogate Hifi Centre, 15 Commercial St, Harrogate, 01432-504274
 Cornflake Shop, 37 Windmill St, London, 0171-6310472
 Nichols Hifi, 430-432 Lee High Rd, Lewisham, London, 0181-8525780
 Performance Hifi Systems, 5 London Rd, Sevenoaks, Kent, 01732-740425
 Worthing Audio, 20 Teville Gate Precinct, West Sussex, 01903-212133
 Music Matters, 156-157 Lower High St, Stourbridge, 01384-444184

Holburn Hifi, 441 Holburn St, Aberdeen, 01224-585713
 W.M. Coupar, 8-12 Wellmeadow, Blairgowrie, 01250-872436
 W.M. Coupar, 33 Reform St, Dundee, 01382-229588
 W.M. Coupar, 9 Scott St, Perth, 01738-634809
 The Music Room, 98 Bath St, Glasgow, 0141-3325012
 Richer Sounds, 34 Wellington Quay, Dublin, 0103531-6719666
 Richer Sounds, 40-41 Smithfield, Belfast

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Ear Waxings

Jason Kennedy still hasn't found exactly what he's looking for, but he may have re-discovered one piece of the audio puzzle.

I've worked on *Hi-fi Choice* since its transmogrification from A5 to A4 in 1987, and I still haven't found my dream hi-fi system! I don't even know which philosophy I'd pursue if I had to choose one: the dynamic path that's scattered with tonearms, tubes and horns or the neutral yet far from mature route into the promise of digital wonderland. Life might be simpler if you nail your colours to the mast and stick with a single philosophy, but it's a lot more interesting to listen to all the variations. At least that way you don't get fixated on one facet of the game to the expense of the others. But it ain't easy.

I have, however, recently rediscovered the delights and capabilities of a loudspeaker for which I'd consider shelling out lucre. This is the inconveniently heavy but remarkably characterless Electrofluidics *Sonolith 2.2xi*. Recently the manufacturer of this audiophile obelisk, Paddy Hanscombe, invited me to a press conference at ACO, the company that produces the polyester polymer concrete cabinets for the *Sonoliths*. This concern is based at the Cranfield Institute of Technology, where the original Townsend *Rock* turntable was first designed (which used similar material to these speakers at its inception). Also, this place is home to the production of high precision beds for lathes and electron microscopes, among other things. The latter are more fussy about the inertness of what they are sitting on than the worst piece of hi-fi kit, and if I could afford one of these mass optimised beds for my turntable, I'd die a happy audio maniac. However, the gist of their spiel was that polymer concretes have very high self damping combined with a higher resonant frequency than MDF.

When you combine this technology with Ted Jordan's aluminium coned drivers, you get a loudspeaker with so little character that a fussy bugger like me hasn't been able to criticise it without first suspecting some other element of the system. The *Sonoliths* have definitely improved since I last had them (nearly a year ago). Higher spec crossover and internal Monolith cable have both made their mark on what was already a very revealing, wide-bandwidth loudspeaker. What's most inspiring is not the solid and prodigious bass, or the spectacular three-dimensional imaging, but an ability to show up significant differences

between software. As Leonard Norwitz explained in issue 145, the most important indication of an audio system's worth is its ability to resolve differences between recordings. The *Sonoliths* aren't tremendously efficient, and therefore they don't have the ease and dynamics that you find with horns. Despite this, however, they are probably the best speakers I've ever used for resolving variations in software. Of course they also reveal limitations in the rest of the system, and the search for a truly transparent yet powerful and phase linear amplifier has been refuelled. The digital Harman might do the trick, but it's still nearly a year away and will not be fitted with an ADC. Perhaps Lars Risbo (Harman's Dane on the case) could build a digital phono stage to match once he's got the amp sorted?

The musical result of all this resolution, apart from the *audiophilianervosa* regarding the amplifiers, is tremendously engaging sonic entertainment. Yea verily, I was torn away from *The X Files* by the need to listen to Mahler's *Fifth* (1969 Sir John Barbirolli on LP) and FSOL's *Smokin' Japanese Babe*, among many others. At the moment, the *Sonoliths* cost £3,250, but if historical president applies they'll get more expensive—possibly quite a lot more—when Electrofluidics gets seriously into export.

Tricks of the trade

It's an inevitable fact of manufacturing that small companies start off with a margin to cover the local market. They sell product to dealers in the same country and if they're organised they'll make a bit of profit. Then, if they're really lucky, they start selling a bit more and foreign distributors get interested. That's when



Sonolith 2.2xi: wideband, metal cone, polymer concrete madness!

things start getting expensive. The distributor wants his cut and the product usually has to increase in price by at least a third. At home and abroad, distributors don't like the idea of their customers going to the country of origin to make a saving which more than covers the air fare. A concept is worth bearing in mind next time a new company comes along with a component that takes your fancy.

To return momentarily to the Roksan *Xerxes 10* (Statements p.33), I didn't have space in the review to point out that despite any criticisms I may have made this turntable (as with many other decent designs) is still a few leagues ahead of CD. Although the gap is a lot smaller than it used to be, a good deck like this can still bring music to life in a far more convincing manner, achieving a great sense of timing and three-dimensional imaging without effort. The converted will already know this, but if our postbag is anything to go by, there are a lot of you yet to be initiated. ▲

Don't always judge

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353 The advantage

Choice sessions

PAUL MESSENGER TELLS YOU EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT HI-FI BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK

Rega Planar 9; HAL; 2xEXON, XEL

Fancy a bit of long term satisfaction? Rega may well have the answer with a complete turntable based remote system.

£3,868

I covered Rega's recently modified XEL speaker in my last Sessions foray (August), but the arrival of pre-amp HAL, monoblock power amp EXON and — most eagerly anticipated of all — the redoubtable new Planar 9 turntable precipitated this review of the system in full flow.

The Planar 9 takes Rega right up into Sondek territory, with its £1,600 tag nearly five times that of the evergreen Planar 3. The familiar RB300 tonearm is common to both, likewise the floppy-hinged lid, but P9's arm has a lovely gunmetal surface finish, while the tapered hardwood frame gives a sleek elegance few can match. The *pièce de résistance* and the biggest contribution to the cost is the white ceramic platter, made from aluminium oxide. Originally developed to make the protective nosecones of missiles, this is several steps further up the hardness, stiffness and

mass ladder than Rega's traditional glass platter material.

The system electronics fit into four identical and exceptionally slim cast/finned cases (similar to the *Elicit* integrated amp). One is the turntable's electronic power supply, another the remote-control HAL preamplifier (£998), and the remaining two are a pair of EXON monoblock power amps, each packing a substantial 150W power output and costing £598. With interlinks supplied, speaker connection was via Rega's own low-cost £1.58/m flat cable, and the pickup cartridge was the £74 Elys. There's also an attractive component rack (see pic) which may be extended by adding modules, but which does not cater for the turntable.

Easy to set up and install, the no-fuss-or-aggravation factor is a major plus, helped by one of the nicest remote handsets on the hi-fi block (even if it is left-handed). Loads of power gives a sense of authority and effortlessness, especially as the performance is impressively consistent across a wide dynamic range.

It's a shame there isn't space or time to explore the individual components in isolation here. The new turntable is clearly outstanding, particularly in midband

integrity and dynamic range, and is somewhat constrained by the MM cartridge normally fitted — substituting a Dynavector moving coil certainly paid dividends.

The overall sound is agile and detailed, but in a very relaxed and laid-back way, so that it sort of sucks you gently into the music rather than taking a ram-it-down-your-throat approach. In fact, I found the amps/speakers a little too distant when fed from an external source, but the up-front character of the turntable fits in exceedingly well. If I do have a criticism, it's that the bass end could be better developed, as both extension and dynamic expression seem a bit limited here. There are plenty of other ways of spending four grand on a record player, but I doubt many will match this Rega package for long term satisfaction.

Rega Research Ltd ☎ (01702) 333071

The latest Rega stack system, complete with the new Planar 9 turntable.



Technics SU-C100/SE-A1000 Pre/Power Amps

Forget black minimalist integrated amps: get a load of this gorgeous Technics pre/power. Power meters are go.

£750

Even after all these years, I still find myself seduced by the appearance of hi-fi gear. And seeing the pictures of this new Technics pre-/power combination, with vast illuminated swinging needle power meters occupying most of the front panel, triggered nostalgic memories of those massive Japanese super-amps of the '70s and '80s.

One important difference is that those behemoths of yesteryear cost thousands, whereas this SU-C1000/SE-A1000 combo comes in at a quite modest £350+£400. And if you're remainly interested in the style, two very similar looking dis-integrated models, the £400 SU-A800D and £500 '900D, both have separate box preamps which take their supplies from the power amp.

Although its style imitates those earlier heavyweights, the new Technics construction is strictly pressed steel rather than castings, albeit with vibration-resistant bases. The C1000's key technical tweak is 'virtual battery operation', a configuration which effectively buffers its power supply from the mains voltage by means of a rechargeable battery pack. Full system remote control is provided via a handset which would benefit from some simplification. The MOSFET stereo power amp is rated at 70W/eight Ohms.

It's a long while since I've auditioned a full feature mid-price amp from one of the big multi-nationals, and I have to say the experience was disappointing. First impressions were



Surf the dial with Rotel's remote control RT940AX tuner.

that the sound was as nostalgic as the presentation, with none of the excitement I've found recently with simpler specialist integrated models like the Densen *Beat* or Rega *Elicit*. Things perked up a bit after an overnight warm-up, and to be fair, the midband is pleasing enough — sweet, mellifluous and transparent, with fine delicate detailing. The top end, however, sounds dull and undynamic, while the bass has a certain sludgy, smudgy (or should that be stodgy) quality. The SU-A/C1000 combo will certainly win friends for excellent presentation, copious features and fine flexibility, but I can't see it having much impact on the sound quality debate.

Panasonic UK Ltd ☎ (0990) 357357

Rotel RT940AX Tuner

A separates tuner within (infra-red) grasp of the modern couch potato — that's the new wireless from Rotel.

£200

Hi-fi tuners don't wear out, and they have a useful lifespan of a generation or more. However, the radio spectrum has changed: there are many

more stations out there, and getting up to graze the AM/FM bands seems so much of a chore after a decade's practice with TV and VCR remote controls.

To which '90s dilemma Rotel might have the solution, in the shape of the £200 RT940AX remote control tuner. This sports 20 pre-sets, plus a full roster of audiophile component tweaks, but no RDS or Long Wave AM.

A tuner is very much a game of two halves, the first of which involves the RF capturing of stations from the ether, and the second the processing and delivering of the audio signal proper. Unfortunately, the two objectives tend to conflict, and in this Rotel's case the former is given scant regard. The reception of distant, weak stations in proximity to stronger local ones is, frankly, poor, and often non-existent.

The 940 acquitted itself better with strong signals and an audiophile context, although it seemed a tad more susceptible to 'birdies' interference, and was somewhat less open and airy than an upmarket reference. On balance it's a competent design for local reception, but not much good for those interested in long distance work.

Gamepath ☎ (01908) 317707



Needles of delight courtesy of the very polished SU-C/SE-A1000 from Technics.



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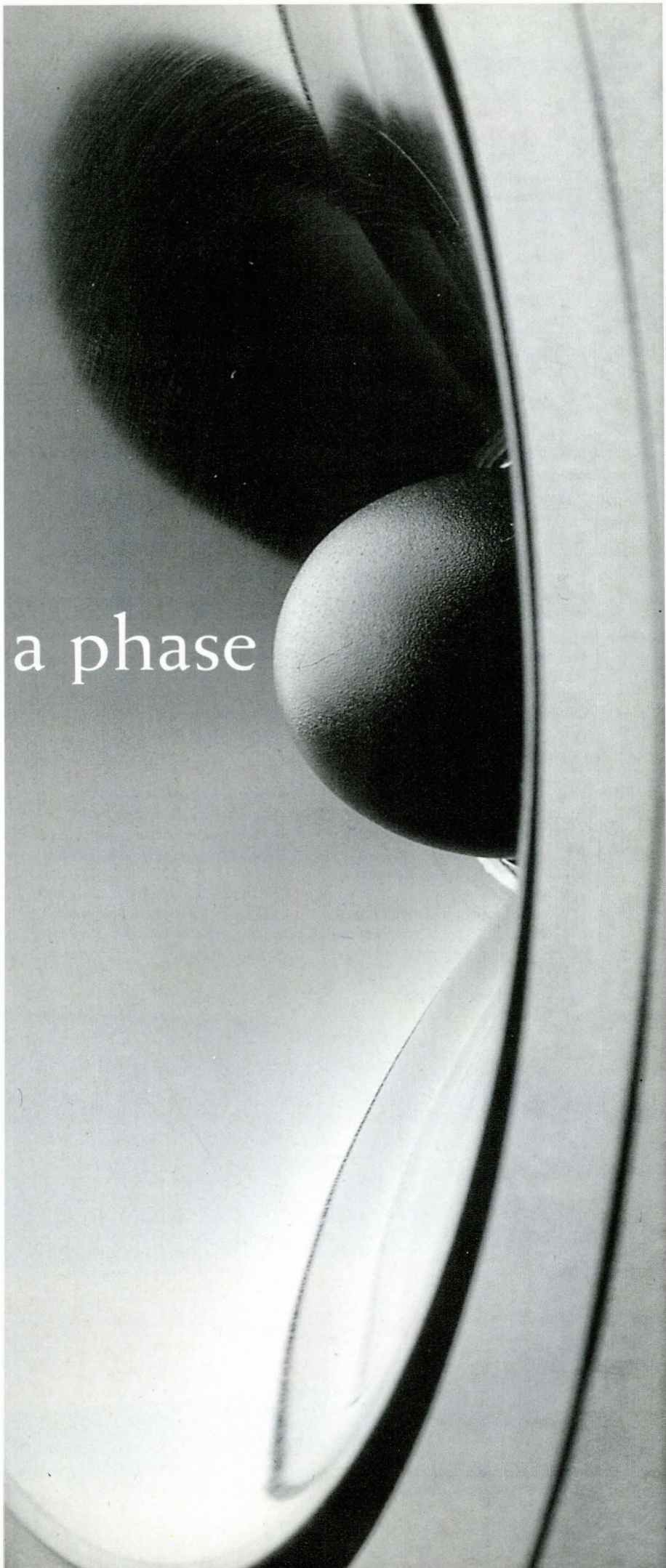
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KEF Coda 8 Speakers

Sibling rivalry takes a new turn, as the Coda 8 follows its kid brother's illustrious footsteps in Paul's system.

£180

On, then, to the speaker-fest, which consists of a couple of new-ish big sellers (the £180 KEF *Coda 8* and Richer Sounds' £200 floorstanding *Gale 4*), Acoustic Energy's first foray into the genuine mass market (the £200 *AE100*); something quite preposterous but delightful from Bando (the £330 *Picture*); B&W's new Kevlar-coned *DM602* (£280); a couple of car speakers with interesting domestic implications (Cerwin Vega and RCL); plus some tiny wireless infrared devices from Sony.

KEF's *Coda 7* is currently leading the budget miniature marketplace, but for an extra fifty quid, the *Coda 8* combines similarly smooth, streamlined styling with a larger main driver and box. This is likely to bring small but significant increases in bass output, loudness capability, power handling and efficiency, but the crucial question must be whether it manages to capture the same holistic magic as the smaller 7.



Coda 8: Living in the shadow of a legend.

I no longer had the 7s to hand for side by side (or sequential) subjective comparison, but do have the measured data available. Careful scrutiny shows how closely practice follows theory — and that the news isn't all good. The *Coda 8* does indeed give more output through the bass and midband, about 6dB better below 50Hz and 1-3dB more 50-700Hz, which indicate that this larger model needs to be a little further out from the wall (say 2ft) to avoid midbass excess. I'd give it an overall 89dB rating.

However, the *Coda 8* is less impressive through the top half of the spectrum, with a mild suckout replacing the 7's smooth 1-2kHz transition, and a mar-

ginally more peaky treble (around 7-8Hz). This all correlates well with the listening experience, which is of a similarly open yet somewhat firmer balance, but without the midband sweetness and coherence of the smaller model. *Coda 8* will certainly deliver more sound than *Coda 7*, but whether this is a better sound is open to debate and personal preference.

KEF ☎ (01622) 672261

Acoustic Energy AE100 Speakers

Acoustic Energy, renowned for top flight miniatures, has produced its first loudspeaker for the masses.

£200

Acoustic Energy is best known for creating some of the smallest, most beautiful and expensive loudspeakers on planet Earth. Not to mention pioneering the surge of '80s interest in metal diaphragm drive units. So what the heck is this company doing introducing something with a paper cone at £200 the pair? Generating some production volume for the new factory might be one possible explanation...

Whatever the motivation, the *AE100*

is a neat enough looking device, if perhaps a shade conventional by *AE* standards. It's reasonable value for money in a market context, too, with a tough little MDF box port-loading a pressed frame driver with doped pulp cone.

There's no superficial

reason why such ingredients shouldn't come together well, though my first impression was of a rather dull, thick and undistinguished sound. Response measurements provided some explanation:

the bass alignment indicated fairly close-to-wall placement, which in turn left the midband output 3-4dB below the bass. Free space gave a flatter (but not smooth) broad midband, but left the midbass shy. At the end of the day, all of this actually seems to correlate quite well with a dull and undistinguished sound.

Acoustic Energy ☎ (01285) 6544323

**Bando Picture Speakers**

Banish unsightly black boxes from the living room with a pair of Pictures, the new 5cm thick speaker from Bando.

£300

I couldn't believe the Bando *Pictures* when I finally managed to extract them from the packing. Only two inches thick and with a lone, tiny, metal-cone driver: to consider this a hi-fi speaker seemed absurd.

However, that's what's so entertaining about this hi-fi game — something totally unlikely comes right out and smashes you in the preconceptions. The *Pictures* don't defy the laws of physics, of course, and the performance envelope has significant limitations, but within those constraints the results prove to be a constant surprise, frequently accompanied by delight.

I've developed a taste for single-driver systems over the past few years, and while



acknowledging this is partly a fascination with the esoteric, there's still something about the overall

Twin ports and pointy dust caps ahoy with Acoustic Energy's *AE100*.

Not the University Challenge trophy but Bando's *Picture* speakers. ▶▶

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What Hi-Fi, November 1995



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THE FRONT END

◀ coherence which more than compensates for the colorations which come from trying to persuade a single diaphragm to cover the full frequency range.

The two-inch thickness is equally important when it comes to positioning. Not just because it's very easy to install them by hanging on the wall like a picture, but because the driver will couple acoustically to the wall like a flush-mounted speaker, with benefits in mid-band smoothness. I had already overcome the initial surprise of discovering that these tinies were indeed to be taken seriously when I ran the risk of sine wave testing. They survived, and showed quite clearly why they'd sounded so good beforehand. The response is one of the smoothest and flattest I've encountered.

There's a slight peak at 1kHz, a tiny dip around 2kHz, the treble gets a bit ragged above 5kHz, and naturally, the bass is limited. But even here, the room-mode peaks at 55Hz and 30Hz register at 4dB and -11dB. Combine the very low 81dB sensitivity with a nominal 30W power handling and the real compromise with this design is its limited loudness capability.

This is likely to rule out the Bandor *Pictures* as a main system speaker for most people, but would make it ideal for small bedrooms, studies and the like. It's also exceptionally well suited to surround sound duties, in both acoustic and installation terms.

At £330, *Pictures* are maybe a bit pricey for their performance, and the presentation isn't all that it might be. But they're still sweet little devices, wonderfully coherent when reproducing voices at modest levels. In addition, they're beautifully easy and discreet to install. Bandor ☎ (01494) 714058

Naim NA AV1 Surround Processor

Much to the surprise of the Flat Earth society, Naim has joined the AV revolution with an idiosyncratic decoder.

Dragged kicking and screaming is not quite the right cliché, but there's been a certain air of baffled bemusement about the AV issue in British hi-fi circles over the past couple of years: 'Hi-fi is about the music thing, and it's done stereophonically, not Pro-Logically.'

I have considerable sympathy (not to mention envy) for the music lover with space and funds to allocate separate rooms and systems to the distinct enjoyment of music and television. However, in the real world of limited means, most people will want to combine their AV and hi-fi entertainment. Indeed, one set of equipment ought to handle both, if



only because a single system should always sound better than two different ones at half the price each.

How to achieve this has become the big issue, especially because of various contradictions between the two approaches. Naim has opted for a minimalist 'least intrusion' approach. The Naim AV1 is more an extractor than a processor, since the fundamental tenet is to leave the main left and right stereo channels entirely alone. The stereo preamp feeds the power amp(s) exactly as before, but a second pre-out signal feeds the processor, which operates in the digital domain to extract and delay two (full bandwidth) surround/rear channels.

There's no Dolby involved here, and no dialogue channel either, and Naim further encourages the use of a room-projector for the pictures, to avoid the sonic degradation of putting a large plastic-and-glass TV set in between the main loudspeakers. The AV1 is indeed wonderfully unintrusive, yet also undoubtedly effective in opening up the sound-space and adding some extra weight. But it's also rather expensive at £1,600 (plus £700 for a NAP140 power amp to drive the rears), especially since it's virtually bereft of facilities. The lack of remote control or any level setting test arrangements (difficult considering the architecture) are particularly irksome.

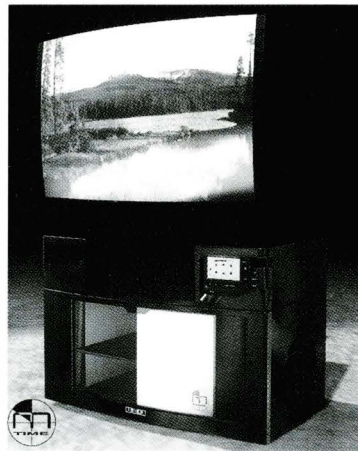
Naim Audio Ltd ☎ (01722) 332266

Mission M-Time AV-Gram

The Mission AV-Gram has finally been launched, so Paul went to Huntingdon to see what all the fuss is about.

Mission's magnificent M-Time (£2,250) takes a quite opposite approach to Naim's AV1. This most imaginative concept is brim-full of extras, but so carefully thought through that it all seems logical and intuitive. The unit itself masquerades as a TV console/plinth, providing support for the biggest and heaviest sets and accommodation for a couple of sources (VCR, satellite etc.). Cunningly disguised as part of the structure are two (actively driven) subwoofers, an MW/FM radio tuner, a Dolby Pro-Logics surround processor and over 500W to drive everything along (configured as nine channels).

This was an away fixture, so I've had no opportunity yet for leisurely hands-on experience, or to run the test gear over



Two distinctive approaches to the surround sound scenario courtesy Naim (above) and Mission.

the subwoofers. But I was taken in by the ease with which it slipped from one role to another — a fine stereo hi-fi one moment, and the full movie surround experience the next. Adding surround effect to stereo music also seemed very effective. Listing the features in full will have to wait for a proper review, but the automatic test tone level setting is clever and effective, while the ability to operate a second independent zone (via its own RF through-the-walls remote handset) is a further bonus. The fact that the electronics and subs fit under a TV set also makes it beautifully discreet.

Mission ☎ (01480) 451777

Corwin Vega AI-62/RCL CS65

Have you got a black ceiling? Do you want rear surround channels without the boxes? If so look at what ICE has to offer.

Even more discreet than Bandor's *Pictures* and considerably less expensive (but a lot more difficult to install) the in-car hi-fi speaker can prove an interesting prospect for in-home use, too. I recently reviewed a quartet of (nominal) 6.5 inch car units — co-axial two-ways which might be fitted to a parcel

A pair of free-range Corwin Vegas for your stud wall.



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THE FRONT END



Will you look at the size of that magnet!

trol. The treble is pretty naff, but that matters little in a surround sound role where the treble is usually rolled off anyway. A definite bargain, especially for those with black ceilings!
 Cerwin-Vega ☎ (01923) 250665
 RCL ☎ (01702) 435570

QED Qudos Profile 8 cable

A couple of months back we looked at QED's Qudos speaker cable; there's now a bi-wire version in the same edible colour.

£5/m

At £5 per metre, QED's new Profile 8 variation on the Qudos theme is a little more than twice the price of the original, but is geometrically much more elaborate, with eight separate multi-strand conductors forming a convenient under-the-carpet profile. Performance advantages are claimed to accrue from lower inductance and capacitance and a greatly reduced 'dissipation factor', but whether that's sufficient excuse to perpetuate magenta-coloured insulation remains a moot point.

The new Qudos certainly sounds smoother and sweeter than the original, and it gives an obvious sharpening of stereo focus and superior depth resolution. But I did miss the dynamic brio of a standard Qudos, which is sufficient to suggest that the Profile 8 is an alternative rather than necessarily an improvement. It's more likely to appeal to those of delicate and refined sensibilities than audiophiles in search of the ultimate rock'n'roll riff. Still, it's a jolly good cable, realistically priced, and presented in a jolly colour too...
 QED ☎ (01276) 451166

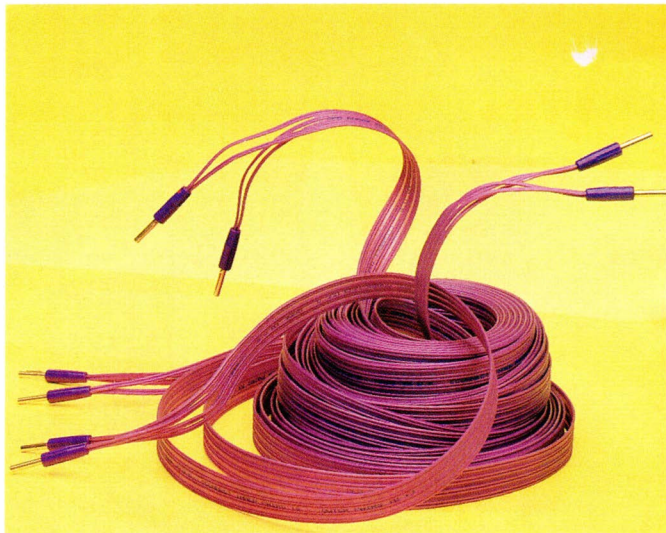
B&W DM602 Speakers

B&W has brought the cost of high tech Kevlar diaphragms down to budget level with the new 600 series.

£280

I tried to get hold of B&W's new £280 DM602 for next month's speaker group test, but it was made clear that in order to qualify I'd have to give it the one-off treatment in Sessions first. With a cringe worthy of Silas Marner I willingly let the god of marketing tap dance on my supine form, secure in the knowledge that I could get my own back by publicising the fact.

The DM602 is the latest in a long line of large bookshelf models—so long, in fact, that the size and shape look positively venerable by today's standards. But loudspeaker fashion and performance rarely go hand in hand, and there are usually sound reasons why a particular



configuration becomes a classic.

The technical justification for this model is to introduce B&W's favourite cone material, Kevlar, at a low price. The result is an impressive speaker with a good measure of midband drive and authority.

The balance is a little too self-consciously laid back and eager to avoid causing offense for my personal taste, and it might have worth trading some of its high (90+dB) sensitivity for a little more deep bass extension. But the integrity through the upper bass and lower midband is very persuasive, giving a richness without accompanying boom, which is well beyond the repertoire of beer-budget speakers.
 B&W UK Ltd ☎ (01903) 524801

QED's multi-headed magenta headed magenta beast the Qudos Profile 8. Beware imitations!

Sony IFS-20K IR Speakers

Fed up with those rear surround channel cables trailing along the picture rail? Perhaps infra-red is the way to go.

£199

Accommodating surround speakers is one thing—wiring the wretched things up can add extra inconvenience and complexity which is sufficient to put many people off the surround idea entirely. Perhaps the answer lies in the infrared portion of the spectrum?

Cordless speakers are a relatively new and undeveloped product, still searching for their role in our lives. Sony's (about-to-be-replaced) IFS-20K (£199) sits among the Discmen at the esoteric end of the company's 'personal' range, so it's not really intended for surround sound applications. Sad to say, in certain respects it does-

Sony IFS-20K: not the answer to rear channel cable blues we'd hoped for.



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The Response range blends inspired design with the finest components available to deliver incomparable sonic performance. Each model generates an awesome scale and weight of sound, yet with an impressive accuracy and clarity. Individually hand-crafted and beautifully finished, a Response is a loudspeaker for life.

 **ProAc**
Perfectly Natural

← n't seem terribly well suited either.

This is a very pretty little product, and very clever too, from the design point of view. The stand doubles as a shelf clip, and the fine detailing is superb throughout. It also happens to work as advertised, especially in close-up, for example on either side of a Macintosh *Powerbook*. However, three factors all work against the hi-fi/surround allure.

First, each speaker is powered by four AA batteries, with no battery eliminator alternative (ie mains adaptor). Secondly, there's really no bass at all. But most serious of all is that the signal is heavily compressed by gain-riding. Such processing might be justified in a personal product context, but the consequent lack of real dynamic range effectively rules the 20K out for hi-fi applications. However, I suspect it's only a matter of time before infrared cordless technology becomes better adapted to surround sound use.

Sony UK Ltd ☎ 0181-784 1144

Gale 4 Speakers

The Gale 4 looks like a lot of speaker for the money, and has been doing great business, but is it as good as it looks?

£200

The price of compact floorstanding speakers continues to drift downwards, making this configuration an increasingly attractive alternative to the bookshelf shape/size speaker in need of separate support from proper stands.

Among the least expensive of all the floorstanders is an exclusive-to-Richer Sounds model which sells for only £200. It's called the Gale 4, and bears no relationship whatsoever to the famous '70s style-setter (remember the chrome end caps?). Rather, it's one of several brands owned by Richer's manufacturing division, The Audio Partnership. And while I'm still not sure how the hi-fi press should deal with what the trader refers to as ROB's (retailer own brands), the sales figures for this model

seem like a sufficient reason to have a look and listen.

The Gale 4 carries all the hallmarks of the (highly competitive) British OEM operations, whose products are found under various brands. It also carries an even stronger hallmark of someone having added several kilos of ballast prior to shipping, suggesting that my samples may not sound quite the same as those you get from the shops. I guess it's called 'ensuring a level playing field', and you can add your own ballast at minimal expense.

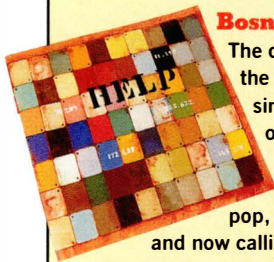
It is, as it happens, a pretty good loudspeaker, but don't let the size of the box mislead you into expecting a comparably big sound. Although most of the box is acoustically active, the main driver is quite small, and in point of fact KEF's bookshelf *Coda 8* actually delivers more sub-100Hz bass.

My first impression was unpromising, as the midband sounds a bit coloured and the top end lacks sparkle and air. But after a short while I'd got used to the exposed upper mid and mild lack of treble, and was starting to groove on the decent basic integrity, good detail projection, fine stereo spaciousness and freedom from boxiness, even if the port is a shade obvious. And considering that this speaker is quite likely to find itself on the end of beer-budget electronics, the treble restraint could well be a positive advantage. ▲

Richer Sounds ☎ (0171) 403 1310

Gale 4s: er, blowin' up a storm down at Richer Sounds.

Paul's CD choice



Bosnia Help

The disc which has spent most time under my laser over the past month must be the Bosnia charity project CD, simply entitled **Help** (Go! Discs 828 682-2). It's a 'various artists' compilation of the type I'd usually automatically ignore, but the hook was the inclusion of the first waxing (etching?) from those Dada geniuses of pop, Cauty and Drummond, formerly known as The KLF and now calling themselves The One World Orchestra.

Having played track 15's variations on the *Magnificent 7* theme at least a dozen times, I started exploring the other nineteen cuts. It's a very mixed bag, for sure, but there are numerous nuggets along the way to make the journey worthwhile. There are bum notes aplenty too, but that is all part of the appeal. This album was put together from scratch through to release in just a week, and all the recording work was carried out on a single day in September. The result might be under-rehearsed and rough around the edges, but it manages to retain that spark of life and enthusiasm which often distinguishes 'live' albums, and which is all too often pasteurised out of existence by the manufacturing mind-set of the music biz.

A totally different approach to sampling is found on **Grayfolded** (S/A 1969/96 double CD), a 'plunderphonics' project from record producer John Oswald's latest exploration of the archives. Since the archive in question was the live recorded history of the Grateful Dead, the office immediately posted it on to me in a plain brown envelope.

The album is a fascinating work, stitching together from over 100 live versions Oswald's interpretation of the ultimate *Dark Star*. With a total playing time that gets uncomfortably close to two hours, this is an essential purchase for the more serious minded Deadhead, no question. But despite my own longstanding loyalty to the band and its musical ideals, I can't help feeling the more casual acquaintance will find it all a bit indigestible.

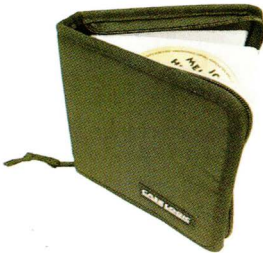
For many, *Dark Star* represents the Dead at its peak, but my own live concert reaction to its opening chords was always to wonder whether this was a suitable moment to slip out to the loo/bar. The original twenty minute-or-so version on *Live Dead* has always seemed ample. There's no denying Oswald does an excellent job of maintaining some sort of momentum through inventive and often seamless editing, and listening afresh makes one aware how much the ambient movement owes to *Dark Star* and the Dead. But I do rather wish he'd given *China Cat Sunflower* or even *Cosmic Charlie* the 'plunderphonic' treatment instead.





Sony ICF-SW100E, £219.99

Sony's hardware boffins have always been dab hands at squeezing a quart of radio technology into a pint pot case, and their latest micro marvel does not disappoint. It's an FM Stereo/SW/MW/LW receiver, PLL synthesised, complete with a World Time clock and enough Short Wave bands to keep the whole town of Parma happy. The handbook is a little daunting, but before you know it you'll have set the time in your part of the world, then tuned in all your favourite stations (Radio Bratislava included) and given them names on the alphanumeric display. For further information call (0181) 784 1144.



Case-Logic CDW-12 £8.99

Although today's CDs are compact, it's still hard to carry 12 of them around in their cases without appearing encumbered. Feel lighter with this ultra-handly wallet, which will tote 12 discs within briefcase-friendly packaging. (Accidentally, this little 'hi-fi essential' that can be purchased through our mail order service, on pages 88 and 89. Quote order reference CDR-12.)

**RockBase Plus
DataBase on CD-ROM,
£49.95**

Based on the books *Rock Record 6* and *The Single File*, this Windows-compatible disc contains details of nearly 400,000 tracks, on 120,000 albums and singles, as released by 40,000 artists on LP, CD and cassette. For music from the '50s onwards, this database allows you to search for information using nine different parameters, including Artist, Instrument or Year of Release. Our pals on *Metal Hammer* inform us it's not too hot on Death Metal, but mainstream tastes from the '50s onwards should be well served.

For further information call (01895) 444603



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Blue Room Minipod, £399

Blue Room's outrageous speakers break the mould of conventional styling, but get away with it because they sound like a good pair of 'real' speakers. The *Mini Pod* is the latest addition to the 'Alien Hardware Collection', which includes the *House Pod* — winner of the European Award for Design of the Year as reported in our October 1995 issue. Standing just 340 millimetres tall without their bijou spikes, the *Mini Pods* sport B&W's distinctive 130mm bass driver made from Kevlar, the stuff of bulletproof vests. Completing the driver complement is a 26mm aluminium dome tweeter; the company claims a frequency range of 70Hz to 30kHz (-6dB).

Available in black, blue, red or white, the *Mini Pod* is worth trying for that small-room system with a difference.

For further information call (01903) 524777.

**Jensen JTK-6
Compact Kit,
£109.28**

Designed for anyone who has to dismantle or service electronic equipment, the JTK-6 from Jensen Tools, a subsidiary of Stanley, is crammed with a total of 31 appliances. There are pliers, screwdriver blades with handle, a wire stripper/cutter and adjustable four-inch wrench. Then there's a ten-piece hex-key set, flexible files, and a six-inch stainless-steel rule. You'll also find a burnisher, alignment tool, light-duty knife, thin-line scissors and a soldering iron with accessories. For further information call (0800) 833246.



Prezzies



**Boston
'Boston', Sony
MasterSound SBM
rerelease 480 413-2,
£16.00**

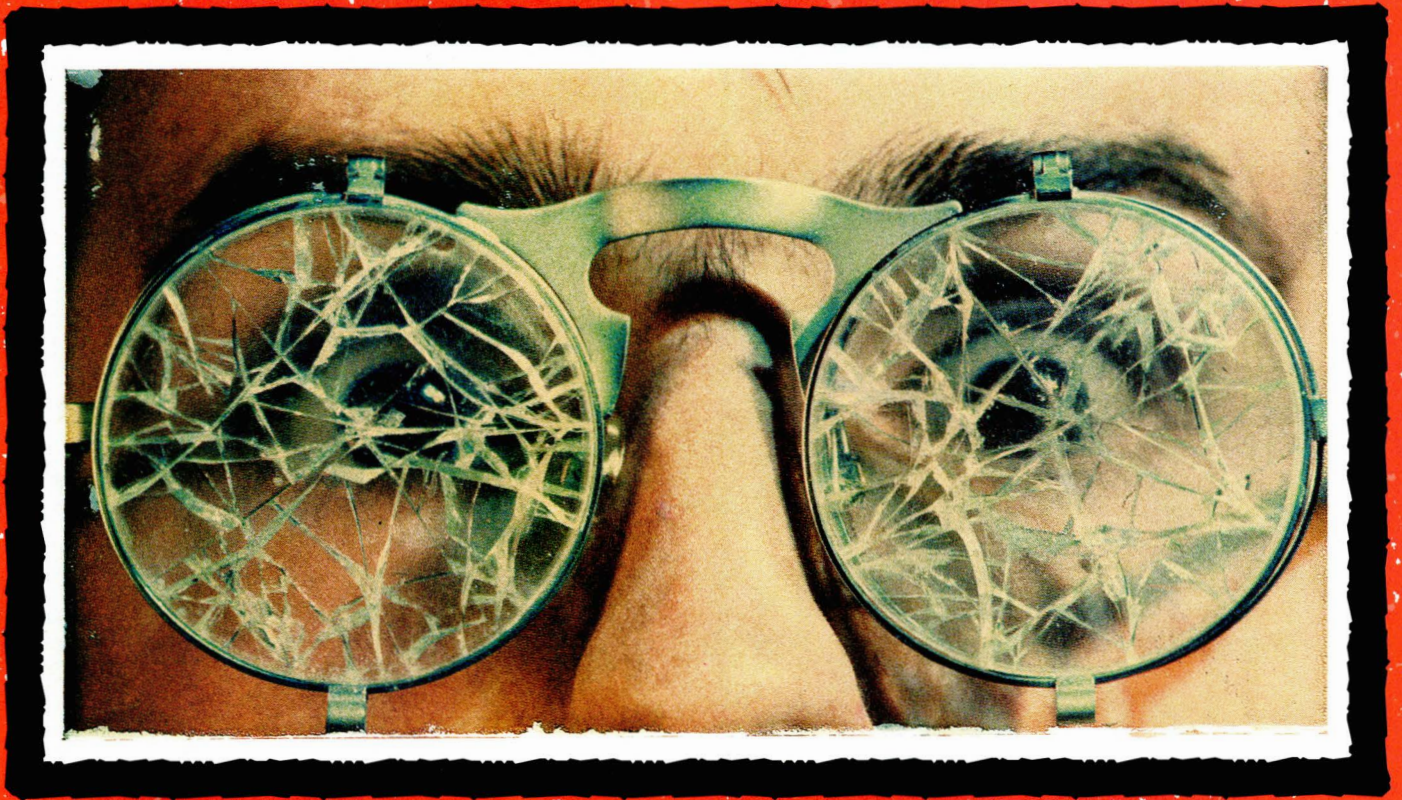
Boston's classic first album is guaranteed to fill your lounge with creamy Hammond organ and crunchy guitar. Recreated from "first-generation masters, session work tapes or other original recording sources", the Super Bit Map treatment adds a load of extra definition.

One For All 6, £39.95

The concept of a unifying remote control is not new, but this must be among the most ergonomic examples of the breed — and claims to operate pretty much any type of gear. Setting up is easy to do: the company supplies a list of three-digit codes for a vast range of brands and components, from TVs to DAT machines. It's then a matter of a little trial and error to find the code that works your appliance.

The OFA 6 will replace up to six separate remote controls, can be updated down a Freefone number and quite honestly, it's a bit of a bargain. For further information call (0800) 966194.





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Portable perfection

The ultimate portable stereo? **Richard Black** marvels at Pioneer's D-C88 'Super DAT'.

This is getting a bit repetitive; 'Here's a right dinky new toy produced by Pioneer'. But initiative is what makes this industry happen, so let's make the most of it. This month's innovation is the D-C88, the world's first portable 'Super DAT' recorder. It's a laptop-computer-sized machine featuring Pioneer's 96kHz wideband sampling technology, as seen in the full-size D-07 (reviewed in issue 133). The idea is to double the sampling rate of normal recorders and thus add an extra octave to the bandwidth. Although CD's bandwidth of about 21kHz covers the nominal range of hearing, some research has suggested that an extra octave (at least) is required for 'perfect' fidelity: apparently we can sense sounds at higher frequencies.

The pay-off is that tapes last half as long — only one hour from a two-hour tape. Still, that's long enough for most purposes, and DAT tape is hardly crippling expensive. And this machine's £2,000 price tag is enough to put off cheap skaters, anyway. The D-C88 is clearly a very serious piece of kit, beautifully and solidly made with features like a four-head transport for off-tape monitoring and a choice of 48, 44.1 or 32kHz sampling alongside the High Sampling 96kHz mode. The case and controls are metal, and look ready for some field recording rough-and-tumble. There is a full range of connection options with phono sockets for analogue in and out, coaxial digital in and out, optical digital in, and two jack sockets for microphone inputs. One of the advantages

of a large portable like this is the space for proper connectors and controls, something I appreciate despite my fondness for the microscopic Sony TCD-D7. A dedicated rechargeable battery pack (internal) gives up to two hours' field use, and is automatically recharged when the main supply is connected. The only surprise is that SCMS (solo copy management system — an anti-piracy system) is included in such an expensive recorder.

Session time

I took the D-C88 along to a recording session and ran it in parallel with my Sony DAT recorder. The session involved solo soprano voice and piano, and I tried various combinations of options. The most revealing of these (no surprise) was 96kHz sampling with battery operation. It's not possible to be completely dogmatic and ascribe this to the increased sampling rate, but all things considered it seems likely. Most noticeable is the ambience on the recording. It's

almost as if the microphones seem closer to the performers on the 48kHz tape. If you've ever seen a computer-processed photograph where the background is rendered as large squares of colour rather than continuous gradations of tone, you have a visual analogy. It's not immediately obvious what an extra octave of bandwidth has to do with this, but using the D-C88 at 48kHz (playing back through its own Legato Link convertors or a Pink Triangle *Da Capo*) gives much the same result as the Sony.

The other big difference was in the quality of vocal sibilants. The 96kHz recording sounded right while the 48kHz version sounded like someone tearing paper — it even sounded disjointed from the rest of the word. Indeed, listening closely one could easily hear that most consonants (which have more high-frequency energy than

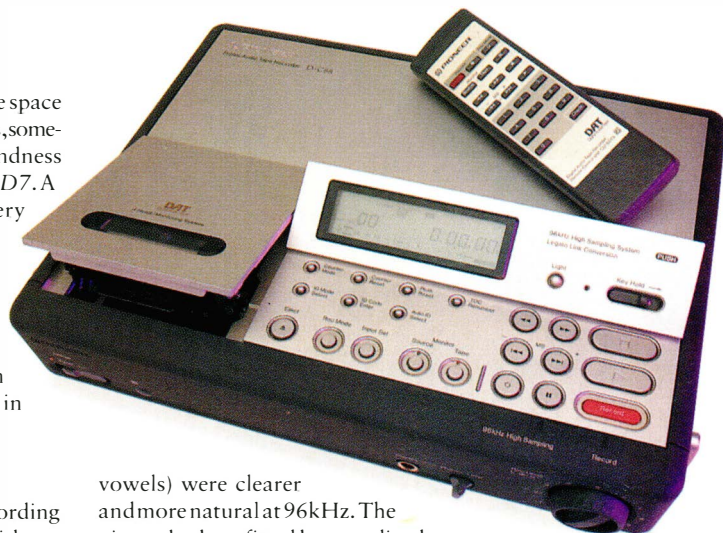
vowels) were clearer and more natural at 96kHz. The piano also benefitted by sounding less 'processed' at 96kHz. So while the 48kHz recording had a peculiar sort of nasal twang to it, the 96kHz recording sounded closer to the live event. Bass was very solid and well defined with the D-C88 too; I recall noting that in this respect, Pioneer's full size D-07 was no better than my Sony, so the D-C88 has clearly improved on its larger relative.

Clean power

I also tried operation with the mains power supply and at other sampling rates. With some portables, mains operation gives inferior results to batteries, but in this instance the difference was hardly audible. There's just a hint more detail and air around when using batteries for recording and playback. At 44.1kHz and 48kHz sampling, performance (correlating with other comparisons I've tried) is on a par with any good full-size DAT recorder, but I feel that differences between models pale beside those between normal and 96kHz sampling.

All in all, the D-C88 is another feather in Pioneer's cap and a seriously aspirational piece of kit for any audiophile who ever handled a microphone. I'm more convinced than ever that wider range technology like this offers real benefits. We can but hope that it catches on!

Pioneer High Fidelity (GB) Ltd, Pioneer House, Hollybush Hill, Stoke Poges, Slough SL2 4QP. ☎ (01753) 789789



No, it's not one of those early VCRs where you'd use your foot to press the play button. It's a very sophisticated DAT machine from Pioneer.



First among Sequels

Martin-Logan has acquired something of an Italian supercar image — fabulous, but not always of the real world. At first sight, the £3,399 Martin-Logan SL3 looks very like its predecessor, the *Sequel II*. It is tall, narrow, and follows the classic pattern of the breed, with a sealed moving coil bass enclosure married to a curved electrostatic diaphragm. Under the skin, however, the design has been extensively revamped and refined, and the result is a revelation. At least, to this seasoned Martin-Logan listener.

So, what makes Martin-Logan speakers special? Above all, of

It took a pair of Martin-Logan SL3s to convince **Alvin Gold** that a sequel to a Sequel is actually a great idea.

course, the electrostatic diaphragm, which in this case operates from 250Hz and up. It is as light as a feather and responds to tiny, high frequency waveforms, without loss of leading edge information or overhang — without time smearing of the sound, if you like. The aural character of this smearing, caused not just by driver momentum and resonance, but also the enclosure itself, defines much of the 'sound' of most speakers. Martin-Logans are also notable for their unusual ultra-high resistivity diaphragms, which can be used undressed — hence the startling trademark see-through appearance, with none of the usual obscuring layers to damp and mask the sound. In short, over the frequency range of the electrostatic panels at least, Martin-Logans are about the clearest window on the original recording you'll find.

Even their detractors will usually concede this much, but this inherent transparency is not achieved without cost — a cost the SL3 sets out to address.

Early Martin-Logan hybrids suffered poorly handled transitions between the dynamic bass transducer to the electrostatic midband. The bass would drag its feet while the electrostatic diaphragm would fly, and the result could often be messy. By improving both electrical and mechanical design in several areas Martin-Logan claims to have achieved a much more seamless bass/midband transition with this latest *Sequel*.

The SL3 is also said to be easier to drive. Sensitivity is 89dB/w, impedance

is four Ohms nominal; and although this drops down to 1.5 Ohms at 24kHz, no decent amplifier will deliver much current at those frequencies anyway, as there's no musical energy above 20kHz. There are some amplifiers whose stability might be endangered by this, if in doubt consult your dealer before throwing the switch. Amongst others I used Krell amplification which proved highly suited to the application.

Mmmm ... electrostatics

The changes from the *Sequel* are more extensive. At 163cm high, the SL3 is slightly narrower and significantly shorter than the *Sequel*. The panel size remains unaltered, though, along with the 250Hz crossover frequency, even if circuit boards have been displaced by point-to-point wiring. The input terminals are now bi-wirable, which is especially beneficial on any speaker with a semi-alpine impedance curve like this one's. For the first time in my experience of the brand, the speaker can be spiked, which makes a bigger difference than you might expect even from more conventional speakers.

Although the changes with the SL3 were easy to spot, I spent some time identifying important areas of actual improvement over the *Sequel* (which was already a fine loudspeaker), and other previous Martin-Logans. In the past, for example, there were some narrow, high-Q HF resonances, which with some material could give a slightly 'spitty' quality. This appears to have been completely resolved in the new model. The SL3 is much smoother and sweeter, though without loss of resolving power and intelligibility. No reference is made

to this in the accompanying literature, but my guess is that the small, transparent panels added to the back of the speaker in strategic positions are part of a tuning process designed to counter the problem. Previous Martin-Logan hybrids could also come to grief on loud, wide band passages, quintessentially choral music, but power handling has been improved, and the practical limitations of the SL3 are no greater than most box speakers. You still probably wouldn't choose SL3s if your tastes were centred on hard rock at truly antisocial volume levels — but at least they will no longer embarrass you.

There are still elements of the SL3's performance that take some getting used to. Despite the narrow, curved panel which is designed to widen the listening area, the SL3 remains a frustratingly 'hot seat' design. Changes as small as two or three inches make a big difference to the sound, largely due to interference effects causing ripples in the response curve. Imagery also tends to be mainly forward of the plane of the loudspeakers, although with plenty of differentiation in depth of image. Therefore the speakers are extremely responsive to positioning. Trial and error is called for, but you are likely to get the best results when placing on one of the usual odd divisors (eg one-third, fifth or seventh) of the room length.

One curiosity remains: the -3dB bass switch on the back. Despite being so well-designed that its influence is largely restricted to the lowest frequencies, with negligible effect on the midband and on stereo perspectives, the nominally flat (no bass cut) position was clearly bass heavy. Selecting the bass cut attenuator provides a frequency balance that to my ears is near absolutely neutral. It may be that the position will sound flat in very large rooms, but this did not occur in my lounge (which is a fair size), even when the speakers were positioned well clear of the wall.

Deadlines!

So much for the nuts and bolts. This is a jaw-dropping speaker, judging, at least, from the reaction of some of my visitors. One even left my house trying to work out how he could convince his wife to let him have a pair. I should also relate how I dragged out completing this review until the last possible minute, in order to keep the SL3s with me for a little bit longer.

However, I am equally obligated to point out that there are supposedly respectable audiophiles who turn their nose up at the very mention of a panel speaker. The problem is that panel speakers — even hybrids like the SL3 — are not very good at sounding like box speak-

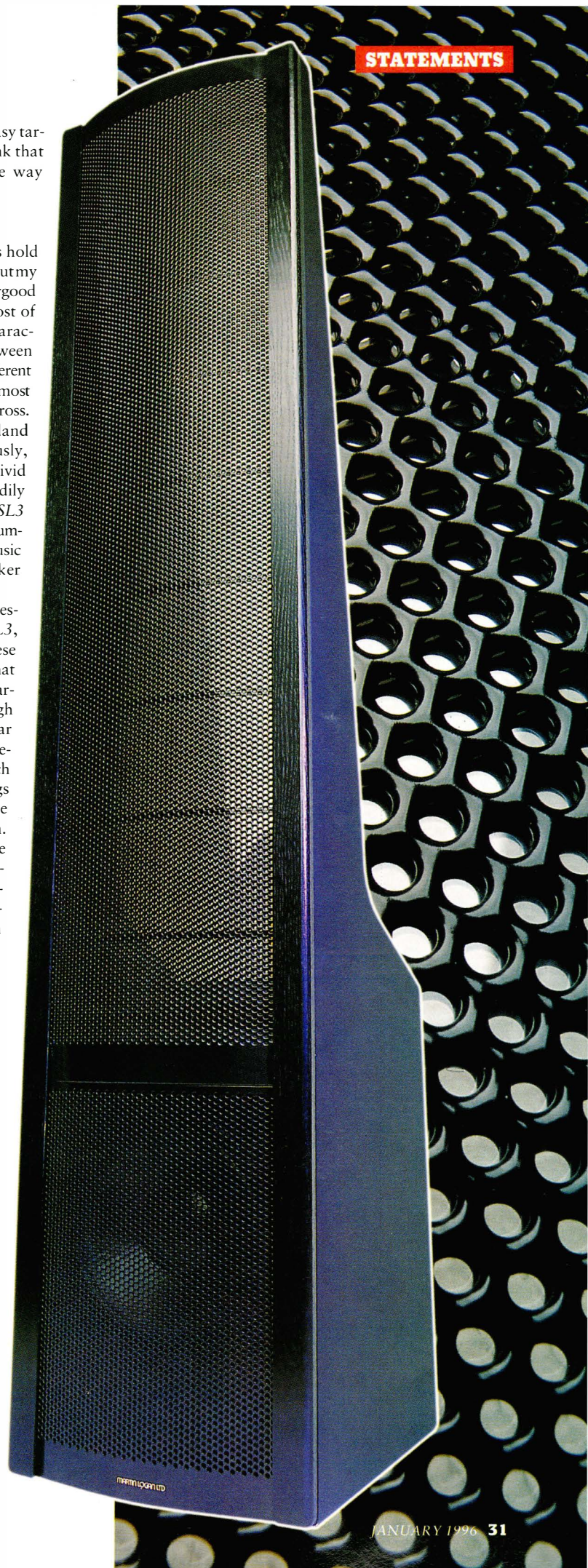
ers, which makes them easy targets if you happen to think that box speakers sound the way music should.

Black and white

Neither boxes nor panels hold a monopoly on the truth, but my personal view is that a really good panel like the SL3 has most of the aces. The change in character when switching between recordings of completely different types was starker than with most other speakers I've come across. The soundstage expanded and contracted more obviously, tonal colours were more vivid and therefore more readily distinguished. All in all, the SL3 seemed more capable of assuming the persona of the music than almost any box speaker you care to name.

My lasting overall impression of Martin-Logan's SL3, however, is none of these things, but simply the way that it made me respond to the various works played through the system — both familiar and unfamiliar. There is a special quality to the SL3 which enables it to combine things that don't normally come together in a single design. The sound tended to be unusually smooth and organic, so that changes in expression and phrasing were particularly marked. Resolution of fine detail was also in the highest class, without any of the false brightness that tends to sneak its way into fashionable hi-fi systems. There was not even the slightest trace of anything mechanical in the sound. Simultaneously, the SL3 proved consistently dynamic. As long as the speaker was kept within its operating envelope, the sound could swell from an intimate whisper to an all-embracing roar. And it manages to do so largely without the change in timbre, which is often experienced as the sound goes louder. And yes, the join between the bass and midband is now practically invisible. ▲

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Tenth Night

As Xerxes turns ten, **Jason Kennedy** finds that age very much becomes it.

When Roksan started out in this business ten years ago, its name was synonymous with the *Xerxes*, a turntable designed to beat the Linn LPI2 at what it did best: timing. I remember the enthusiasm of the company's first brochure, which encouraged *Xerxes* users to listen to as many Bob Dylan albums as possible. I even wrote to them at the time, suggesting they'd do something to make the deck more beautiful; the original was a slab of black veneer with a black acrylic lid!

Now, Roksan has launched its tenth anniversary celebration, the *Xerxes 10* — or X, as it says on the deck. I'm glad to say that somebody has taken notice of my initial complaint and made a very attractive *Xerxes*, with contrasting veneers and nice chrome caps, but the principles of the original still hold true. The deck is a pretty solid affair, with compliant bushes providing damping and isolation between the three wood elements. The base has three adjustable feet, and supports both the plinth (which houses the motor) and the subchassis (which again supports the platter bearing and arm base).

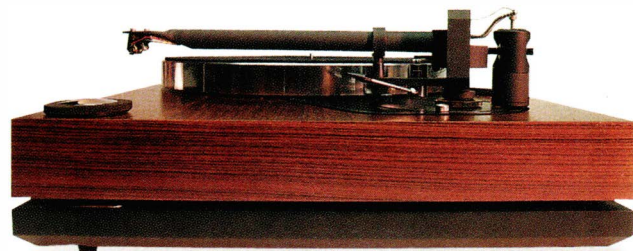
The original *Xerxes* was effectively a two-part design with a slot cut in the subchassis to isolate the arm and bearing, while the *Xerxes 10* takes its cue from the company's TMS range-topper, and uses a separate slab for this purpose. Compliance all round is greater than the original's 'blobs', so the feedback often experienced with the original model should be reduced if not altogether banished. The motor swivels against a spring which absorbs speed fluctuations introduced by stylus drag, and allows it to run at synchronous speed. Also it lets the platter's inertia dictate rpm and maintains constant belt ten-

sion. The power supply consists of two outboard boxes: one a split-phase crystal referenced motor drive the other a general purpose DC supply. These supplies come in a variety of options, the least expensive costing £299 and the *Atessa/XPS5* combo I was lent adding up to £874. The *Xerxes 10* itself will set you back £1,295.

Shall I compare thee?

Roksan's top of the range *Artemiz* arm (£895) is a joy to use. It stays wherever you place it over the record, and the lift/lower lets it down quickly but gently without the arm swaying around. On the end of this particular *Artemiz* was Roksan's *Shiraz* cartridge (£975), an EMT-generator-based moving coil that's locked into an open alloy chassis. It's about the only bit of this record player that is similar to my own: a naked vdH *Grasshopper* on the end of a Wilson Benesch *Act One* arm atop a Voyd. The latter is a more expensive combination with which the Roksan set-up was inevitably compared.

And I must say that it compared quite favourably. The most striking characteristics of the *Xerxes* — or rather the musical element that it brings out so well — are attack and speed. Percussive notes really sound hit; they stop and start on the button, which creates a very cohesive sense of rhythm. The good sense of timing adds a degree of realism to struck notes (often lacking in CD players), and this is probably just as important as good dynamics. Both represent different facets of impact, but the main difference between the *Xerxes 10* and my Voyd is that the former seems to have a stronger sense of rhythm, whereas the latter emphasises dynamics.



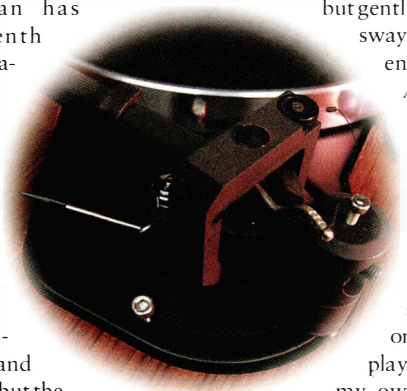
If this were played upon a stage...

In terms of balance, the *Xerxes 10* is a lot more even than its predecessor, which I found a little bright for the tube systems I was getting into. This deck, when combined with a Michell *Iso HR* phono stage, has tremendously low frequency power — too much, in fact, for the Electrofluidics *Sonolith 2.2xi* speakers I was using. These have prodigious but not excessive capabilities in the bass and didn't really suit the fast and highly energised bottom end of this record player. Comparisons with CD bore this out, although the *Xerxes* sounded a lot more convincing than the CD player in most other respects. It is, however, important to remember that other loudspeakers would probably benefit from this extra oomph.

The *Xerxes 10* is a very fine record player and the fact that it was bettered in some respects by a deck costing 50 percent more is hardly surprising. I can see that in the context of an appropriately balanced system, such as one of Roksan's own, the *10* is likely to produce outstanding results. After all, it produced superb results in my less-than-sympathetic set-up, and many hours were spent trawling through the record collection to great effect. If precision, resolution and timing are your bag I would urge you to take your black gold along to the nearest Roksan dealer. ▲

Roksan Digital Ltd, Stockley Close, Stockley Road, West Drayton, UB7 9BB. ☎ (01895) 436384

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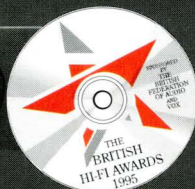
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Reelin' In The Years

"It was 20 years ago today/That Angus and Richard taught the mag to play" . . .

Here's **Paul Messenger** with the highlights of *Hi-Fi Choice's* glorious 150 issues.

I wasn't involved in the very first issues of *Hi-Fi Choice* — I was busy deputy editing another hi-fi magazine at the time — but I do remember the fuss and furor caused by its first appearance in 1975. *Choice* wasn't the first hi-fi publication to do large comparative tests: *Hi-Fi For Pleasure* took the credit for starting that particular ball rolling, and of course the Consumer Association's *Which?* magazine had been doing a similar job, across a much broader front, for many years.

What made *Hi-Fi Choice* different was the way it took hi-fi reviewing to its logical conclusion, by daring to assemble the overwhelming majority of models in any particular category, and put them up against each other in close, side-by-side comparisons. Detailed

From 1975 to 1995 and from A5 to A4: 20 years (and 150 issues) of the ever-changing *Hi-Fi Choice*.



technical and subjective judgments were the order of the day.

The result was not so much a magazine as a paperback A5-size book, that was at once smaller but also more expensive than orthodox monthly hi-fi journals. At *Hi-Fi News*, we actually treated those early editions as books, running reviews of them in our *Book Review* section — little did we realise that this upstart newcomer would actually have a higher monthly circulation twenty years later.

Bringin' it all back home

The mists of time have obscured the precise identity of *Hi-Fi Choice's* progenitors, though the two main protagonists were certainly Angus McKenzie (a leading independent technical reviewer and consultant, as author), and Richard Howell (active in editing, publishing and advertising sales).

The fact that the first issue was devoted to Cassette Decks and the second to Receivers — simply because those were the most important component types around at the time — only goes to show how much hi-fi has changed over the intervening two decades. Cassette decks are still relevant today, of course, but don't have anything like the same importance.

In the 1975 and '76 editions, the top-loading Sanyo RD4260 was the least expensive Best Buy cassette deck around, at £95 plus VAT. That's the equivalent of some £500 today! More indicative of future styling trends was the front-loading Pioneer CT-F2121, priced at a recommended £173.62 plus VAT, but more typically available at £143.70 plus VAT, and one of the forerunners of the rack component system.

Flatliners

Receivers had a near-death experience through the '80s, virtually ignored by all and sundry, yet now they are staging a real comeback in remote-controlled Dolby Pro-Logic guise. Two key budget contenders in 1975 were the Sansui

331 (£106.50 plus VAT) and Pioneer SX434 (£134.80 plus VAT), both silver fronted and bulky. The black, beautifully slimline and British-made Armstrong 626 (£163.94 plus VAT) looked at least a decade ahead of its time.

Those early editions of *Choice* probably didn't sell a huge number of copies, but they wielded profound influence. Though hi-fi customers took a few years to catch on to this unique buying guide in a big way, the retail trade immediately exalted it to biblical status.

Like most reviewers Angus had his fans and his critics, but whether or not one agreed or disagreed with the reviewer/author was only of secondary importance. What *Choice* provided was a genuine comparative database across a huge range of competing products.

Lies, damn lies, and specifications

Manufacturers' own specifications, brimming with optimism and obtained via a whole variety of different test regimes, were known to be riddled with distortions, and were thus thoroughly unreliable. *Choice* tested the products and published the data, every model was treated the same, so the comparisons suddenly became powerfully relevant and useful.

Choice's famous Best Buy and Recommended ratings have been with us since those earliest days (the corner flashes first appeared in issue 5), and have always exerted considerable influence on the marketplace. Just as important, if less obvious, was the facility of using data from several volumes to check compatibility between different components — whether cassette deck A would match input and output sensitivities with amplifier B, whether B had the juice to drive speaker C, or whether its phono stage matched cartridge D.

The earliest editions were a minefield of controversies, from the notorious Erratum slip inserted in issue 2, to the court action of a litigious US speaker company in issue 3. It was no coincidence that Dennis Publishing (aka Sports Scene) took over as patrons of issue 5, devoted to Turntables & Cartridges, and the first to be written by hi-fi stalwart Martin Colloms (currently writing for *Hi-Fi News* and *Stereophile*, among others.)

Editions dedicated to Amplifiers, Tuners and Music Centres (plus ça change) followed in subsequent months, and though the reviews were penned by various authors, all deployed appropriately comparable review procedures. A prophetic Recommended flash went to a £125 integrated amplifier known modestly as the A60, which was in fact the first product from a company called A&R Cambridge — now better known as Arcam. A quick name check

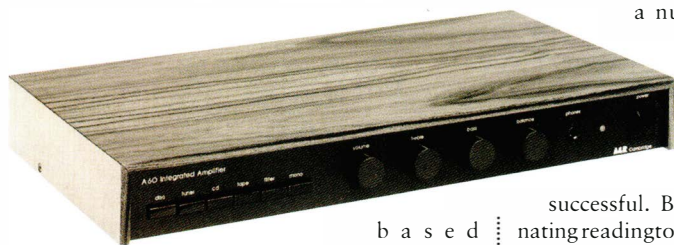
of the Best Buy budget tuners reveals that Optonica (née Sharp) and Eagle brands shared top honours with Sony.

Contentious, moi?

My own editing involvement with the magazine started in 1978, on issue 9, and even then controversy was still rife. The KEF 105 was brand-new and the most exciting speaker for years, so from our point of view its inclusion in the second Loudspeakers edition was essential. The late KEF supremo Raymond Cooke did not agree, believing it was unrealistic even to attempt to review sixty loudspeakers at one time and give each an adequate assessment. He had a point, but so did we, and we arranged to borrow a pair of 105s from a dealer. We did the review, liked the product a lot and put it on the front cover of *Loudspeakers* 2. Raymond accepted our pre-emptive strike in good grace!

Amplifiers were an even more contentious issue. The industry was split into two camps, one insisting that all properly-designed amplifiers sounded the same, the other that the sound of the amplifier formed a cornerstone of the system as a whole. All the reputable, measurement-

Back when Arcam was called A&R Cambridge, the A60 was king of the amplifier hill.



based reviewers at the time adhered to the former camp, whereas I was firmly committed to the latter, so I ended up as author as well as editor, working alongside Edinburgh dealer and electronics graduate Dave Watson for a couple of issues.

In view of the controversy and the difficulty of 'proving' the subjectivist case, we restricted ourselves to Recommendations only for this issue. Stand-out British designs included the A&R A60 (again), plus the Sugden A48 II and Meridian's gorgeous 101/105 combo, while Sansui showed strongly amongst the imports, especially with the slimline AU217 II.

Nowadays, of course, sound quality takes pride of place as a matter of course in any amplifier assessment, but in 1979 we were a little ahead of our time, and the industry hadn't really caught onto amplifier sound. Valve amps were found only in attics, and on our publication date we just preceded the launch of NAD's famous 3020, which totally changed British attitudes to amps.

From the long to the compact

If amps were still emerging as an area for subjective debate, the importance of turntable sound quality was better appreciated, and Martin Colloms's ground-breaking vibration measurements on turntables and tonearms gave a fascinating insight into some of the whys and

Some of the early Best Buy and Recommended products, in their original reviews, '70s Hi-Fi Choice style.

wherefores. 1978's £250 Linn *Sondek LP12* showed fine resistance to acoustic breakthrough, and also sounded very good when used with a top quality arm 'although arms of lesser quality also sounded surprisingly good' (issue 12).

By 1984 Turntables and CD players sat cheek-by-jowl in Martin Colloms's issue 35, edited by Steve Harris (now at the helm of *Hi-Fi News*). This was the first time a decent number of different brands were represented, but even so, the analogue vinyl content ran from page 1-193 (give or take a few ads) while the CD section only spanned 195-221. The least expensive CD players were £300, and the catalogue of software was still limited, but Best Buy honours went to Yamaha's *CD-X1* (£359) and machines from Philips and Marantz. By the following year's edition (issue 40) the title had turned round to CD Players & Turntables, and the pages split had become roughly 50/50.

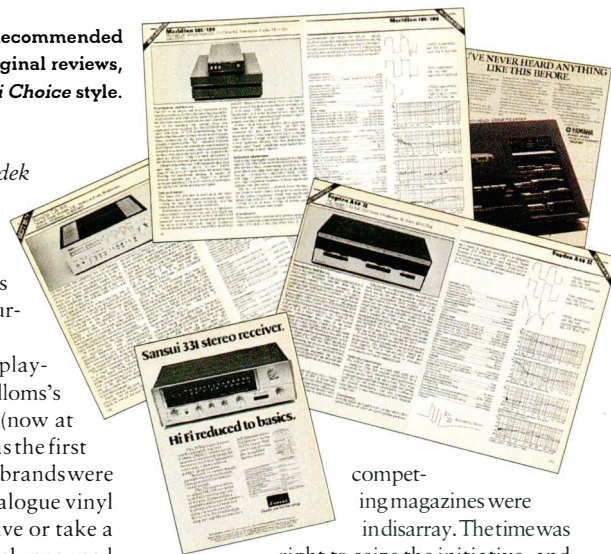
During the '80s, new management blood and the falling cost of colour repro brought a number of new initiatives, including a number of large-format special editions. Among the earliest were two forays into the world of video, neither of which were particularly successful. Both, however, make fascinating reading today, now that hi-fi and video are moving much closer together.

More significant, perhaps, were a series of annual special editions aimed at both ends of the readership spectrum. Timed to appear at the start of hi-fi's main selling season, the *Best Buy Guides* were lavish reviews of the best products from every component category. (Back this month! See page 72-73 - Ed). For the serious enthusiast, meanwhile, *The Collection* was an essential purchase. This was crammed with classy full-colour photography and detailed reviews on the most exotic and expensive hi-fi gear available. Some articles were culled from previous A5 editions, but many were undertaken specifically for the project. It still hasn't made a mark about the editorial workload involved!

It's Choice, Jim, but not as we know it

I regained the helm of *Choice* in 1986, but by 1987 it seemed clear that

The KEF 105 — one of our early 'contentious' reviews.

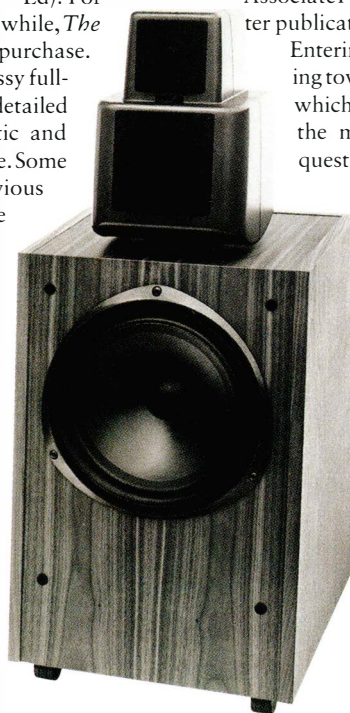


compet-ing magazines were in disarray. The time was right to seize the initiative, and in November 1987 *Hi-Fi Choice* transformed from a quarterly book to a monthly A4-size magazine. The editorial team was reinforced for the launch by current Deputy Editor Jason Kennedy and Dan Houston, who's now scribing for *What Hi-Fi?*.

Still costing nearly twice the price of the nearest competing title, issue 53 was packed with group tests, single reviews, features and colour, with the icing on the cake being the famous *Buyer's Guide Directory*. Loudspeakers were the main review content, and notable new budget Best Buys included the Goodmans *Maxim II* and Mordaunt-Short *MS10 II*.

John Bamford took over the editorial reins in 1988, and the new monthly *Choice* went from strength to strength until he departed to work for Pioneer at the end of 1990. The last five years, however, have seen the most rapid changes: during Andy Benham's tenure (1991-1993), full colour was introduced throughout the magazine, and Paul 'Graphmeister' Miller was appointed as main reviewer of CD players and amplifiers. Current *Choice* editor Stan Vincent took over from Simon Davies in June 1994 — who has now returned as Associate Publisher of *Choice* and its sister publication, *Home Entertainment*.

Entering its third decade and heading towards a bi-centennial edition which should neatly coincide with the millennium, the immediate question that must be asked of the 200th edition is whether Paul Miller's graphs will have become holographic. On a more serious note, the most exciting challenge facing *Choice* and the hi-fi industry is the inexorable consumer trend towards combined video-with-audio. It's a sign of the times that the most significant product reviewed in 1995 was Meridian's *Home Theatre* system, given a most comprehensive ten-page workout in issue 140.



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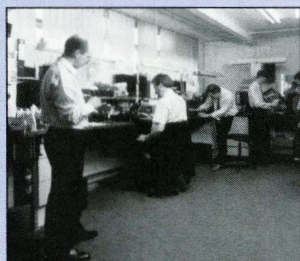


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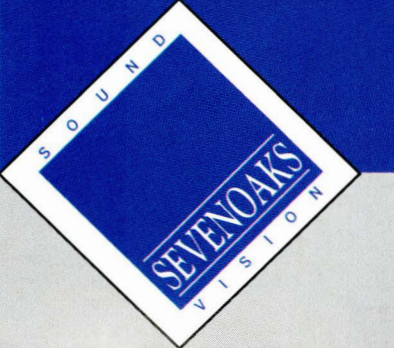
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arcam



ALPHA 6 CD

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cyrus



III

Following the success of the original Cyrus range, the new Cyrus III was developed. Inside the familiar shoe-box casing, this remarkable amplifier incorporates the very latest technology, including full remote control operation. By adding the PSX-R power supply you isolate the Cyrus III from the mains, reducing the chance of extraneous noise and glitches. The end result is an audiophile product, adept at reproducing all types of music with great reality. The recent award from the Federation of British Audio enhances the CYRUS III's reputation further. For more details on the Cyrus range, including the DISCMASTER, DACMASTER, DAD7, FM7 and the new PRE/POWER amplifiers, contact your local Sevenoaks Hi Fi-Cyrus branch.

ruark



PALADIN

Craftsmanship, style and refined musical presentation is evident with all Ruark loudspeaker's. This is the result of years of experience and dedication to design. As a member of the Guild of Master Craftsmen they refuse to accept compromise. The Ruark PALADIN's are a two-way floorstanding loudspeaker that incorporate a new long throw driver and a

Vifa tweeter, ensuring superb mid range clarity and the dimension of extended bass. This means that when the PALADIN's are partnered with suitable amplification they are sure to enhance all music lovers' enjoyment for many years to come. To addition the Ruark range, including the TEMPLAR, TALISMAN II, CRUSADER II and the new ICON's, contact your local Sevenoaks Hi Fi branch.

meridian



506

All Meridian components, from the simplest to the most complex, are designed to be operated by the touch of a single button on the MSR remote control. The 506 CD player is no exception. It provides the levels of performance you expect from models within the superb Meridian range. Utilising a high mass drawer mechanism and steel chassis means that CD transportation is exceptional. An 18bit Delta Sigma conversion stage ensures that bass notes are delivered with real slam, while detail is incredibly natural. These are characteristics common to all Meridian CD players including the new 20bit 508 and the remarkable 500 and 563 CD transport and DAC. However, the real benefits of the 506 materialise when it is used with other Meridian components, like the 551 integrated amplifier and 504 digital tuner. Creating an advanced an flexible, full remote control system.

audiolab



8000S

The new 8000S, stereo amplifier, offers the same flexibility and outstanding sound quality as every Audiolab product. At the turn of a switch it will perform as an integrated amplifier delivering 60 watts per channel, or by connecting a second power amplifier act as the pre-amplifier in an audiophile pre/power combination. As a high performance stand alone pre-amplifier the 8000S delivers many of the features found on the remarkable new 8000Q, such as Zq technology and remote control operation. With the addition of the 8000PPA, vinyl replay is superb. The 8000S also caters for the addition of an Audio Visual Decoder and an active sub-bass system. This ensures that the 8000S is an ideal amplifier for the present and the future. For more details on the Audiolab 8000S, 8000A, 8000P, 8000C, 8000CDM, 8000DAC, 8000Q and 8000PPA, then contact your local Sevenoaks Hi Fi branch.

quad



77 CD

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hi fi connoisseurs and music lovers

The new **77** CD player is available in two guises. The first is a conventional, mains powered CD player, which offers all of the hallmarks of performance and style you expect from Quad products. The second is a bus powered CD player, which must be connected to the revolutionary **77** integrated amplifier and operated by the new intelligent remote control. The introduction of this second model enables Quad's new **77** system to offer almost limitless expansion capabilities, and with the addition of a **77** digital tuner, this exciting family of components will soon be complete. This ensures that Quad will continue to offer their rare breed of innovation and tradition.

rotel



RC/RB970BXII

Designed and developed in the UK, the amazing **RC** and **RB970BXMKII** pre and power amplifiers deliver audiophile sound quality. By adding a second power amplifier, you can bridge the two in mono, providing incredible control with a wide range of quality loudspeaker's. The **RC** and **RB970BXMKII** offer the same slimline styling and characteristically solid build as all Rotel products. A separate record and listening facility with tone defeat and a split volume control means you have almost finite adjustment. While the addition of the **RQ970BX** phono equaliser ensures vinyl replay of the highest standard. For further details of the Rotel range, including the **RCD970BX** CD player and the **RA970BX** integrated amplifier, visit your local Sevenoaks Hi Fi.

monitor audio



STUDIO 20SE

The breathtaking **STUDIO** series of loudspeakers from Monitor Audio, offer a no compromise approach to design and construction. This is obvious the first moment you see them. Whether they are finished in a standard satin veneer or a luscious grand piano lacquer, they cater for a discerning palette. Incorporating a gold anodized tweeter and an aluminium alloy bass/mid range driver. The superb **STUDIO 20SE** deliver remarkable transparency and the necessary focus to reproduce complex passages of music with such accuracy that they are used in many reference systems. To experience the stunning Monitor Audio **STUDIO** series of loudspeakers, including the new **STUDIO 12**'s, just visit your Sevenoaks Hi Fi branch.

michell



GYRODEC

The **GYRODEC** has always been a class act. Beautifully styled in either a gorgeous bronze or a standard silver finish, it looks like no other turntable. Like all of the products designed and built by John Michell, it offers outstanding performance, extracting every last nuance from a variety of music. The **GYRODEC** incorporates a three point suspension system, so it is very easy to set up. It can also be used with a multitude of tonearms and cartridges, making it one of the most flexible turntables available. Over the years the **GYRODEC** has evolved. With the addition of the new QC power supply it provides vinyl replay normally associated with more expensive turntables.

marantz



CD63SE

Marantz are one of the audio manufacturers that enjoys making recorded sound as realistic as is possible. This development of pure hi-fidelity has led the Hi Fi press to bestow numerous Best Buys and Recommendations upon models within their range. The latest being the 1995 What Hi Fi Award of CD player Best Buy. The **CD63SE** offers sparkling performance. With its high mass drawer mechanism and copper screening ensuring unrestricted CD transportation and air flow, all music from classical to rock, jazz to blues is reproduced faithfully. The **CD63SE** also offers a logical upgrade path, via its coaxial and digital outputs. With this pedigree the superb **CD63SE** represents exceptional value for money.



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21st Century

The record industry is dead right to be nervous about the recent launch of CD-R. And **Barry Fox** knows why.

Fox

The arrival of CD-R (Pioneer PDR-05, HFC 148) should make some people very glad that DAT and DCC flopped, and that Mini Disc never caught on in Europe. While they have been waiting for a *de facto* standard in digital audio recording to archive their LP collection, the original vinyl has been gaining value — up to £40 or £50 for some good-condition titles. At that price, owners can afford the high price of CD recording and still show a profit by selling the original vinyl.

The price of the hardware (£1,300) is likely to fall. Philips and Marantz have announced launches of similar recorders in the spring, and Sony, Yamaha and Kenwood are also ready. Terrie O'Connell, Marantz's Managing Director for Europe, recently described CD-R as a future 'core product', and Product Manager Ken Ishiwata said that Marantz has a long-term target price of £499.

However, without a better deal on blanks, CD-R cannot become a mass market product. And this is where things get interesting.

Early this year, the major electronics companies held meetings with the IFPI and RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America). They reached an agreement on what can only be described as a policy of crippling consumer CD-R. But the agreement is like gorgonzola...

Stopping the pirates

Like DAT, DCC and Mini Disc, any CD recorder will incorporate the Serial Copying Management System. SCMS puts an electronic marker on the blank disc as it is used to copy music from a pressed CD. The SCMS circuitry also stops the recorder making a copy of any CD already marked as a copy. In practice, this is no real deterrent to piracy, because there is nothing to stop the user making any number of first-time copies from the same pressed CD.

Recently, a Dutch/German specialist electronics told readers how to build a Copy Bit Killer circuit, for around £100. Under the US Audio Home Recording Act, 'wilful' marketing of anti-SCMS devices is worth a fine of, literally, a million dollars. But what if someone calls it a 'bitstream cleaner'?

Each CD recorder also has its own individual identification number, stored electronically inside. A circuit called Recorder Identification automatically transfers this number to every blank disc used. The manufacturer keeps a sales log of machine numbers supplied to dealers.



Dealers are supposed to cross-reference these numbers with customers who buy the machines. So, if legal inspectors find large numbers of pirated CDs bearing the same serial number, they should be able to track down the machine owner from the sales logs. But even if logs are kept, pirates can easily defeat the system by buying under a false name.

Consumer decks should only be able to record on blanks which are marked 'for consumer use'. Apart from the printed label, these discs are factory-marked with an electronic Disc Application Code. The digital time code, pre-pressed onto the disc in the groove, has the digital bit number 14 set to 'one'. Professional discs have bit number 14 set to 'zero'. As soon as a blank disc is loaded, the consumer recorder checks bit 14, and if it is set to zero the disc is physically rejected. Professional players can, however, cope with either bit setting.

The one-hour threshold

While professional discs run for 74 minutes, Pioneer's blanks stop at 60 minutes. This is unlikely to matter when archiving an LP, but it blocks straight-through dubbing of hour-plus CDs. The IFPI says there is no written agreement on playing time, but Pioneer is working on the understanding that consumer discs can only run to 60 minutes. As Pioneer relies heavily on the goodwill of the music industry for Laser Disc release deals, the company will probably not do anything to upset the record companies by making 74 minute blanks. However, tape and chemical companies TDK, Fuji, Taiyo Yuden and BASF have no such fears.

Pioneer's 60 minute blanks cost £15,

PC CD-R: Pioneer has made sure its PDR-05 is politically correct.

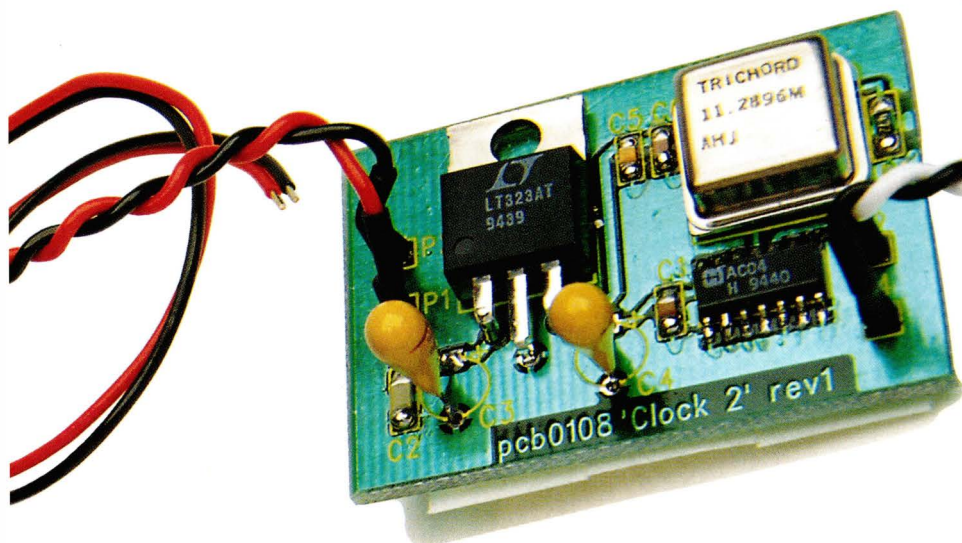
whereas professionals can now buy 74 minute discs for as little as £6 each. Pioneer says the high price is because the company has to make its own consumer discs, in a Laser Disc plant. Pioneer is unlikely to ramp up production and drive down the price, but Taiyo, TDK, Fuji and BASF could easily drop the price to a fiver per blank if they wanted.

If the disc-makers do start producing 74 minute blanks with the Consumer Application Code, at a fiver a time, CD-R quickly will become a mass market product. That would force the record companies to re-think their whole policy on the price of pressed CDs. It does not take a rocket scientist to know what some people will do if pressed discs cost two or three times the price of blanks. And the record industry trade bodies dare not strike deals which artificially hold the market price high. They risk actions under European and US law for price-fixing, anti-trust and unfair trading.

Even if the 60 minute time limit sticks, the record companies still have some re-thinking to do. When the price of consumer blanks drops, they can no longer short-change the public with music CDs that run for under an hour.

So, these may soon be the good old days which the record companies will look back on with red and misty eyes. ▲

Trichord strikes gold



Trichord's cult-classic CD player modification now has its own power supply for greater compatibility. Paul Miller investigates.

The premise was simple enough. Just hand your treasured CD player and a wad of cash to Trichord; they replace the existing master clock with a custom-specified crystal oscillator module called *Clock 2*; and in theory at least, this new and highly stable clock should tighten up the timing of digital data, reducing levels of jitter (see issue 147), improve the accuracy of D/A conversion and reduce all sorts of nasty distortion *en route*.

In practice, however, because *Clock 2* tapped off the player's existing power supply, it exerted what can only be described as a 'parasitic influence', actually increasing the levels of noise and distortion associated with some CD players. On the whole, modification was more appropriate to players with robust, well-regulated power supplies, than typical budget machines whose power supplies are usually more fragile.

Time keeps on slippin' ...

Although the concept of *Clock 2* was laudable, its execution seemed both flawed and unpredictable on the basis of our objective tests in issue 145. Fortunately, the solution was self-evident: just equip the *Clock 2* module with its own piggy-back 1VA power supply and tap into the player's 240V mains inlet! This has now become the basis of Trichord's latest £221 *Clock 2* System which, in one fell swoop, avoids

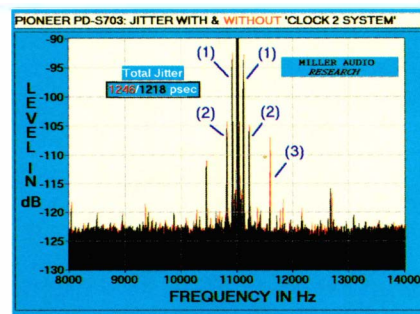
the extra noise and distortion suffered by some original *Clock 2*-modified players. Incidentally, owners of players that have already had *Clock 2* treatment can have the new power supply added for £80.

Early reports suggest that the new *Clock 2* System amounts to a more profound upgrade than the original *Clock 2*, even though there is no appreciable change in the harmonic distortion, noise or low-level linearity of the modified players. Jitter, however, is the key.

For those readers without a copy of issue 147, jitter is a blurring of the precise timing of the edges that represent the ones and zeros of the digital code. If this jitter (or uncertainty) is regular, the distortion caused during D/A conversion is manifested as extra signal either side of the 'real' signal represented by the digital code. If the jitter is random, the distortion will appear as an increase in background noise.

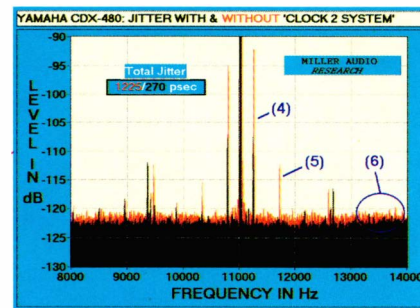
The right kind of jitter

In practice, the effect of the *Clock 2* System is highly specific, acting to suppress not jitter as a whole but only one or two types of jitter. Jitter within Pioneer's *PD-S703*, for example, derives principally from an interaction with its power supply (PSU) and bitstream DAC. The sidebands (1) and (2) are not appreciably reduced by the *Clock 2* System because the jittering effect of the PSU noise is linked to both the physical construction of the player and its



circuit-board-track layout. In this case, improving the clock is akin to fitting a new padlock after the horse has bolted.

Only one spike (3) in the unmodified player (red trace) is obviously suppressed by the use of the *Clock 2* System (black trace). This spike is evidence of data-induced jitter, caused by the pattern of the digital data itself, rather than some external 'blurring' agent like the PSU. As this spike accounts for such a small fraction of the total jitter, it's hardly worth modifying the *PD-S703*.

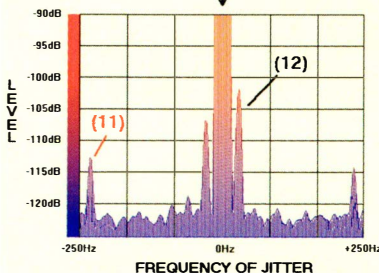
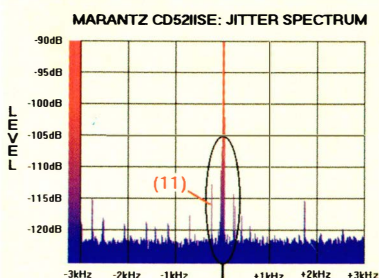
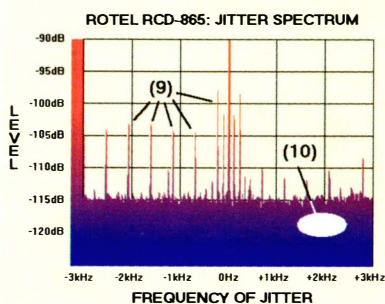
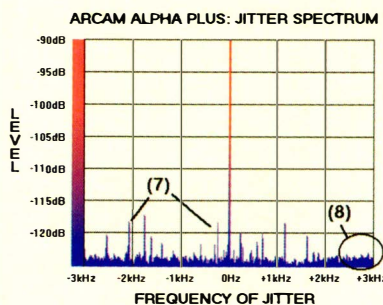


Which CD players benefit most?

This poses a question: is the *Clock 2* System best suited to improving CD players that suf-

COMPARISON TABLE OF CD PLAYERS SHOWING JITTER PERFORMANCE AND SUITABILITY FOR TRICHORD CLOCK 2 UPGRADE

CD PLAYER	TOTAL JITTER (WEIGHTED)	PSU INDUCED JITTER	DATA INDUCED JITTER	POTENTIAL FOR UPGRADE
Arcam Alpha Plus	137psec	42psec	99psec	Poor
Denon DCD-890	333psec	63psec	288psec	Good
Marantz CD-52II SE	408psec	<20psec	134psec	Average
Marantz CD-65II	237psec	54psec	108psec	Average
Marantz CD-65II SE	192psec	<20psec	86psec	Average
Micromega Leader	196psec	61psec	165psec	Good
Philips CD850	236psec	<20psec	201psec	Very Good
Pioneer PD-S703	1246psec	1060psec	230psec	Poor
Rotel RCD-855	182psec	<20psec	122psec	Average
Rotel RCD-865	1111psec	470psec	1006psec	Excellent
Rotel RCD-965BX	351psec	278psec	185psec	Average
Sony CDP-311	2145psec	690psec	1447psec	Excellent
Yamaha CDX-480	1225psec	<20psec	1218psec	Excellent



fer from data-induced jitter, rather than other forms? To test this theory I inserted the Clock 2 circuitry into a CD player already known to suffer high levels of data-induced jitter. Yamaha's CDX-480 (tested in issue 147) was the ideal candidate—a player that incurs some 1225 picoseconds of jitter, 95 percent of which is data-induced.

As suspected, the result was that Clock 2 smashed both the fundamental data-induced jitter (4) and third harmonic data-induced jitter (5) down to just 270psec. You can also see a significant reduction in random (noise-like) jitter (6) between the original (red) and modified (black) players. The upshot? A vastly superior sound from a player originally hampered by a poor clock design.

Which CD players to upgrade?

Having come to understand the mechanism behind the new Clock 2 upgrade, I collected together a number of old-time CD players:

favourites that sold very well in their time but which are now, likely as not, due for replacement. The results of this survey are shown in the box above.

Let's look at some of the results in greater detail. We've already discovered that Pioneer's PD-S703 isn't worth re-clocking because, despite high overall jitter levels, data-induced distortion is already very low.

By contrast, both the Rotel RCD-855 and Arcam Alpha Plus may suffer a far higher proportion of data-induced jitter (7), but the overall amount of such distortion is already so low that re-clocking would simply be overkill. I've plotted these jitter spectra in our usual format so you can compare them with players from issue 147 and next month's test group. By the way, it's interesting that the Alpha Plus's random or noise-like jitter (8) is lower than that achieved by any player we've tested recently!

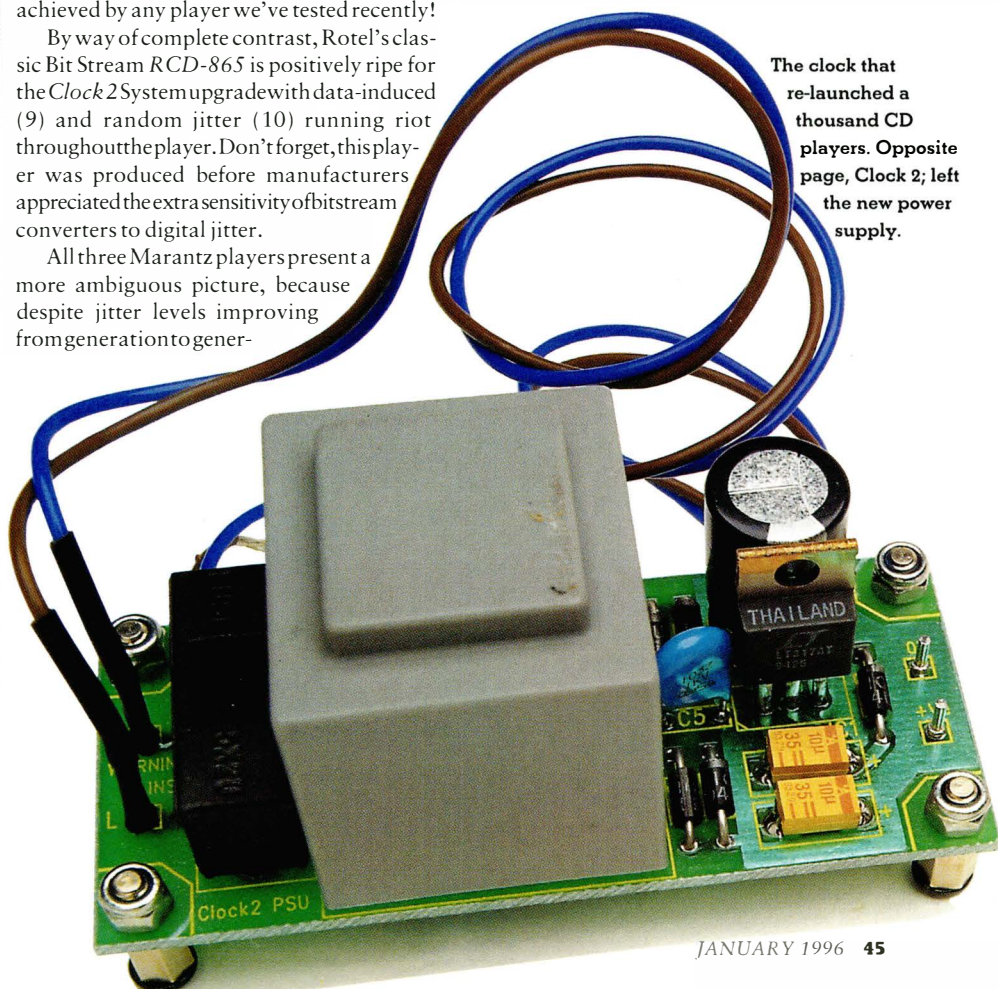
By way of complete contrast, Rotel's classic Bit Stream RCD-865 is positively ripe for the Clock 2 System upgrade with data-induced (9) and random jitter (10) running riot throughout the player. Don't forget, this player was produced before manufacturers appreciated the extra sensitivity of bit stream converters to digital jitter.

All three Marantz players present a more ambiguous picture, because despite jitter levels improving from generation to gener-

ation, the trio all suffer from complex (ie not PSU or data-induced) jitter. The CD-52IIE has some data-induced jitter (11) together with a complex jitter component at 29Hz (12) which amounts to 359psec of the 408psec total. This can be seen by expanding the horizontal axis by 12 times, as in the graphic (left). As a result, these players may respond to the Clock 2 System rather more favourably than anticipated.

Conclusion

As we have shown, the original Clock 2 modification was not as universally applicable as it might have been. Now that its wrinkles have been ironed out, however, the Clock 2 System can be recommended as an upgrade that, at worst, should do no harm to your player. At best it can breathe new life into selected CD players, both old and new. ▲



The clock that re-launched a thousand CD players. Opposite page, Clock 2; left the new power supply.

Help!

DON'T SCREAM AND SHOUT IF YOU'RE IN WORRY OR IN DOUBT. ALVIN CAN TELL YOU WHAT HI-FI'S ALL ABOUT.

Chill out

I recently bought a Denon D90 with KEF Coda speakers. The cabinet the stereo sits in is only two cm off the top of the stereo. My amp is, of course, on the top. Is that enough clearance, or should I rack it?

A Rohws, Nottingham

Modern audio equipment is designed to sustain a certain amount of abuse, and this is

especially true of packaged audio, where the usual working assumption is that if anything can be done to bugger the equipment up, someone will do it. However, this is not a licence to mistreat: the manufacturer's instructions about ventilation should be followed. Just make sure that there is a clear air path around the amplifier and keep an eye on its temperature, and all should be well.

Query of the month

System: Micromega Stage 2, Audiolab 8000A and Celestion 3s, with van den Hul interconnects and speaker cables in a 12 x 20 foot carpeted room.

Where do I go from here? My plan is to add an Audiolab 8000P and perhaps change the A for a C. I think the things that needs changing are the Celestions, and I plan to spend about £500 on replacements. I like the 3's upper frequencies, however, and listening to them against a friend's Monitor Audio 7s has made me realise the Celestion's limitations.

My 'friendly local hi-fi dealer' says that floorstanders in the £500 range are a 'cop-out' and that they do not give 'true bass', for which he says you need to spend £2,000 plus.

Azlan Sharom, via the Internet

First, keep your existing amplifier, for now at least. It is easily good enough to see you through your next change of speakers. However, I think you should get shot of your dealer. The idea that £500-ish floorstanding loudspeakers are a cop-out is nonsense. The £500 - £700 price band marks a watershed of a kind, one that yields the first speakers with real bass — and they are precisely the floor standing columns your dealer berates. The granddaddy of the breed — the speaker that re-established the floorstanding column in recent times — is the £700 Mission 753, which I'd thoroughly recommend. At £500, there is the newer 752, which has a slightly softer, less dynamic and less defined character, but which can sound a little more transparent and less manipulative. I think you'll like it.



Dole remnant

My system consists of a Trio KD1033 turntable, Sony Discman, Aiwa AD-F410 cassette deck, Denon PMA250III amplifier and Gale Reference Monitors. The problem is that my turntable is the last remnant of my 'dole' system — the rest is what I like to call my 'low paid job' system. Now I am keen to replace the turntable. The question is, how does the Trio stand up against more modern machines? If the old Trio is adequate, I would be happy to merely get it serviced. Michael Hiney, via the Internet

The Trio (now Kenwood) KD1033 was a better-than-average-budget deck in the '70s. Its simplicity means it is easily serviceable, although a worn main bearing would be fatal. Nevertheless, the Trio's performance is way short of the Rega Planar 2 or 3, either of which would make an ideal replacement, according to your budget. They cost £198 and £260, respectively.

Ambitious

In Greece I have an old Akai component system to which I'd like to add a CD player. My problem is that the system is so old, I do not know which CD player would be suitable. I listen mainly to soul, slow and instrumental music, and I would like a sound that can recreate the feeling that the listener is where the music was recorded.

C.Sakellariou, via the Internet

The reality is that there is no restriction other than the bounds of common sense on the choice of CD

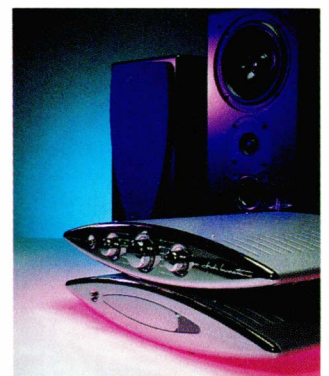


Rega Planar 3 to replace the 'Dole remnant' Trio.

player, but there is a strict limit to what you can expect from any player. Choose any good budget model from Sony or Pioneer, say, but expect to hear a somewhat cleaner and sharper version of what you already have. To experience the kind of audio nirvana that I suspect you're after, a wholesale change in your system may be needed.

Alto voce

I intend to build a system around an Audio Innovations Alto amplifier — I've fallen for its looks. I would like some advice on speakers between £250 - £350, bearing in mind its low power and current capability. Would Royd Minstrels with Cable Talk 3 cable be suit-



Audio Innovations anticipates customer demand in 'Alto voce'.

able? My room is four by three metres, and I listen to anything from rock to classical.
G Thomas, Berkshire

As it happens, Audio Innovations have anticipated your needs with the Alto loudspeaker. We took a subjective look at this £300 model in the December issue (149) and found it very much to our liking. A full, formal review will be appearing in the March issue (152). And don't forget the Alto CD player if you want the ultimate sci-fi system.

Field amplification

I have read in the past that all monitor speakers are not necessarily suitable for near-field listening. Are there any electronics (pre/power amplifiers) designed or well suited for near-field listening?
Robert Hoops, Texas

I know of no electronics specifically designed for near-field listening, and few speakers, although companies like JBL spring to mind. Most speakers are voiced to be heard from about two meters, or slightly more. Most speakers tend to sound bright when listened to from close quarters, and by this I mean less than, say, about one-and-a-half metres. Your best bet would be an amplifier with tone controls, such as a Quad pre/power or the Audiolab 8000A.

Current hungry

I intend to upgrade my current NAD 7220PE integrated amplifier (25W) to another NAD amplifier. I think my



Tannoy 632 speakers require a bit more muscle, and I am trying to decide between the NAD 304 (35W), the 705 (40W) and the 306 (50W). I rarely listen to radio, so the tuning capabilities of the 705 are an unnecessary bonus.
Philippe Yared, Beirut

Power is one of those attributes of an amplifier you can't have too much of, and the Tannoys will definitely cruise better at middle or higher volumes with a NAD 306.

Digilog-off

I own the following: Philips CD-473 used as a CD transport, Musical Fidelity Digilog, Mission Cyrus II and KEF C75 Uni-Q speakers. I am very pleased with the sound of this system, which has given me years of trouble-free service.

A few days ago, however, my Digilog stopped working, and enquiries with the manufacturer suggest it could cost quite a lot to repair. Given that the Philips transport is sound-

ing increasingly 'slack' and making all kinds of ticking and whirring noises, should I repair the Digilog and look at upgrading to a better quality transport (how does the Digilog rate alongside modern DACs?). Or should I junk both and buy a good quality midrange CD player?
Tony Brown, via the Internet

I would hesitate to spend a lot to bring the Digilog back to life, especially if you expect to face a similar problem with the transport. Think in terms of a new integrated player, such as the Marantz CD-72II (£600) or one of the Micromega Stage options (£550 — £900) if your budget allows. Consider lower cost alternatives from Sony and Pioneer if it doesn't.

Acoustic curtain

I am the happy owner of what's mainly a NAD system (502 CD, 402 tuner, 306 amp), but I'm not too happy with the speakers, which are B&W DM630s. In my view, they spoil the final result, but perhaps they only need a 'beefier' amp? The midrange doesn't project properly, as if a curtain is muffling the results, and the bass is much too heavy and woolly. I considered purchasing Castle Chesters or Dali 450s, but I am open to suggestions.

Further, I must admit that my cables and interconnects are very cheap. I wonder whether quality cables would change the outcome drastically.
Bart Lefebvre, Belgium

I've been refreshing my memory buds, and have discovered that the DM630 did indeed tend to sound thick and woolly. Something of an oddball in the

Micromega's Stage range will let the 'Digilog-off' nicely.

B&W line-up of its day, it responded best with a big, gutsy amplifier. The NAD 306 is certainly under-endowed for the job.

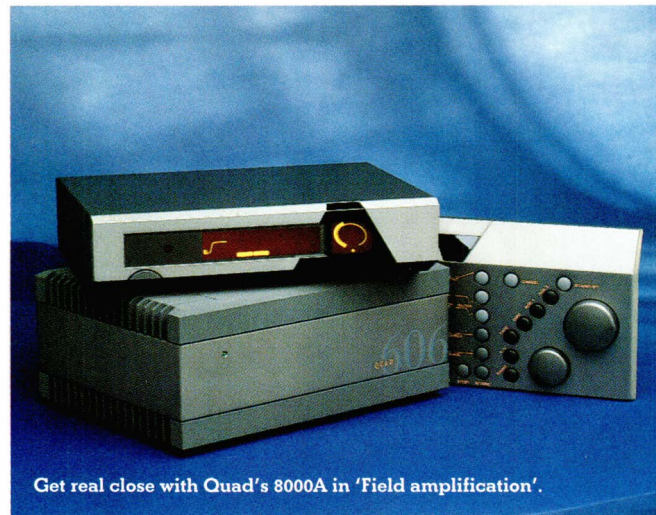
From this distance, it is difficult to make a definitive diagnosis. A change of amplifier probably won't provide a complete cure, although it may turn out to be a prerequisite anyway, given your level of expectations. If you decide on a change of loudspeakers, I can't answer for the Dalis, but the Castles sound like a pretty good idea. In any case, this must be an opportune moment to engage the services of a specialist dealer who can demonstrate some of the alternatives.

The cables will definitely make a difference, and as the system changes to offer more resolution and control, the effect of the cables will become starker. But they are unlikely to have a dramatic enough effect to account for the observations you make. The DM630 is, however, known to respond favourably to bi-wiring.

Harsh language

I have a Pioneer A-400X and a pair of Tannoy 633 floorstanding speakers connected with Talk 3 cable. The treble seems too harsh at times, which has made me wonder if there was something wrong with either the A-400X or the 633s.

Is there a cable that's more



Get real close with Quad's 8000A in 'Field amplification'.

Query of the month

Each month we're giving away a one metre pair of Precious Metals interconnect cables to the writer of the most interesting letter. If you've any system queries send them to: Hi-Fi Choice (Help!) Dennis Publishing Ltd, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ.

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◀ suitable, warmer and richer in openness and clarity? What is the cause of the harshness?

The other components of my system are a Marantz CD-63 and a Cambridge DAC-Magic 1. I was thinking of a future upgrade for the A-400X, but have yet to make my mind up. My budget would be around £1,000 - £1,500.

David Castello, London

There are various factors to consider here: both your CD transport and speakers have an inclination towards brashness and your amplifier is slightly under-powered to fully control the 633s. But it's not easy to see which is the worst culprit.

As a start, try toeing in the speakers so that their axis cross in front of the listening position. If this isn't sufficient, your most economic alternative would be to replace the speakers with something more relaxed and efficient. We would suggest you listen to the Systym 937 (£600) and Mission's 752 (£500), which are both fine floorstanders with an easy amplifier load.

Easy listening

My system comprises an Arcam Alpha Plus (Trichord Clock 2 modified) CD player,

Nakamichi DR3 cassette deck, Linn Basik/Akito/K9 record deck and Linn Index speakers on Ku-Stone stands — with Chord Flatline twin core and Linn interconnects. I'd like to upgrade the amplifier — an Arcam Alpha 3 — as I find the sound somewhat 'easy' and uninspiring. My only real requirements are a phono input and a headphone socket. I'm confused about which direction to go — Magnum IA170, the new Alpha 5 or 6, Audiolab 8000A, Arcam Delta 290, Sugden A21A or perhaps the Mission Cyrus III. Any ideas?

John Kenton, Bolton

Have you listened to any of these amps? If so, what did you think? Most of them will inject a little more electricity and in some cases a good deal of added gravitas to the proceedings. My money would go on the refined and exquisitely detailed Cyrus III, especially if there was a realistic prospect of adding a PSX power supply at some time in the future. But although it has a phono input, it has no headphone socket. I should imagine, however, that QED would be able to supply a headphone output device that could be driven by the Cyrus' pre-out sockets. ▲

DEALER DECISIONS

Three well-known hi-fi dealers aim for the perfect solution to your problems.

THE QUERY

I have about £2,000 to spend upgrading the main components of my system, which currently consists of a Philips CD618 CD player, a Sony TA-F440E amplifier, QED F200 cables and a pair of Celestion UL10 loudspeakers (about 20 years old!). I listen to opera and the like, so I am looking for lots of detail and plenty of 'oomph'. However, I live in a small terraced house so I want the bass tightly controlled.

I know the speakers have to go, but do I throw the lot out and start again? Do I upgrade the CD player with a DAC?

R T Standing, North London

Griffin Audio

My advice to you would be to throw the lot out and start again. Adding a DAC would make an improvement, but I don't consider it a good investment for you in the long term. Given the amount you are prepared to spend, I would suggest that you listen to two systems. The first comprises Linn Mimik CD player with Linn Majik amplifier and Linn Tukan speakers; the other is made up of Quad's 77 CD and amplifier, partnered with a pair of Quad 10L speakers.

Both these systems sound tremendous on all kinds of music, and speaker will work superbly in a small room. Consider a pair of Linn Keilidhs as an alternative. These would give you more oomph, but as they are floorstanders, you should try them in your listening room before buying, just in case the extra bass is overpowering.

Bob Griffin, Griffin Audio, Birmingham

Acoustic Arts

We suggest you keep the Philips CD618 and add to it the Theta TLC. This device will extend the life of the CD player and upgrade the unit to that of an excellent transport. Add to this either the Alchemy DAC in the Box or DPA Little Bit converters.

As you live in a terraced house, you do not need an overtly powerful amplifier, but one with finesse, and we would recommend the Densen Beat 50W integrated amplifier. This amp has a wonderfully 'open' midrange, coupled with good control across the audio frequency range.

Due to the size of the room, we think the B&W CDM1 loudspeakers would fit the bill quite well. They provide good imaging and a tight bass, while being fast, punchy and very open at the top end. This should leave you with a reasonable margin for stands and cables. Hopefully, you will find this combination highly suitable for your musical taste and environmental limitations.

Kingsley Scott, Acoustic Arts, Watford

The Hi-Fi Company

An operatic voice is a truly musical instrument, which, together with the sheer scale of orchestral support, places special demands on a hi-fi system. We'll take all of your components in part-exchange, as they are fine individually. However, with a system, we think you can move towards a vastly more satisfying soundstage.

Ideally, we'd suggest a home demonstration, particularly to take into account that all-important interactive component — your listening room. Yet, working by 'remote control', we feel confident that our initial recommendation will meet your principal expectations — transparency and an emphatic bass performance. It's unlikely that the low frequency element of an operatic production will bother your neighbours in the way that the relentless 'thump, thump' of other music types often does.

We therefore recommend the Mission DAD7 CD player, the Mission Cyrus 3 amplifier and Mission 752 loudspeakers. The Cyrus electronics offer superb driving capabilities and can be upgraded simply by adding high current PSX power supplies. Suitable cabling can be decided once we have a firm appreciation of room acoustics.

Steve Wilcox, The Hi-Fi Company, Peterborough

The Jimmy Hughes Experience

Our in-house X-Files investigator **Jimmy 'Spooky' Hughes** investigates curious Mana-ings in the London area.

It may be couched in varying terms, but the most-asked question in hi-fi can only be: which component should one replace to maximise the potential of a present system and obtain the most cost-effective improvement? If I wanted to improve the sound of my system, there are various avenues I'd definitely explore, but I doubt that replacing one of my equipment support stands would be top of the list. Of course, it's important to have quality support stands, but surely beyond a certain level, the law of diminishing returns must kick in with a vengeance. Or not...

If you've already got decent support stands, you've probably got reason to assume things are well covered. Certainly, in my own case, using Mana's two tier *Reference* table under a Wilson-Benesch turntable, I thought I had little to worry about, feeling that any further improvements wrought by a better support would be marginal. Far safer to invest one's hard-earned in another part of the system — perhaps upgrading a key component. At least, that's what I thought until a few weeks back!

More Mana madness

It seems that I was wrong. Superb as it is, replacing the Mana *Reference* table with their *Phase Four* stand produced a remarkable improvement that went far beyond anything I might have anticipated. The difference was far from subtle yet difficult to put into words. Essentially, the *Phase Four* table seemed to make the music sound more interesting and vital. It was as if I'd re-set the turntable — suddenly everything sounded tighter and more cohesive, with greater fine detail and expressive subtlety. The sound was noticeably firmer and more solid, so that instruments and voices reproduced with

greater presence and body.

Yet beyond these sonic gains was a larger, more significant change to the music itself. It was as if one could suddenly hear lots of extra parts that hadn't been quite audible before. Rather than a track consisting of a few dominant voices or instruments against a generalised backdrop, the whole picture seemed to snap into focus so that small incidental parts suddenly took on added significance. Subtle changes of tone colour and slight shifts in dynamics began to register with greater impact, making the music more interesting and expressive. The whole experience took me back to earlier days with the Linn Sondek *LP12* turntable, and how it seemed to find the magic in otherwise ordinary recordings.

David and Goliath

It's easy to think that an expensive system must always beat smaller and less ambitious outfits. Yet often the most satisfying musical results are obtained from systems that are set-up so each individual part works close to its peak, resulting in a collective result far greater than the sum of

the parts. A modest but well-matched system giving 100 percent will often sound far more involving and satisfying than a much better system that's only working at 50 percent of its potential. It reminds me of Linn's comparison of a good, cheap system that included an *LP12*, with something much more costly incorporating a less able turntable; the cheaper system won every time — it had a certain magic that the 'better' system simply couldn't match.

I mention this because it seems very appropriate to the kind of effect produced by Mana's *Phase Four* stand. It did seem to allow a lot more fine detail to be heard, but by itself this was not what made the end result so satisfying. Instead, it was the way each voice and instrument started to relate, as if everyone was playing together. This, plus a feeling of firmness and total security or stability, was incredibly satisfying. Hence my remarks earlier, regarding the turntable being set up again.

Try it on your CD, Gran

This improvement is not limited to turntables. Putting a CD player or amplifier on the *Phase Four*

stand seem to have much the same effect, and Mana claim equally impressive results if their supports are used under existing speaker stands. Indeed, according to Mana's John Watson, the effectiveness of Mana stands in multi-tier arrangements, and under speakers, was something pointed out by satisfied users who had to convince the company to try the products in this way!

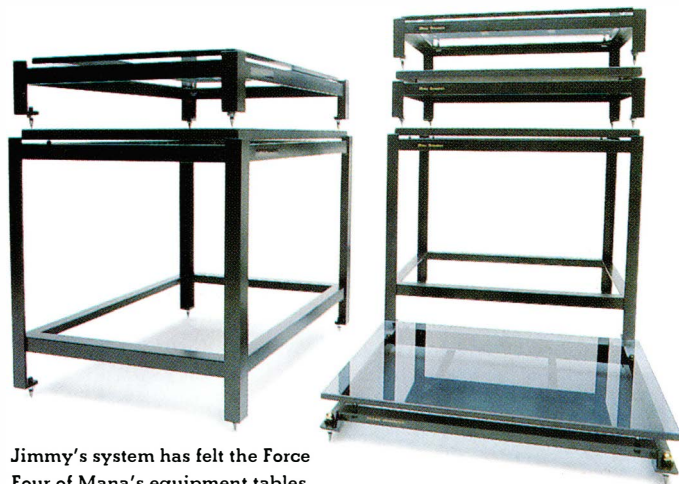
Like me, you've probably seen photos of multi-Mana'd systems which seem to have tier upon tier of tables and platforms, and perhaps like me you've found it baffling why their owners had gone to such extremes. I sometimes wondered whether Mana tables might breed during the night! But now, having experienced the *Phase Four*, I think I understand.

The Feel-Good Factor

Adding Mana tables seems to activate your system's feel-good factor, making it perform in a far more involving and satisfying way. Even if the system's absolute standard is not amazingly high, the Mana effect seems to dominate to a degree where limitations don't matter. In cold print it may seem hard to swallow, but a demonstration will convince in a way that mere words cannot.

Because of this, the Mana table is a valid if unorthodox way of upgrading your hi-fi system. To go back to the question posed at the beginning of this article, most of us upgrade by isolating the weak link in our system and replacing it with something that performs better. A stand like Mana's *Phase Four* produces what is in many ways a deeper and more fundamental improvement — by getting the component it supports to work more effectively.

Mana Acoustics, 59 Jubilee Close, Pinner, Middx HA5 3TB ☎ (0181) 429 0118



Jimmy's system has felt the Force Four of Mana's equipment tables

HINTS & TIPS SPEAKER POSITIONING

Jimmy Hughes gives valuable advice for those who thirst after reproduction righteousness.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of finding the right position for your loudspeakers. You can have a first-class system expertly installed, but if the speakers are placed badly, the final sound will be disappointing. However, where exactly is the 'best' place for speakers, and does it vary according to the type of enclosure being used? In an ideal world you'd be able to lay out the room to suit the hi fi, experimenting with different positions before finally deciding on the one that gives the truest, most realistic sound. However, in practice, few of us are so lucky, and many enthusiasts are forced to situate their speakers to fit in with existing domestic arrangements.

Stereo adds an extra dimension to the problem. Mono reproduction only requires a single loudspeaker in an appropriate part of the room, making the optimum listening seat fairly uncritical of placement. Stereo, via two directional speakers, dictates that you sit more or less in a specific spot in order to experience the full benefit. Because rooms are often asymmetrical, either in shape or with regard to objects situated within, it may be that one of the two loudspeakers has to be placed in a less ideal position than the other.

Let my speakers breathe!

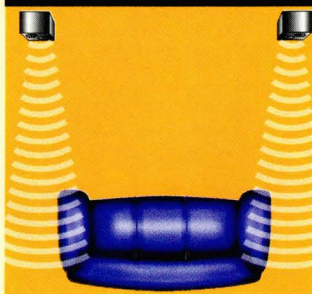
Leaving aside for a moment the needs of stereo, speakers broadly divide into two types: those that like to be placed close to walls, and those that work best in free space. Siting a speaker close to a wall tends to boost its lower frequency response, and many sealed-box designs exploit this to give a fuller, deeper bass. Conversely, ported speakers usually need to be given space, otherwise the result can be a boomy, heavy bottom end. Dipole designs also tend to need lots of space. When choosing speakers it's important to bear this in mind — there's no point in buying a pair of ported (reflex) models that need to be used in free space, if domestic constraints force you to place your speakers in corners.

The classical ideal for stereo is to place the speakers between 3m and 4m apart, and listen midway between the two, some 3m to 4m back. In this manner speakers and listener form an equilateral triangle. Moving the loudspeakers further apart will increase the sense of left/right stereo width, but this may result in poorly-defined central images — the so called 'hole in the middle effect'. Having the speakers too close together dilutes the breadth of the soundstage, making the music sound confined and lacking in spread.

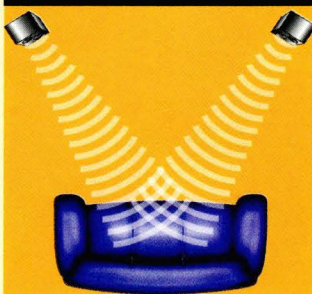
High-ho silver lining

The height of the speaker is vital, too: gener-

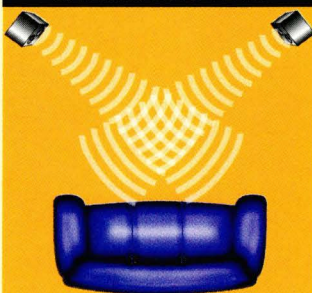
1. FIRING FORWARD



2. ANGLED AT LISTENER



3. SHARPLY TOED IN



4. SPEAKER AT EAR LEVEL



5. SPEAKER ANGLED DOWN



Images by Paul Wootton

ally the aim is to arrange things so that when you are seated, the tweeter is at ear level (diagram 4, right). Very small speakers need to be placed on tall stands to get them to this height, because if the stand is too low the result can be a 'small' sound that lacks breadth and scale. However, getting the tweeter at ear level can create excessive treble brightness. So it's useful to experiment by angling the front of the speaker so it fires away from the listener.

Siting the speakers so that they fire straight forwards, in line with the side walls (see diagram 1, left), helps lessen treble brightness, but may result in a slightly diffuse stereo soundstage with widely spread central images. Turning the speakers so they point in towards the listener (figure 2, left) will sharpen up stereo imagery but will also tend to increase treble brightness — this may or may not be a problem, depending on the tonal characteristics of your system. Many find that the best result occurs with the front of each enclosure angled so their perpendicular axes cross at an imaginary point in front of the listening seat (see figure 3, left). Dome tweeters tend to be very directional and lose treble off axis, so angling in this way acts as an effective natural tone control.

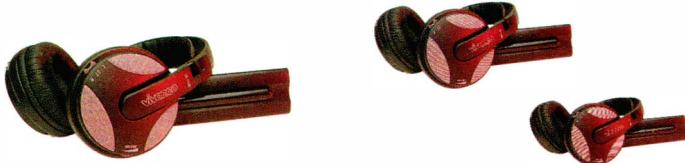
Full tilt!

Another way of achieving a similar end is to tilt the enclosure up or down. If you prefer the sound when standing up, rather than in your listening seat, you can simulate this and get a similar tonal balance when sitting down; simply angle the speaker so that it points towards the floor (see figure 5, left). In short, although you'll always get the most brilliant and immediate sound with the speaker drivers pointed straight towards your ears, often the sound is smoother and more accessible off direct axis. In this context, don't just assume that the 'best' sound is always to be had with the speaker grilles off. Again, you'll generally get a sharper, more open and immediate sound this way, but often the treble will be smoother, cleaner and better integrated with grilles in place.

Perhaps the most radical solution to problems of tonal balance and integration is to use the speakers reversed, so that they fire off the rear wall rather than pointing straight at the listener. (I wrote about this at greater length in issue 146, last September.) Serious exploration of direct/reflecting speaker designs has been largely killed off by the widespread acceptance of stereo reproduction since the '60s, and the assumed need for directional speakers to get clear aural clues for left/right positioning. Yet to my mind this topic lends itself ideally to home experimentation.

COMPETITION

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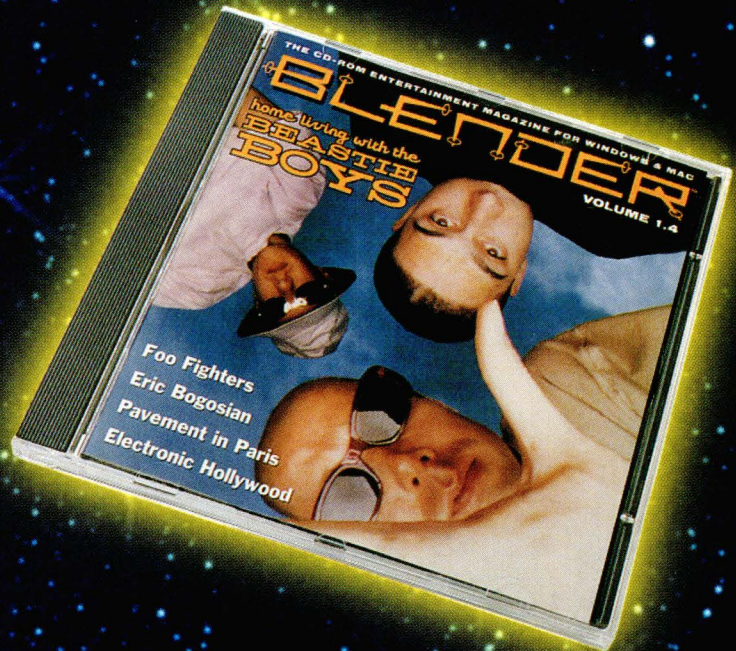
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The secrets of CD Players

Do you want to know what really goes on inside a CD player? Then let Dave 'Bitmap' Berriman talk you through digital audio.

Specifications and reviews of hi-fi equipment contain so much technical jargon, that to the uninitiated they must sometimes appear to be complete gobbledegook, understandable only by technocrats.

CD players are no exception to this rule, so if you don't know a DAC from a digit, this feature should set you straight by explaining the intricacies of the Compact Disc system.

Let's start with the first obvious question: what is digital audio? To have some idea about digital, there's something to understand about analogue and sound in general. Sound at its most basic is the vibration of air, typically produced by the surface of a vibrating object, or an oscillating air column. Whatever the cause, the air is cyclically squeezed and sucked, sending pressure waves outwards, to be detected — or heard — at a distance. Although not visible as such, if these waves are picked up by a microphone and displayed against time, the result will appear continuous from one instant to the next, no matter how short the time interval, nor how complex the signal.

A voltage waveform is a direct representation of the original sound wave. In dictionary speak, this is what analogue means — an exact copy of something in another form.

What, then, is digital, and why bother with it when analogue is so simple? After all, analogue sound reproduction has been with us ever since Edison uttered his famous nursery rhyme into the first phonograph.

In a nutshell, digital sound works on the same basis as digital computers. These wonders of the modern age function by using small active transistor devices on microchips to switch between two voltages — high and low. These two 'states' can be transmitted electrically from one set of switches to another, or stored in another form as magnetic information on tape (or disc), or on an optical disc such as CD.

The resulting stored signal is normally much more robust than its analogue counterpart and can be copied or replayed many times without any audible or measurable degradation, and next to no noise or distortion.

Virtually any analogue voltage can be represented by a number of on/off switches. Each switch represents something called a bit, or Binary digIT. One bit on its own can represent either zero or one, and so can only count to a maximum of one. Two bits together can count up to three (four possibilities), four bits up to 15 (16 possibilities) and five bits up to 31 (and any number between zero and 31 of course — that's 32 possibilities), six bits up to 63 (64 possibilities), and so on.

Note that adding just one bit doubles the number of possible numbers which can be

represented. Sixteen bits, as used by CD, provides a staggering 65,536 possible combinations: 65,535 plus zero.

The largest bit is the Most Significant Bit. In a 16-bit word this represents 32,768; the next represents half this 16,384; then next 8,192; the next 4,096; then 2,048, 1,024, 512, 256, 128, 64, 32, 16, 8, 4, 2 and 1, (which is the Least Significant Bit).

Note that analogue numbers are represented by adding the appropriate bits. They are written down with the MSB to the left and the LSB to the right, so zero is 0000000000000000; three becomes 0000000000000011; eight is 000000000001000 whereas 32,769 becomes 1000000000000001; 32,767 is 0111111111111111 and 65,535 is 1111111111111111.

So far, we have considered only positive numbers. To indicate negative numbers, the digital words may be changed into a slightly different form, called two's complement, and this allows mathematical manipulation of the digital data.

ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL CONVERSION: THE REAL STORY

So far so good, but the analogue signal is not a single steady voltage that can be recorded and retrieved like a letter in a pigeonhole. The signal is by its very nature fluctuating from positive to negative rapidly, at speeds between 20 times per second and 20,000 times per second (or 20Hz to 20kHz).

To capture and reproduce the original analogue waveform, it must be measured repeatedly in succession, and each and every one of those readings will then be recorded by a row of 16 digital switches.

The first of these functions is carried out (for each channel separately) by a sample-and-hold circuit (see fig. 1). This, as the name suggests, samples the analogue voltage at that particular instant and holds it while another circuit works out the nearest digital number in

ones and zeros and stores them before the next sample is taken: the process is then repeated.

These intervals are too frequent for even the quickest witted to note. Why? Because in order to re-build a waveform after digitising, it must be measured (or *sampled*, in technospeak) at a rate at least twice that of the highest frequency to be recorded.

So, to capture the full 20kHz audible bandwidth accurately, the sampling rate must be at least 40kHz, and this is why the rate for CD was set at 44.1kHz.

The safety margin allows for filtering out frequencies above 20kHz, because if signals above half the sampling frequency get through to the sample and hold and A/D stages, spurious data will be created. These are reproduced as extra signals called aliases once the signal is converted back to analogue in the CD player. Once embedded in the digital signal, this unwanted data cannot be removed, so an anti-alias filter before the sample and hold circuit is of vital importance.

Quantising

To skip briefly back to the basics of digital numbers, you may remember that the maximum possible number of voltages which can be represented by 16 bit CD is 65,536 (including zero), and it is these numbers which are used to store the analogue values of the waveform going all the way from the maximum negative to the maximum positive value. However, if at any sampling instant the analogue voltage falls in between these precise values, it must be rounded up or down to the nearest number.

Nothing can exist in between

Drawing on a similarity with quantum physics (where particles, or energy, cannot exist between quantum states) these digital levels have been dubbed quantum levels and the process of rounding up and down is called quantising.

This has far reaching implications because, when the analogue waveform is later reformed by a digital to analogue converter in the CD player, it will comprise not a smooth waveform, but one with a quantising error at each sampling frequency, which produces quantising noise and distortion (see (fig. 2).

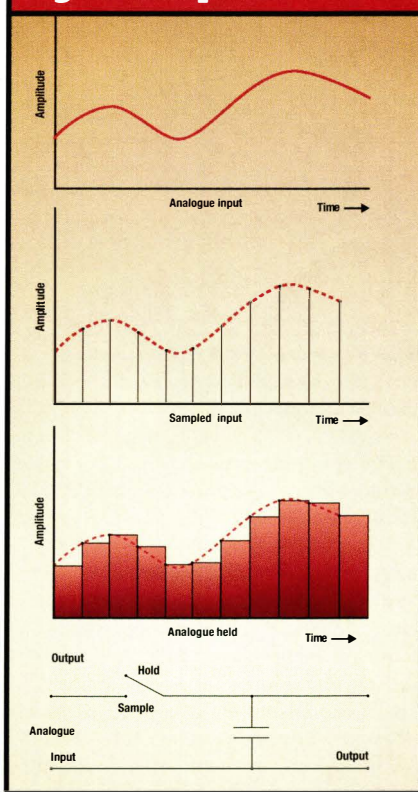
Dither

At high levels, the quantising error is very small, but at low levels the error becomes a greater proportion of the signal, and due to its grainy subjective effects it is sometimes called granulation. At close to zero volts there is a possibility that the waveform will switch repeatedly between the lowest quantising levels causing very obvious granulation effects and high levels of harmonic distortion (shown in reviews by a 1kHz spectrogram, for example).

Any wanted signal which is very small will either not be reproduced at all, or reproduced as a square-wave rich in unwanted harmonics (see fig. 3a). Fortunately, there is a cure for this which goes by the name of dither.

This comprises a small quantity of carefully controlled noise which is added to the analogue signal before analogue to digital conversion.

Fig 1: Sample and Hold



A waveform (top graph) is sampled at regular intervals (middle graph). The samples are then held (bottom graph) to simulate the original.

It makes sure that the signal is repeatedly taken up and down through the lowest quantising levels. This results in a kind of pulse width modulation which, when averaged out over a few cycles, recovers the wanted waveform. So, dither prevents granulation by averaging out the error (see fig. 3b). Note that dither does not mask granulation, it effectively eliminates it.

Dither greatly reduces harmonic distortion of low-level signals and, against all logic, actually allows signals to be recorded and reproduced which are well below the lowest quantising level. This is why tests on CD players at low levels often use a dithered test signal.

So long as the CDs played have also been dithered during production, a similar level of performance will be obtained at home.

Digital coding for CD

So far, so good. The left and right channel analogue signals are separately dithered, anti-aliased, sampled, held, quantised and digitised into two 16-bit numbers. At this point each channel occupies a set of 16 transistor arrayssimultaneously, making a total of 32 bits of information to be transmitted around the digital circuits and then recorded at any one instant. This type of data, where a large number of bits must be conveyed simultaneously, is known as a parallel data stream and CD requires (at least) 32 individual data channels. Clearly there are not 32 available (and even if there were, the digital circuitry would need to be duplicated 32 times—hardly economical).

The Compact Disc has just one spiral of pits for recording. Before anything can be done with

the parallel data, these pits must be converted to a steady stream of bits following each other in a serial data stream, rather like the carriages of a railway train.

They must also be transformed into a form which can be recorded on to disc and recovered with minimal loss or corruption. In addition, because there is no separate data path, a timing signal must also be slotted in.

This repetitive pulse, aptly called a clock, makes sure that events inside the CD player happen at exactly the correct times. Without it, the CD player will not be able to re-build the original analogue waveform. Also, any timing irregularities in the clock will give rise to distortion or noise in the DAC output.

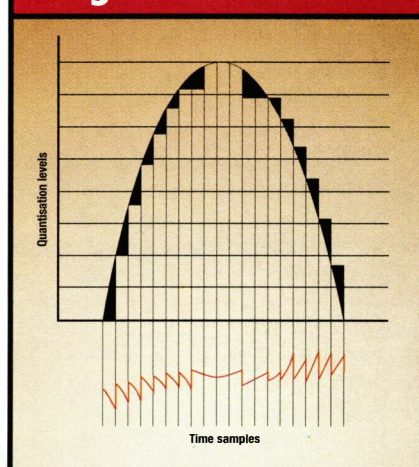
To prepare the data for transfer to CD, the two 16 bit numbers from each sampling instant, one for the left and one for the right channel, are laid down sequentially (called multiplexing) and broken down into eight-bit blocks. The order of data from six sampling periods is then altered (rather like shuffling playing cards in a pack) using a rather complex mathematically-based Cross Interleave Reed-Solomon Code (CIRC). Parity bits are then added to assist in error-checking later.

Thus, if any information is lost during recording or replay, it will not represent a whole continuous chunk of data. Instead, only small bits of data are lost from a number of different digital words, which can be accurately corrected. This prevents a sizeable dropout, that would otherwise result in a click or silence. Not surprisingly, this is called data correction. Words which cannot be precisely corrected are re-created by interpolation, while errors too large for correction are muted.

EFM

Recording long, rapidly changing sequences of digital ones or zeros require a wide bandwidth, which would encourage data loss and cause problems in recovering the clock signal. To overcome these problems, a form of modulation is used for CD called eight to fourteen modulation, or EFM. This takes each inter-

Fig 2: Quantisation



Unfortunately the sample-and-hold method can also produce errors due to time sampling and quantisation.



leaved eight-bit word (as described above) and converts it using a look-up table into a specific 14-bit word, adding three extra packing, or merging bits, making a total of 17 bits in all for every eight bits of audio data.

This EFM-coded data is arranged so that each change in the signal represents a digital one and no change represents a logical zero, or rows of logical zeros. There are a maximum of 10 zeros and a minimum of two zeros allowed between ones (see fig. 4).

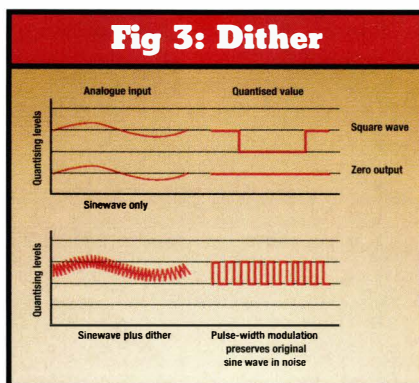
The lengths of the CD's pits are varied by EFM coding in discrete steps to dictate the positions of ones in the pulse train (with zeros in-between). There are nine possible pit lengths in all (see fig. 5).

The timing increments recorded by this clever means are much smaller than the pits themselves, and also avoid the need of separate adjacent pulses for each digital one (for instance, the eight-bit number 01101110 becomes 00010001000010 in EFM).

The existence of ones or zeros in the CD pulse train, known as channel bits, is later determined by the re-constituted bit clock, which 'looks' at the data at each instant during demodulation.

EFM reduces the required bandwidth, allowing a slower disc speed and more channel bits to be recorded than there are light/dark or dark/light transitions on the pits in the disc.

Self-synchronisation is also assured by avoiding long sequences of zeros (which of course would result in no output from the pickup diodes).



Dither allows low-level signals to be reproduced even when they are below the level of the Least Significant Bit.

The resulting data sequence comprises 588 bits with a frame structure not unlike that of a TV signal (see fig. 4).

CD production and replay

We have not, so far, considered how the data is stored on the disc and later replayed by the CD player. In the first instance, the digital signal is usually recorded onto tape at the higher professional sampling frequency of 48kHz and is then down converted to 44.1kHz.

The data stream, containing the encoded channel bits in 588-bit frames, is laid down by laser onto a photo-sensitive glass master. This is processed to make moulds for forming the CD from polycarbonate material.

When removed from the mould, the polycarbonate surface contains the data in the form of a single spiral of pits, starting at the centre and expanding outwards. This is then covered by a protective lacquer which becomes the label side of the disc. The clear polycarbonate side is the one which a small laser is shone through to replay the CD, and from this side, the pits appear as bumps.

The light from the laser is first collimated (made into a parallel beam) and is focussed onto the reflective layer. Because the beam is quite wide at the surface — at about 0.8mm — small imperfections such as dust and scratches do not disrupt it, as they are out of focus. The refractive properties of the polycarbonate layer have a further focussing effect which is taken into account in the design of the optical system.

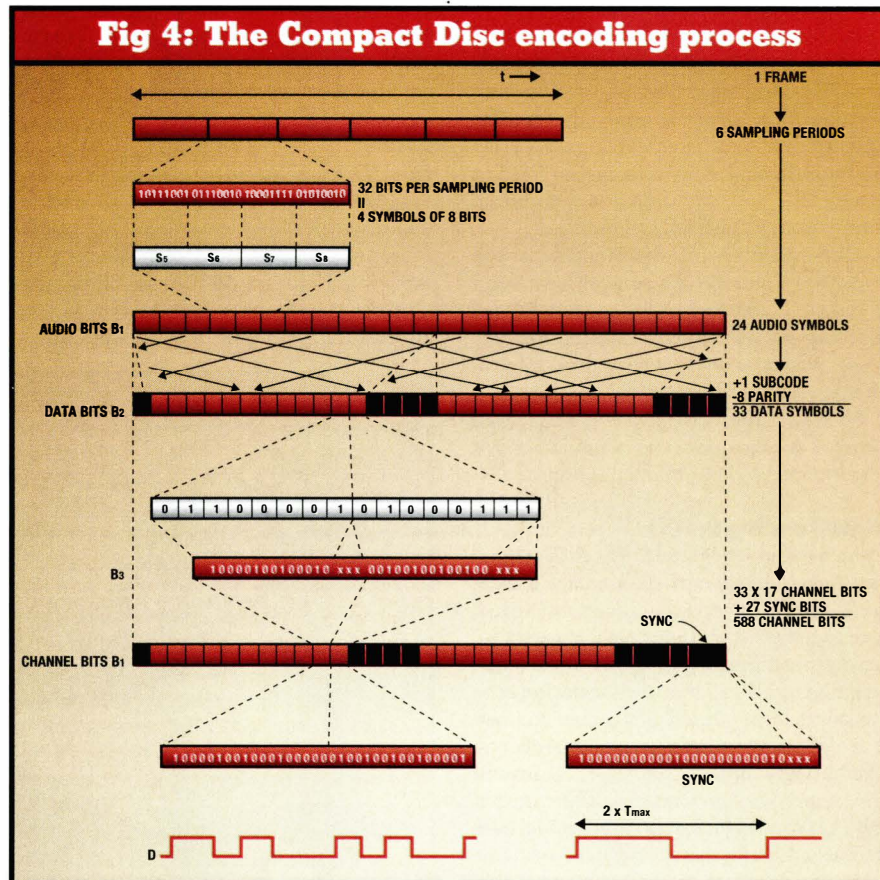
At the reflective surface containing the recorded bumps, the beam is focused to a diameter of 1.7µm. The reflected light then passes back through the same optical system and is separated to fall on an array of photodiodes which convert variations in light intensity into electrical signals. Between them these diodes collect the digital signal and are used to create analogue control signals for laser focussing and alignment of the beam over the spiral of pits.

But why does the reflected beam intensity fluctuate? The answer lies in the wave nature of light. Unlike sunlight and common artificial sources, laser light is coherent. This special quality means that all the waves of laser light are precisely in step with each other. Just like sound waves, coherent light sources will cancel each other out if 180° — exactly half a wavelength — out of phase.

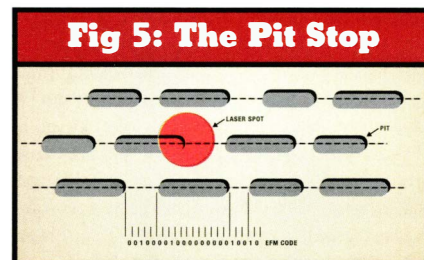
The tiny bumps are accordingly made 1/4 of a wavelength high. (When you consider that the ALGaAs lasers used for CD have a wavelength of 790 nm — that's 790 millionths of a metre — these bumps are seriously small.) Half the beam area is reflected from the smooth surface and half from the top of the bump, creating two beams which are 180° out of step. So there is theoretically zero light transmitted back through the optical system while bumps are under the beam. In-between bumps, however, the light is reflected straight back.

Demodulation and Decoding

In practice, cancellation may not be complete for each bump, but there will be strong, rapidly changing light/dark fluctuations for the diodes to convert to an electrical signal.

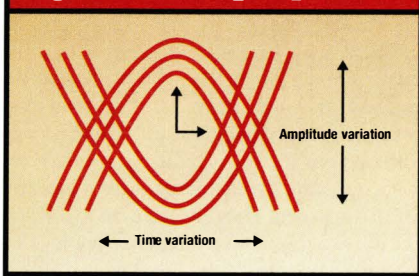


The intricacies of Cross Interleave Reed-Solomon Code (CIRC) and eight to fourteen modulation (EFM) coding. Note that the basic audio signal subsequently receives subcode and parity and then is modulated and finally receives a synchronisation word (after Philips Technical Review).



Eight to fourteen modulation encodes information into the pit dimensions on the surface of the CD. There are nine different lengths in all.

Fig 6: The 'eye' pattern



The 'eye' pattern — as generated on an oscilloscope — gives an indication of the severity of jitter in the RF signal.

The resulting frequencies involved are very high, in the megahertz region, so the signal from the diodes is actually in the radio frequency (RF) region and is commonly called the RF signal. Surprisingly, the signal does not look like a neat row of ones and zeros, more like a very wiggly succession of almost-sine waves.

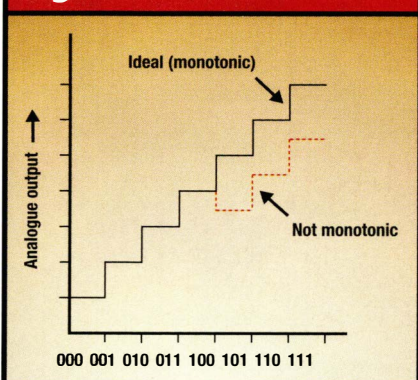
Furthermore, these vary in timing due to rapid fluctuations in disc rotation speed—similar to analogue flutter on a turntable. In addition, variations in output due to noise, etc, afflict the signal and will also affect the timing of the beginnings and ends of pulses which are extracted from the RF signal. At the end of the day, though, it is the RF pulses that contain the music data.

Before anything can be done with this messy signal, timing pulses must be extracted to form a bit-clock and the signal must be cleaned up to look more like square-edged pulses. Provided the fluctuations in time and amplitude of the RF signal are within certain pre-defined limits, the data train can be decoded into channel bits using the bit-clock. Beyond those limits data will be mis-read because it will be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The fluctuation in data timing is appropriately called jitter, and one benefit of the EFM coding used for CD is to minimise its harmful effects on the data. Jitter can be judged visually if the RF signal is displayed on an oscilloscope synchronised using the extracted timing pulses (the bit-clock).

An 'eye' pattern is formed by the overlap-

Fig 7: Monotonic DACs



A monotonic digital-to-analogue converter increases in output in regular steps. Deviation from the monotonic ideal is not desirable.

ping waveforms and as the eye closes, the signal becomes non-recoverable. The more open the eye, the better (see fig. 6).

A comparatively high level of jitter may be okay in the bit clock, but be far too high for subsequent processing and D/A conversion, where even tiny levels will be converted into noise and distortion.

Jitter is dramatically reduced by reading the cleaned-up data from the CD into a First In First Out (FIFO) buffer, which stores it temporarily. An extremely accurate quartz clock in the player is then used to read out the data, (rather like letting people through a turnstile one-by-one at regular intervals) so the resulting data stream has the precision of the clock and virtually all the jitter is removed. (It's important that CD players do not to re-introduce jitter in subsequent data processing or transmission, particularly between separate transports and DACs — see feature in HFC 147.)

As the FIFO buffer fills and empties, signals from it are used to control the servo motor rotating the CD, thus maintaining the linear speed of the data spiral under the laser, while attempting to keep the buffer half-full. The disc

starts off at track one spinning quickly and slows down as the section being replayed approaches the outer edge.

The next stage of signal processing is to demodulate the EFM signal, reverse the CIRC coding (de-interleaving), extract the sub-codes, correct or conceal any errors by interpolation or muting, and de-multiplex (separate) the left and right channel data prior to D/A conversion.

All these functions are carried out by dedicated microchips and timed by the CD player's own internal crystal clock.

D/A conversion

The easiest form of Digital to analogue (D/A) conversion to comprehend is probably the multi-bit converter, or DAC. This is so called because, in effect, separate graded voltages (or currents) may be turned on or off simultaneously by switches representing each of the 16 bits. The voltages (or currents) are simply added together to re-create the exact value of the originally quantised analogue voltage, which is held steady until the next summed set of voltages come along, thus reversing the sample and hold

Fig 8: Multi-bit digital to analogue conversion

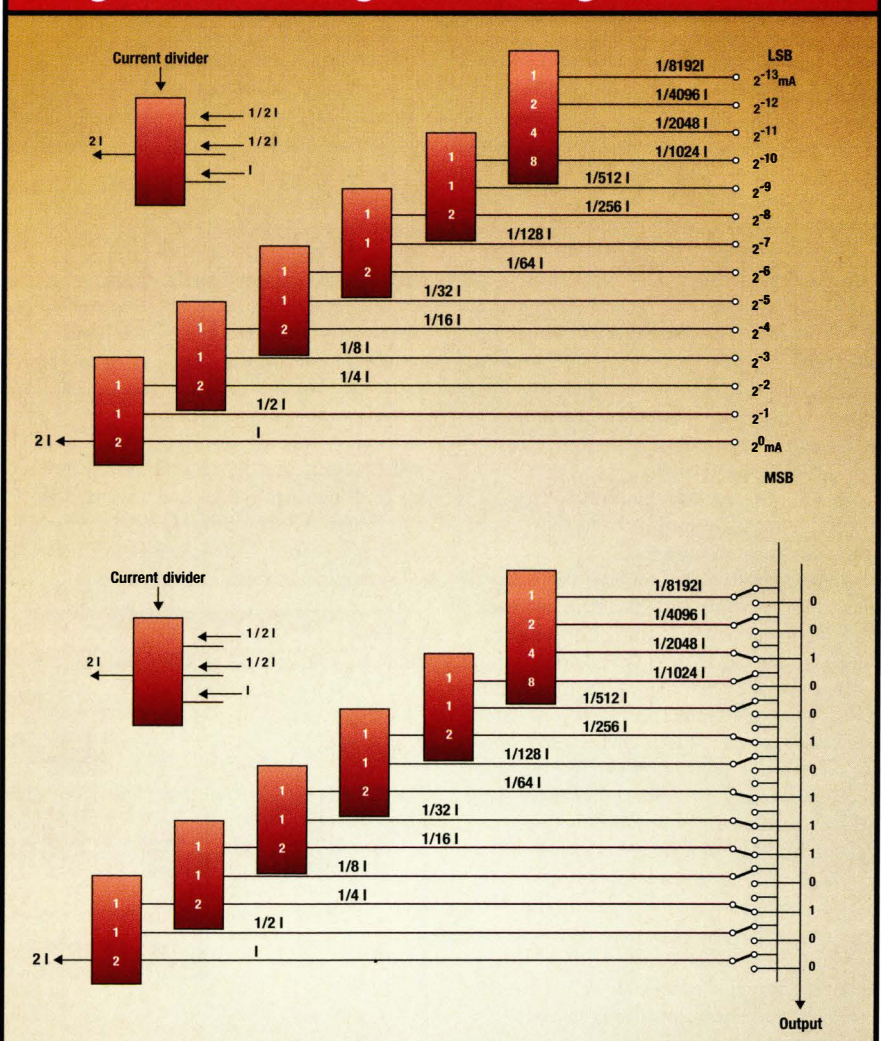
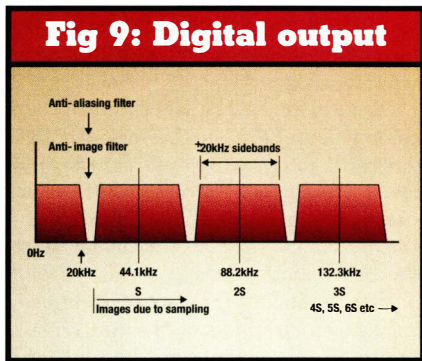


Figure 8a (above): In a multi-bit digital to analogue converter, currents are graded according to each bit.

Figure 8b (below): The analogue voltage is the total of the bits switched.



The output from a D/A converter doesn't end at 20kHz. Instead, sampling produces signals at multiples of the sampling frequency.

process in the A/D converter.

This is repeated at a rate of 44,100 times per second, the same as the original sampling rate. This allows the original quantised waveform to be re-built, sample by sample. The inevitably 'stepped' nature of the waveform, due to the discrete timing instants, creates harmonics. These must be filtered off before a smooth waveform may be revealed.

The output of the D/A after filtering is therefore the original waveform, plus any quantising error (which is distortion or noise, depending on your viewpoint).

Such converters are highly reliant on the accuracy of the currents to be added together. If any one bit is wrong in amount, or appears at the wrong time, glitches appear (where the output decreases instead of increases with increasing original analogue input). If this happens the D/A converter is not monotonic (see fig. 7).

One way of helping to avoid these errors is the current-dividing decoder in which the current for each bit is derived by halving that of the next higher one (see fig. 8). The most significant bit (MSB) is represented by 1/2 the total current, the next bit down by 1/4, the next by 1/8 down to the least significant bit at 1/65,536 of the total (representing only 43µV for the standard 2V rms output).

To arrive at the analogue voltage, the currents from the turned-on current sources are simply added in a resistor.

Another source of potential inaccuracy is around the zero-crossing point, when every single bit changes state (15 turn off and the Most Significant Bit (MSB) turns on, or vice versa).

To avoid these problems, a different type of low-bit converter has been developed, variously described as PWM, PDM or PEM. These systems have in common the elimination of large numbers of different voltages for each bit. They rely instead on anything between one and four bits. In the Pulse Density Modulation system, the D/A converter switches between just two voltages, one positive and the other negative, at a very fast rate of many megahertz.

These rapid, constant-width, positive-going pulses are packed together tightly to reproduce positive voltages and thinly spaced to create negative voltages, with all the various shades in between represented by variations in pulse density. All that is required to restore the original analogue waveform is to filter out the high

frequency pulses, leaving their average value, which is the original analogue waveform, plus quantising noise.

PEM conversion modulates the pulse edge, while PWM modulates the pulse width, though the broad principle is identical to PDM.

Such converters are by necessity complex and work at extremely high frequencies. They require careful control of radiated signals to avoid interference, either within the player itself or with other equipment.

Oversampling

The output from a multi-bit DAC working at 44.1kHz comprises the wanted audio information up to 20kHz, plus a strong (and unwanted) signal centred on 44.1kHz, extending between 24.1kHz and 64.1kHz. This pattern is repeated with decreasing strength at multiples of 44.1kHz up to infinity (see fig. 9).

To remove these unwanted ultrasonic signals from the wanted audio, very sharp-acting analogue 'brick-wall' filters just beyond the 20kHz region must be incorporated immediately after the D/A converter.

Such analogue filtering requirements can be greatly eased if the D/A converter is run at a multiple of 44.1kHz, say four times, at 176.4kHz (or higher).

This also pushes all the unwanted information up four times, reducing the strength of the 176.4kHz +/-20kHz signals and their harmonics, and allows a much gentler analogue filter with a superior phase response to be used.

But there are not enough original samples and corresponding digital words to run the D/A at 176.4kHz, so they have to be invented. With four-times oversampling, for example, digital filters create an extra three new words for every original, interpolating by computation

what might have been in-between to re-create a smoother curve from the D/A converter (fig. 10a and 10b).

The digital words generated by oversampling are much longer than 16 bits, being typically 32 bits long. However, if the extra bits were just chopped back (truncated) to 16 bits, both in-band and out of band noise would be worsened, so to avoid this the surplus bits are not all discarded. They are often used to drive a DAC with more bits to create a pseudo-18-bit or even pseudo-20-bit output.

The signal from this type of converter therefore has a finer structure in amplitude as well as time compared to a conventional type, and analogue filtering is eased.

By suitable manipulation of the truncated bits, the error and resulting noise due to the

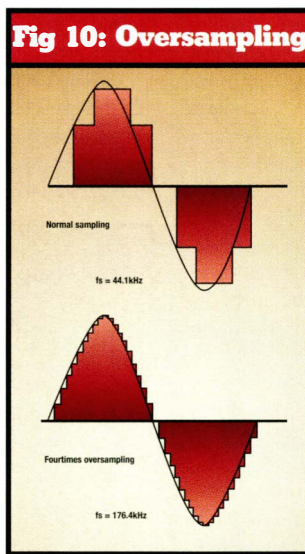
truncation can be reduced, being effectively pushed out of harm's way up to a higher ultrasonic frequency. This type of error treatment is therefore often referred to as noise shaping. This can be used in multi-bit converters using fewer than 14 bits (such as the original 14-bit Philips system) but is not needed for conventional multi-bit DACs.

It is, however, essential in single-bit or low-bit converters, where both oversampling and noise shaping are used. Here, by necessity, the circuits run at extremely high frequencies, requiring particularly careful attention to RF leakage and coupling.

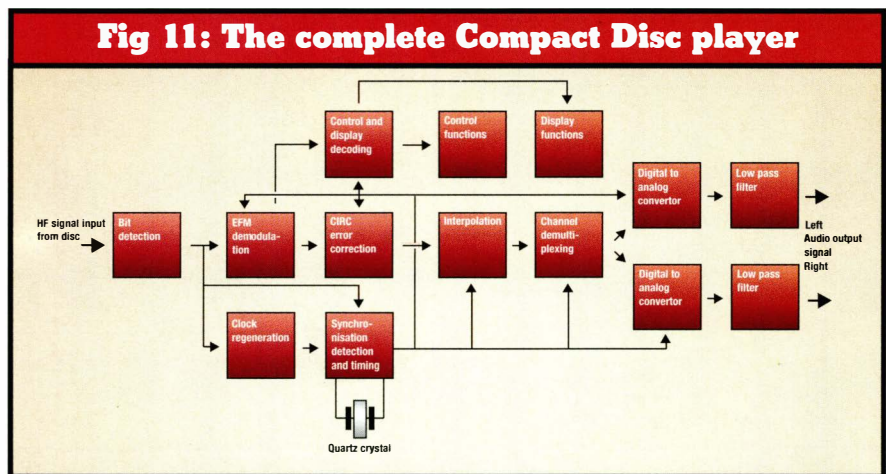
All these elements in the complete CD player, as shown in block diagram in fig. 11, the final performance of which is

the result of many complex circuits working in unison.

Although it might seem complex to the uninitiated, this feature has barely scratched the surface of what goes into digital audio. However, to go deeper is outside the scope of *Hi-Fi Choice*.



10a (above): Normal sampling. 10b (below): Four times oversampling creates a signal with fewer steps, which is easier to filter.



A simplified block diagram of a complete CD, showing the main elements. Simple, isn't it? — as long as you remember to do a left turn onto the A316 at the Hogarth flyover.

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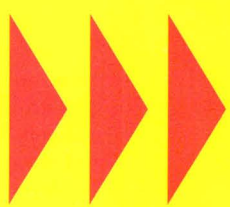
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Write on!

THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE, IT SAYS, AT THE BEGINNING OF TV'S 'THE X-FILES'. WRONG. THE TRUTH IS IN HERE...

LETTER OF THE MONTH

After a series of upgrades, having spent literally thousands of pounds trying to produce a system that would sound good in my house, not just in the auditioning room, I have stumbled across aural delight.

First, most reviews of equipment point toward 'better control' from bigger and separate pre-power amp combinations. I am now convinced that bigger amps operating at low level (ie normal listening levels) sound duller and less dynamic than a high quality integrated being used at sensible output. This is how I listen to most of my music.

Secondly, larger speakers have a tendency to become more lumbering at normal levels and it is surprising how much 'kick' can be produced from small boxes of the right pedigree.

Finally, the room is the biggest single influence on the sound and can make the highest-regarded system sound lifeless. For example, a friend who has an all-Naim system is still spending since he moved the speakers so that they fire down the room rather than across it. It sounded great before.

My system now comprises a Marantz CD63 CD player, a second-hand Rogers *Cadet III* integrated valve amp that cost £85, and a pair of Epos *ES11s* and stands. Although the amp can clip when pushed, and hums a bit, it has a delightful open sound that is far more revealing than anything I had previously. And now I get full, punchy bass from speakers that are usually referred to as 'bass light'

*Adrian Buckmaster
Teddington, Middx*

Another reviewer, another planet

Do Chris Beeching and Richard Black live in different worlds? I do not know how you can explain the huge difference between the review of the Gamma Acoustics *Gemini* in the November issue (148) and the earlier 'Sessions' piece in the March issue.

*John Smith
New Barnet, Herts*

Relative values

Currently, all your test ratings for sound quality are related to price. Would it not be informative instead to compare sound quality, features, build quality etc. directly, regardless of price? You would have to adjust your ratings scale, maybe to a mark out of 10, where one out of ten represents the worst item on test, and ten out of ten represents the best;

Polo!



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others would be rated relative to these. Perhaps this would help readers decide whether it was worth spending that extra fifty pounds or not!

*Ben Holness
via the Internet*

All the World's a Stage

I am writing to relate an experience which I feel has bearing on your recent research into the 'clocking' of CD players (The Trichord Phenomenon, issue 145; The Jitter Bug, issue 147; and see pages 46 and 47 of this issue - Ed)

My story concerns the modification of a Micromega *Stage 1* CD player to *Stage 3* specification. The modification consists of a digital clock installation that takes it to *Stage 2*, then subsequent power supply changes lift the player to *Stage 3* specification. Having lived with my *Stage 1* for several months and being very pleased with it, I was understandably keen to have it modified. However, on return of the CD player from Micromega, I was greatly disappointed.

I lived with the player for a few days to allow for running in, ►►



Will you look at the quality of those rafters?! But don't forget that rooms have an influence on sound quality.

but at the end of this period I was still extremely disappointed. Not only did the *Stage 3* sound no better, it actually sounded worse than the *Stage 1*.

The differences that I noticed were interestingly similar to the detrimental effects of 'clocking' that you describe in your August article. The player had lost its previous sparkling treble and now sounded slow and congested. Vocalists, previously to the fore, were now lost in the mix of multi-track recordings. In other words, the mid-band was recessed and there was clear evidence of 'time smear'.

On returning my player to my local dealer, subsequent auditions confirmed that the *Stage 3* sounded worse than the *Stage 1* (in the context of my system, comprising Arcam *Delta 290/290P* and Ruark *Templar* speakers, with AudioQuest *Quartz* and *Cable Talk 3* cable).

I understand that this flies in the face of accepted wisdom, but fortunately the player was returned to its original specification — at no cost to myself. The experience has in no way detracted from the enjoyment I get from my *Stage 1*, which has taken up permanent residence in my system. I suppose it all comes down to system matching.

PC Jones
Wrexham Clwyd

Mana music; old gold

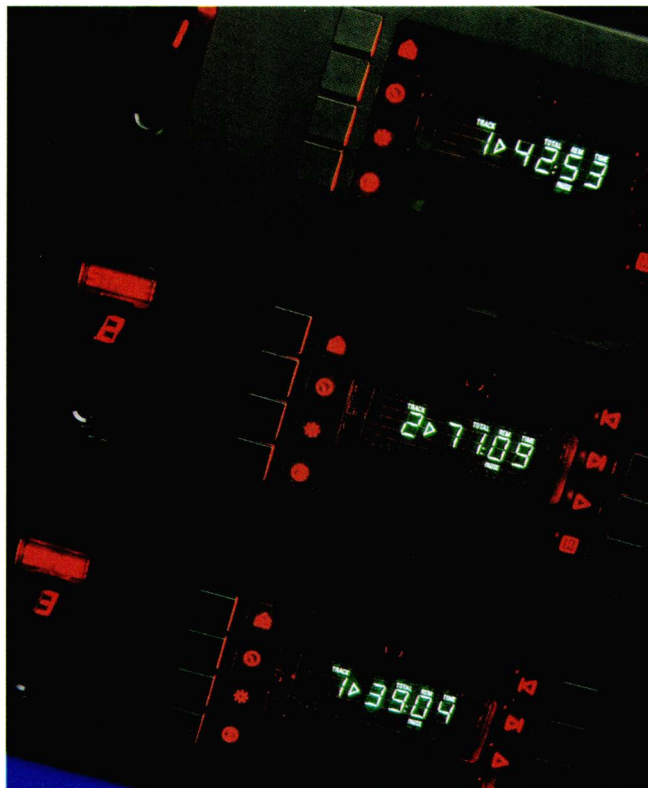
In your report on the Sound & Vision hi-fi show (page 14, issue 149), why didn't you make mention of the incredible music in the Mana room? (Should have read Ear Waxings in the same issue — JK.) I have sold my soul to Mana, and all the people that I spoke with at the show said it was the best sound there.

There seem to be two types of people who are into hi-fi: music lovers and techno freaks. Your music lovers were to be found in the Mana room for prolonged periods and in some cases on a number of days. The techno freak would have a quick look, seek out the leaflets, listen for a minute or two then leave. What conclusion shall we draw from this?

By the way, I'd like to see a section in the magazine called

Antiques Corner where you'd review systems that were partially (or completely) built from obsolete equipment that trashes modern replacements. Too many hi-fi enthusiasts are only interested in new equipment and not getting the most out of what they have.

Paul Ogle
via the Internet



When is an upgrade not an upgrade? When it destroys system synergy!

Horn of plenty?

Thank you for the reviews of the JBL horn speakers and valve amplifiers in your November issue. Fascinating, but since cheaper valve amps have too many compromises, please let us have some similar comparative reviews of the more expensive ones.

Jason Kennedy's review of the JBL speaker was too tantalising. I wonder how it sounds with stringed instruments and a full orchestra?

G Williams
Ringwood, Hampshire

Tip top tape taste

Congratulations on yet another quality publication. In particular, I am finding the detailed blank tape guide very useful.

I hope the following information is helpful. For years I've used TDK SA-X tapes and your guide confirms that the SA-X is

now "an exquisite performer". Just recently, I've tested TDK MA-XG. I was very sceptical about paying nearly £10 for one tape, but I am truly surprised and impressed with the tape's overall performance. It's quite a revelation.

Also at £10, it compares very favourably with the £17 price tag for Sony *Metal Master*

gle take.

6. The reason that studios are of mediocre quality is that companies place profit above sound quality.

With all respect, John, tell us something we didn't know already.

Nick Udovic
Goonellabah, NSW, Australia

Shoot out at the CD player corral

Do you have any plans to review mid-range CD players? There would seem to be an ideal shoot-out waiting to be staged in the £400-£600 range, including models such as the Arcam *Alpha 5+* (and *Alpha 6* come to that), Micromega *Stage 1*, Marantz *CD63II* etc. It is of course pure coincidence that I am looking for a nice new replacement for a seven-year-old Marantz *CD65II*, to go with my Arcam *Alpha 6* amp...

Peter Westwood
via the Internet

Next month's issue has a group test of CD players between £250 and £500, and includes the Arcam and Marantz models you mention. Reserve your copy now! — Ed

Knob-less treble required

We are solely classical music lovers and would like a good stereo system; we think 'separates' are much better. But we have been very disappointed at some of the sounds we've heard in hi-fi establishments — too much accent on bass and not enough treble. It is a fact that a good treble response cannot be achieved by twiddling knobs on an amplifier!

Do we really have to spend about £300 on a pair of speakers to obtain the sort of sound suitable to us? In our opinion, most of the equipment made is pointed at the pop industry. This is just not good enough!

Mr & Mrs D Foster,
Birmingham

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Hi-Fi Choice's Best Buy and Recommended swing-tags are renowned around the world for marking out the crème de la crème in hi-fi products.

It's not just that our swing tags clearly indicate which equipment rises above the mundane. Their value lies in the fact that, ever since this magazine was launched 20 years ago, Best Buy and Recommended status has been conferred only after a product has undergone rigorous testing of both its technical merits and musical reproduction ability.



THE BENEFIT OF BLIND LISTENING

Our blind listening tests are designed to overcome any bias for certain brands that can afflict 'sighted' reviews. History has proved that a strong product pedigree is no guarantee of continued quality, but hi-fi reputations will influence all but the most independent minds. Every year, our blind listening régime proves that the greatest sounds often originate in the most unexpected quarters. It is sound quality that ultimately determines whether a product is awarded a swing tag, and all Recommended products must prove to be a cut above their peers in sound reproduction ability. If, in addition, they are of particular note, or offer 'expensive' sound at a budget price, they become eligible for a Best Buy tag.

UNIQUE, MEANINGFUL TECHNICAL TESTS

Listening is supremely important, but we are committed to assessing the nuts and bolts of a hi-fi component. We pursue a policy of continuous development when it comes to measurements, not due to an obsession with specifications, but because we believe that listening is only part of the story. True understanding of better hi-fi, and hence greater potential for musical enjoyment, will only result from an objective understanding of why hi-fi sounds the way it does. We aim not just to verify a manufacturer's claimed performance, but to discover what's really happening 'behind the scenes'.

THE ULTIMATE BEST BUY GUIDE

Why do we do go to all this trouble? Simply to enable you, the reader, to choose and buy hi-fi armed with the most reliable advice. However, don't forget that successful hi-fi buying depends on you forming a good relationship with a reputable hi-fi dealer. Furthermore, long-term satisfaction in hi-fi can only be attained if you trust your own ears over and above any commendation you might read in a magazine — including this one. We provide the map, but navigation is up to you!


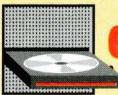




CHARTING THE PATH OF HI-FI

In this instance your hi-fi map has been distilled into ten pages of Best Buys and Recommendations from a year's worth of reviews (two years' worth, in the case of cables). For your convenience we have edited down the original reviews, but we recommend that you seek out original articles if you want the whole story — full details of back issues will be found on page 89 of this issue, and you may order individual articles via our 'Factsback' service, as advertised on page 91. Inevitably, some products have been discontinued since we reviewed them earlier this year. Where possible we have listed direct replacements as suggested by the manufacturer, but only next year's reviews will judge their

worth. Nonetheless, I sincerely hope that we help you find 'hi-fi that fits'!

ATW "Stan" Vincent, Editor-in-Chief, November 1995 ● Review summaries by Paul Messenger and Alan Sircom

WHERE TO FIND THE BEST BUYS

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AMPLIFIER

BEST BUYS



AUDIO INNOVATIONS ALTO £299



Strikingly different 'flying wing' styling and an optional chrome finish (£30 extra) distinguish this line-only integrated amp from the herd. The *Alto* represents valve amp specialist Audio Innovations's first move into the transistorised mass market, and the competitive £299 price owes much to a stripped-down, no-frills, line-level-only capability, and the fact that it's distributed exclusively through Richer Sounds Group outlets. Vinyl disc users will need to make alternative arrangements, such as a separate phono stage.

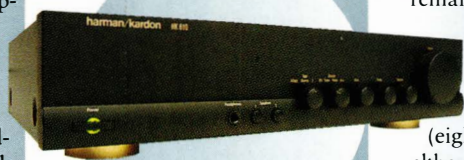
The internal circuit topology is a little unusual, with a push-pull quasi-complementary output stage, a single-rail powersupply, and a large decoupling output capacitor. Much in line with the AI tradition, low bass and power delivery are limited, the latter rating 40W/eight Ohms (1kHz) but only increasing to 44W into four Ohms, so difficult speaker loads should be avoided.

A slight loss of deep bass might be detectable with very large loudspeakers, but the subtle low frequency roll-off is relatively unintrusive and doesn't seem to handicap the *Alto*'s commanding sense of rhythm, drive and substance. The upside is exceptionally lucid mid and treble reproduction, with a marvellous sense of space, air and delicacy that charmed and enthralled the listening panel.

HARMAN/KARDON HK610 £200

Lacking the remote control convenience of its more expensive brothers, the £200 *HK610* is the junior model in a five-strong range of new integrated models from US amp specialist Harman/Kardon. All are configured as line-level-only amplifiers, but they can be fitted with a *PH600* plug-in module to handle MM or MC vinyl disc cartridges as an optional extra.

Circuitry follows the HK



tradition for using discrete components in preference to ICs. The elegant and symmetrical high gain power amp has improved ultrasonic stability over its predecessors, and thereby avoids the need for output inductors. Power output registers a satisfactory 52/76W (eight/four Ohms, 1kHz), with a respectable peak current capability of 12A.

Sound quality was described as 'unusually clear, clean and vivid', with the sheer energy and zest of this amplifier's performance singling it out as the overall preference after two days of blind budget amplification. Fine image depth and a properly layered soundstage combine behind powerful, clean and articulate-sounding voices, with only the merest hint of top and bottom emphasis. Fizzy and sparkling with an unexpected kick, the *HK610* is an obvious and outstanding Best Buy.

MISSION CYRUS III £500

This latest incarnation of Mission's *Cyrus* integrated amp retains the cute 'half-width' presentation of its famous predecessors. It's packaged in reassuringly solid case-work, and supplied complete with a remote-control handset.

The circuit topology also retains the familiar quasi-complementary power amps, but with an entirely symmetrical layout to accommodate surface-mount components. The electronic control functions are executed via a 'silent BUS' arrangement which remains inactive when not being addressed, and so avoids compromising the sound.

Power output registers a respectable 73/109W (eight/four Ohms midband), although high frequency and high current delivery are both a little restricted.

The listening panel reacted very positively to the *Cyrus III*, describing the sound as "well-developed and vigorous, yet mature in its use of power".



Naturally balanced with a vivid and articulate midrange, sandwiched between firm bass and a sparkling, sweet treble, this amp encourages the close analysis of subtle musical complexities. An additional bonus is a vinyl disc input stage of suitably high quality to match the rest — in more than a few amps today this often seems to be something of an afterthought.

NAD 310 £150

In the constant battle against price inflation, NAD has taken some unusually radical design approaches to the electronics of its slimline £150 budget 310 model. One economy compared to the £190 302 (issue 116) is that it's a line-input-only device, so vinyl users will have to look elsewhere. A less obvious saving is seen in the single-rail powersupply, with attendant capacitor coupling arrangements.

The power amp itself is most unusual, a mix of high-current Logic-level MOSFETs and PNP bipolars in a pseudo-complementary configuration, allowing for a simplified pre-amp section. Power output is a modest 27/40W (eight/four Ohms, 1kHz). A dual-concentric volume control obviates the need for separate balance (but gives poor low level channel tracking), while front-mounted input jacks make it easy to plug in a personal stereo.

The sound quality was very well received, the music cracking along at a convincing pace while still just about managing to retain its composure, communicating the enthusiasm of the musicians and setting listeners' toes a-tapping. The extreme top end is a little muted yet it manages to project performances confidently into the room. A comfortable Best Buy at a very competitive price.



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 Marantz CD63se £349.00
 NAD 501 (New) £179.00
 NAD 502 (F/L) £225.00
 Naim CD3 (F/L) £949.00
 Naim CD Players - Full range? **YES!**
 Pioneer PD-S703 £219.00
 Quad 67 CD (F/L) £825.00
 Rotel RCD 930AX £199.00
 Rotel RCD 970BX (F/L) £345.00

TURNTABLES

- Dual CS504 inc AT95e £199.00

- Rega Planar 2 Inc RB250* £198.00
 Rega Planar 3 Inc RB300* £260.00
 Linn LP12 Turntable £449.00
 Linn LP12 Basik or Lingo* **YES!**
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- NAD 5120 inc Cart £119.00

AMPLIFIERS

- Arcam Alpha 5 Plus £239.00
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 Arcam Delta 290 £499.00
 Arcam Delta 290P £399.00
 Denon PMA 250/3 £159.00
 Linn Majik (line) £579.00
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- Arcam Delta 100 **£899.00**
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 Denon DRS 640 (F/T) £199.00
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 NAD 613 (New) **£229.00**
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 Yamaha KX480(F/L) £199.00
 Yamaha KX-W482 £249.00

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 KEF Q10 (Free C.T.3) £199.00
 Linn Full range stocked & on Dem? **YES!**
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AMPLIFIER

BEST BUYS



ECA VISTA/LECTERN £760/£880

No, we hadn't heard of ECADistribution either. Turns out it's a small and relatively new operation, mainly operating out of a PO Box number in North West London. And the fact that the mains transformer fitted to our review sample of the *Vista* preamp was loose didn't help to boost our confidence...

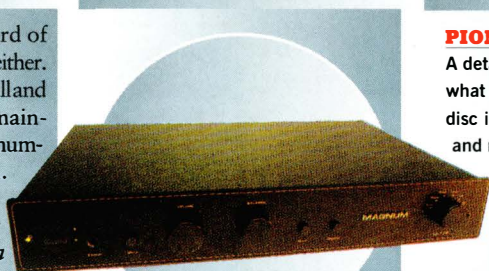
Such foibles aside, however, this turns out to be a very promising amplifier combination indeed, at any rate for the attractively slimline, solid and chunky appearance.

Plenty of attention has been paid to power supply regulation, although it's surprising to note that the *Vista* Pre-is built around op-amp ICs whereas the *Lectern* power amp is built almost entirely of discrete components. The *Vista* does not accommodate vinyl disc sources — ECA has a separate *Prisma* phono stage pre-amplifier — while the *Lectern* delivers a modest but stiff power output of 53/90W (eight/four Ohms, 1kHz).

Listening tests were very positive, clearly lifting the ECA combo well clear of the pack and placing it up on the rostrum of very interesting models. Lively, firm and funky if less sweet and relaxing than some, its indefinable sense of 'rightness' is ultimately very persuasive.



MAGNUM IA170 £270



From Magnum, a small but well established and innovative British amp specialist, the £270 IA170 is a slimline line-level-only integrated amplifier (vinyl-equipped versions are also available). It's a very straightforward and rugged design, based on an old Darlington topology, and features pairs of discrete 25A transistors run at enriched bias from a Class-A driver stage.

Clearly designed to be bomb and nerd-proof, 3A fuses blow well before the amp can, while there's a huge power supply with which to clout recalcitrant loudspeakers, and no invasive hi-tech protection circuitry to interfere with the sound. Power output registers a generous 96/155W (eight/four Ohms, 1kHz), with a massive 21A of peak current available.

In ultimate terms, the sound quality does suffer some loss in transparency and low level 'blackness', but this amp nevertheless captured the mood of the music as well as the enthusiasm and imagination of a hard-bitten panel of listeners. Their verdict: "Cooked in the oven, rather than the microwave, so the true tonal flavour of its music is allowed time to develop". It has clarity, confidence and real-world charm. Quirky in a safe yet entertaining manner, the unassuming IA170 earns Magnum its first *Choice* Best Buy.

RECOMMENDED MODELS

PIONEER A400X £300

A detailed and articulate amp, somewhat let down by an indifferent vinyl disc input; can sound a little too tidy and restrained.

ROTEL RA-970BX £300

Line-only amp that sounds big, bouncy and entertainingly detailed, with massive power reserves for difficult loads, although complex textures could be improved.

AUDIOLAB 8000A £500

An evergreen design that continues to evolve and keep ahead of the pack, with a mature, refined and dependable all-round sound and measured performance.

TECHNICS SU-A900/2 £450

A gutsy if somewhat authoritarian amp with a rich and friendly sound, let down by an indifferent vinyl disc input.



AURA VA-80 £280

Delivering hefty bass but somewhat limited when driving difficult speaker loads, this simple line-only design sparkles with lively detail.

DENON PMA-450SE £270

A very brisk and energetic sounding amp which is certainly entertaining. It may, however, leave some listeners exhausted.

COPLAND CSA14 £1100

Great sound; great looks; great build; this integrated hybrid valve amp is a powerful vindication of the thermionic approach.

CAMBRIDGE A1 £100

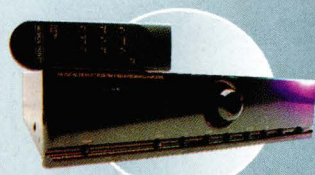
Not great, but nothing comes near it for £100, thanks to Chinese manufacture; vinyl disc optional extra.

PIONEER A-300R £200

A lively, clean and fun sounding amplifier that deftly avoids over-brightness and aggression. Comes with remote volume control.

MUSICAL FIDELITY ELEKTRA F100 £599

A rich and fruity sounding amp which is also remarkably musical and euphonic; gorgeous gloss finish and full remote control, too.



SONY TA-F246E £200

A gentle, atmospheric and subtly detailed performer, if a little too reserved and lacking in vim and vigour.

TECHNICS SU-A600/2 £230

An amplifier that's great fun to be with, but it can sound a little untidy at times.

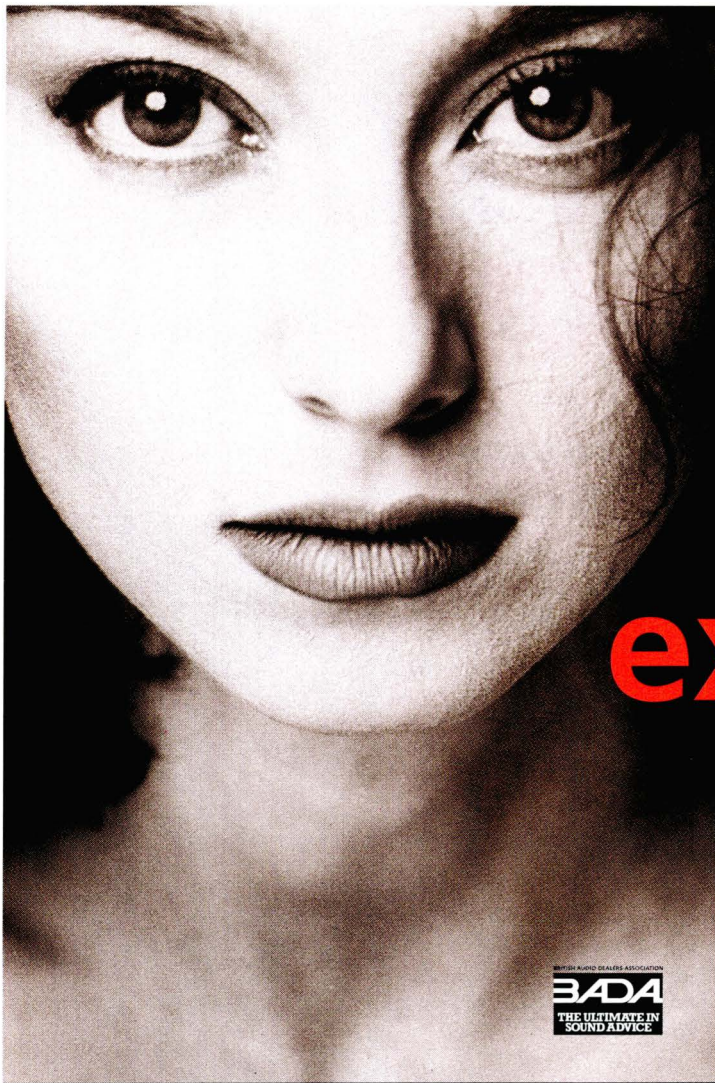
SUMO ATHENA IIB/ POLARIS III £944/£891

Assertively styled American super-amp combo that has bags of power, sounds colourful and lively if not super-incisive. Vinyl is £209 extra.

AUDIO INNOVATIONS I.1/SERIES 800 ANNIV. £299/£1249

A very natural, relaxed and coherent sounding valve combo, but decidedly midband oriented with limited power output. A perfect match for efficient loudspeakers, especially horns.





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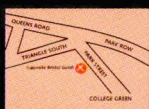
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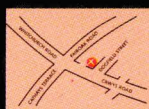
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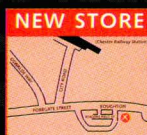
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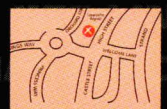
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CD PLAYER

BEST BUYS



ONKYO DX-750 £350

Onkyo's claims for innovations in the bulky £350 DX-750 were numerous, and included a custom-designed digital filter, proprietary Fine Pulse Conversion System (FPCS), a complementary distortion canceller, an AccuPulse Quartz System and a ZeroShift Noise-shaper.

It featured a crystal oscillator, mechanically damped by a synthetic rubber blob, and uses NPC's 8x oversampling filter with bitstream DAC—the latter an SM5861 device featuring a differential output, allowing common-mode noise and even-order distortions to be suppressed in the analogue stage. The FPCS system was not unlike a milder form of Pioneer's Legato Link, reducing the ringing of impulses and transients at the expense of sub-30kHz stop-band noise.

The generous complement of features included a 36-track random access memory and a Disc File capable of storing favourite selections from over 200 discs. A motorised volume control fed both variable output and headphone sockets.

With a big, bold and ballsy sound, this cultured player was delightfully uncluttered and utterly free from the dirty digital detritus which afflicts lesser



players. Eddi Reader sounded loose, free and relaxed while creating an atmosphere whose exuberance only occasionally ran unchecked.

The bass from Massive Attack's *Better Things* was a little flatulent at times, but otherwise the DX-750 just sounded big, generous and dramatic. Our listeners repeatedly expressed delight at the natural yet vivid string tone and vocal clarity of a Bach aria.

Sensational and entertaining, the DX-750 was capable of filling the room with a huge and expressive sound. Unfortunately, Onkyo have subsequently discontinued the DX-750, but you may still be able to find samples of the original in the shops. We live in hope to see how their replacement to this star player shapes up in a forthcoming blind test.

PIONEER PD-S504 £200

Although the PD-S504 bears an exceedingly close physical resemblance to the PD-S503 (issue 139), which might bode ill for the listening tests, it actually sounds much more like the PD-S703 (issue 137), which is altogether better.

The chassis really is a carbon copy of the 503, featuring the same range of track access, program, repeat and random play modes, plus peak search, proprietary 'Hi-Lite' scanning and synchronised tape edit facilities. The same handset is used too, complete with 25-step digital volume control.

As expected, Pioneer's Stable Platter Mechanism takes pride of place, supporting the CD label-side-down while the laser reads from above. The idea is to prevent the edges of the CD from 'flapping' minutely at high speed, allowing the laser to read a sharper 'eye pattern' of data which in turn should mean less digital jitter downstream. Furthermore, the player incorporates a digital co-axial output which could allow it to be used as a transport only at a later date.

Pioneer's Legato Link digital filter provides a gentle treble roll-off which combines digital stop-band noise with genuine audio to synthesise frequencies

above 20kHz. Subtle differences between this 504 and the 503 include the select use of Silmicelectrolytic caps, plus a new pre-regulation filter to remove ripple and switching noise from the DAC power supply.

The effect of these is far from subtle, however, with the PD-S504 sounding both extended and exceedingly natural, as well as bringing an air of sophistication to the music. Vocals are free from unwanted sibilance exaggeration, although the extreme treble still lacks some finesse and brilliance.

Compared to previous Legato Link players, the PD-S504 is a consistent and polished communicator—a player which "remains neutral while keeping its musical finger firmly on the fun button," as our panel put it.



RECOMMENDED MODELS

DENON DCD-615 £180

A precise low-cost player, with exceptional detail but rather un-emotional. Now replaced by £200 DCD-625.

MARANTZ CD-53 £200

Sweet-talking and communicative. Can sound imprecise but conveys the underlying musical message well. Now replaced by £270 CD-63 MK II.

SONY CDP-312 £156

Lively budget player with more exuberance than subtlety. Crude, but lots of features. Replaced by £130 CDP-313

DENON DCD-1015 £350

Denon's discontinued 1015 featured Alpha processing. It sounded beefy and expensive, but also shut-in and lacking in air at the top end.

KENWOOD DP-7060 £380

The DRIVE-equipped DP-7060 player sounds agreeably light-footed with plenty of life and bags of detail, but may sound too bright when in the wrong system.

JVC XL-V284 £140

A very affordable player incorporating plenty of hi-tech embellishments. It



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MUSICAL IMAGES

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CD PLAYER

BEST BUYS



SONY CDP-561E £200

The CDP-761E might be the natural price and position successor to the famous CDP-715E, but it's this less expensive CDP-561E that matches the earlier model's very superior sound quality. Two hundred notes buys a player that's genuinely state-of-the-art.

Take the slick 2.5 second track access, for example, or Sony's advanced bitstream technology with a new LSI that combines two 8x oversampling filters (giving 64x into total), a PLM (pulse length modulation) DAC and complementary output.

Within this chip, the 21-bit output of the first 8x oversampling filter is chopped down to 16 bits before being multiplied up to 64x, leaving Sony's proprietary 'Full

Feed Forward' compensation scheme to account for the 'rounding errors' (in the form of noise) which are produced.

Careful level-matched comparisons found this 561E, with its beautifully extended treble and all-round airiness, to be better than the CDP-761E and far closer to the earlier CDP-715E.

In every respect, its music has a living, breathing quality which extended across our full repertoire of music, while its bass control exposed the fingering of Massive Attack's bass lines like never before. "What it lacks in sheer welly it gains in a most convincing clarity," our panel remarked.

On a Cannonball Adderley excerpt, the interplay of instruments combined perfect control with infectious musical enthusiasm. As performers traded lines with one another, the colour, inflection and ambience of the music poured forth with effortless grace and refinement.

This Sony CDP-561E is as stunning a performer as the CDP-715E was, while costing fifty pounds less into the bargain.



KENWOOD DP-3060 £200

Latest in a succession of players featuring the NPC (Nippon Precision Circuits) bitstream DAC, the DP-3060 is pitched at the pivotal £200 price point, and comes with a typically broad range of user features. These include direct access, program, repeat and random play, plus peak search, digital volume and multi-disc edit.

The DAC may be from the same source as before, but this latest rejuvenation has worked wonders. Gone is the massive surge of re-quantisation noise which was almost guaranteed to upset the constitution of some amplifiers, while the insidious response ripple of an unsophisticated digital filter has also been expunged. Low level linearity is improved, and distortion is extremely low, too.

Such is its sedate and sophisticated sonic composure, you'd never guess you were listening to a beer budget machine.

Just as importantly, however, this sense of equanimity is not achieved by squashing the passion from its music.

We were mightily relieved to rediscover the sultry intensity of



Cassandra Wilson's *In My Kitchen* — gutsy music that reflected the sturdy but honest sound of the player itself.

The panel also applauded the 3060's coherence, with a smooth and even-handed balance that builds along with the developing interplay of the music, rather than limiting resolution or crumbling into an untidy heap.

The DP-3060 is not perfect. It lacks a certain colour and flamboyance, and it can sound a little thin and constricted, especially through the bass.

Importantly, the Kenwood DP-3060 CD player will not sound out of place, even in a costly system, and is proof positive that budget players do not have to sound as cheap as their price tag.

RECOMMENDED MODELS

delivers an intimate sound which lacks a little in substance and gumption.

LUXMAN D-322 £140

More solid and robust build than most budget players. The sound quality is generally positive but showed some inconsistency with different types of music.



ONKYO DX-7210 £260

A very refined and pleasantly open-sounding mid-price player, with a fluid and involving performance that's not quite as relaxed and crisp as the best.

CAMBRIDGE CD4 £150

A budget player, designed in the UK but built abroad, from the Richer Sounds group. The CD4's operation and aesthetics are a shade primitive, but it sounds energetic and enthusiastic, if a tad crude. Perhaps a touch rough and ready, but great value for the money.

SONY CDP-761E £250

A very relaxed, confident and clean-sounding player, but it can sound a little dynamically constrained, and falls short — subjectively and objectively — of its famous and highly-rated CDP-715E predecessor

TEAC VRDS-T1/D-T1 £500/£450

An entry level price for two-box combos, this Teac is well engineered throughout, with a controlled and reserved sound that's a little short of passion and enthusiasm.



AUDIOMECA MEPHISTO/TRICHORD PULSAR 1 £2,200/£1,395

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541



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LOUDSPEAKER

BEST BUYS



MISSION 733 £300

A generously proportioned floorstander at a realistic price, the 733 is closer to a large bookshelf model in internal acoustic volume, since part of the cabinet is merely used for support. That, in turn, makes it less susceptible to boomy bass than a full-size floorstander, yet there's still a sufficient low end to mean that the speaker should stand well clear of walls for the smoothest midband response.

That is really the strength of this model, which sports similar drivers to the smaller 732, while revealing (on the evidence of our samples) a subtly smoother balance with sweeter mid-treble integration.

The enclosure has the obligatory vinyl woodprint finish for a box of this price and size, but the moulded plastics baffle gives a welcome touch of class and individuality.



MUSICAL TECHNOLOGY KESTREL £265

The first product from a brand new company, the *Kestrel* is a most unusual design which shows much original thought. It's an ultra-compact floorstander, saving the cost of providing separate stands, with an interesting hexagonal plan cabinet shape and metal diaphragms for both main driver and tweeter — all for a surprisingly modest £295 (which includes £30 for an optional metal plinth, giving good spike mounting and footprint). Most of the cabinet is finished in vinyl woodprint, but the top panel has real wood finish to add a touch of extra class.

Sensitivity and bass extension are both limited, but the overall balance is generally flat, apart from a cautious dip through the presence band, and the *Kestrel* is surprisingly smooth sounding for a budget price model.



TANNOY 633 £320

Tannoy's least expensive and smallest floorstander, the £320 633, differs from most of its peers by using two decent-size drivers for the bottom end, with its profile-shaped cabinet supplying sealed box loading. The result is bass that's significantly deeper than the norm for boxes in this category, as well as less susceptibility to port-generated mid-bass boom.

The down side is a midrange that's not particularly smooth or even, with some coloration as a result. This probably explains why Tannoy is about to introduce an updated MkII version. It's likely that the existing 633 will still be widely available during the period this issue is on sale, but we intend to review the new version in the March '96 issue of *Hi-Fi Choice*.



JPW P1 £170

An evergreen model that seems to have been around forever, JPW's bookshelf-size *P1* had been in our Best Buy listings for so long that a reappraisal seemed worthwhile. The only drawback seems to be that the shape and size now look a little old-fashioned, although this in no way implies any compromise in performance. Indeed, the wider baffle used in older designs often offers acoustic advantages over the fashionable narrower front, while also permitting a large main driver.

In the event this model continues to set a high sonic standard, with a fine overall balance despite a measure of midband unevenness, while the price-for-size ratio remains one of the best on the market — especially considering the real wood veneer finish.



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LOUDSPEAKER

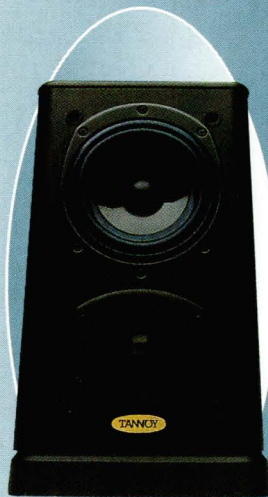
BEST BUYS

BEST BUY
HI-FI CHOICE
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TANNOY 631 £150

Tannoy's tiniest rarely did well in *Choice* tests, until the arrival of this latest 631 model, which provides stern competition for any of the miniature models currently in play. At £150 it's a little more expensive than some of its peers, but this is justified by the plastic cone main driver and subtle cabinet curves.

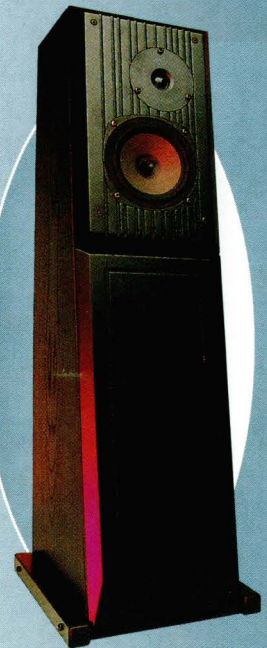
The Profile-shaped cabinet used here provides a wider baffle than the previous hexagonal shape, and this makes the mid-band less susceptible to reflection effects when placed close to a wall. The bass is properly aligned for wall-loading, which also makes sense as such small speakers do look a little odd stuck out in the room. The vital mid-to-treble transition is as sweet as that of the immediate competition, and even a few expensive models. This speaker sounds happy and consistent whether played loud or soft.



REGA ELA £498

Rega anticipated the current trend towards compact floorstanders by some years when the *ELA* first appeared in 1989. This model has now benefited from cosmetic re-working, with a beefed-up and heavily chamfered front panel, a proper metal-frame bass and attractive real wood veneers. The main driver has a cast frame and small (90mm) paper cone, with some bass assistance (and control) provided by the transmission-line enclosure loading.

Despite the latter, the bass is somewhat under-nourished; at the same time though free from heavy thickening effects. This makes the speaker refreshingly agile, with a midband and treble that are delightfully open and coherent, if maybe a bit bright for some systems and tastes. Build quality is exceptional for the price.



KEF CODA 7 £130

Britain's best-selling budget miniature speaker is an artful combination of clever production engineering and carefully-contrived acoustic manipulation. The 'soft-look' moulded baffle is both fashionable and effective, and if the end result feels little lightweight in build quality, that's because it is a little lightweight in build quality.

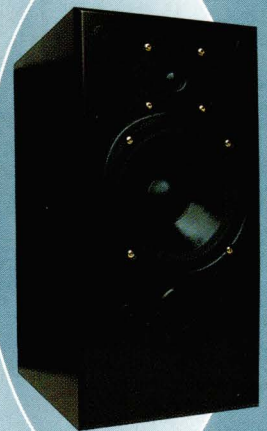
The proof of the speaker, however, comes in the listening, and this is where the *Coda 7* shows its class. The very well judged, slightly forward midband projects detail exceptionally well, there's a lightness of touch which is thoroughly engaging and this helps distract attention away from a bottom end which isn't the last word in drive. But what do you expect at the price?



KESWICK AUDIO ARIA II £270

A good size stand-mount speaker dressed in an attractive real wood veneer would seem very fair justification for the price Keswick Audio is asking for the *Aria II*. The overall balance is characterised by a well judged midband, a slightly shut-in presence and top end, and rather limited absolute bass extension.

Sensitivity is quite high considering the amplifier sees a very undemanding load — the main driver has a decent size magnet to drive the 120mm doped paper cone, and the box is very solid. All of these factors account for a degree of authority and dynamic drive, which is order of magnitude more convincing than models at half the price and size. Good stands are essential.



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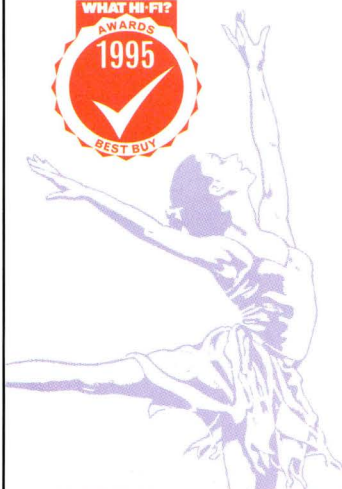
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LOUDSPEAKER

BEST BUYS



JBL
L90 £1,500



Based loosely on a 'classic' design from the '60s. This large and hefty three-way design flies in the face of modern fashion. No slimline floorstanders here: the large and unusually wide front panel needs to be supported well clear of floor and walls on truly substantial stands. It's all rather pro-monitor in appearance, entirely uncompromising and

maybe all the better for that. Sensitivity is high, the bass goes deep, and the whole thing has a gusto and enthusiasm which is rare at any price. However, there's also a degree of midband coloration which amounts to a slight crudeness and untidiness. Even though the price has gone up £200 since our review, what the heck, it rocks (the house)!

RECOMMENDED MODELS

JBL L20J £800
Pricey and midbass-heavy luxury bookshelf model — a fine rock'n'roller with good communication skills.

KAR VOLANTE £500
Very informative and entertaining floorstander with lovely cabinetwork. However, it suffers some midband coloration and doesn't sound quite as big as it looks.

INFINITY REFERENCE II £150
An essentially neutral and surprisingly smooth design at a very competitive price. It needs stand-mounting clear of walls to avoid bass thickening.

LINN KEILIDH LS300 £595
Very coherent and fast, this fine-value floorstander likes to be driven hard and responds with gusto; tonally it's a tad bright, with shut-in presence.

MISSION 752 £500
Loads of detail from just about the sharpest-looking compact floorstander around, but bottom-end lacks authority, weight, warmth and richness.

POLK LS50 £800
Exceptional balance from pretty US floorstander which really packs a punch; a bit pricey for engineering content and build.

SYSTYM 937 £600
Good value transmission line floor-

stander delivers fine midband delicacy but with some lack of bottom-end drive.

MONITOR AUDIO MA202 £450

Substantial floorstander has good vocal projection and generous scale, but not the most neutral balance around; bass is a bit one-note, price is a bit stiff.

PIONEER S-4UK £250

Lightweight but lively and communicative, this agile bookshelf speaker is lots of fun but a shade pricey and shut-in at the top. A real enthusiast speaker.

GLL MEZZO £170

A very classy midband at a very competitive price, though treble is over-restrained, bass alignment is tricky and the cosmetics rather tacky.

MORDAUNT-SHORT MS05 £110

Almost too small to take seriously, so not much bass or loudness, but fine, forward midband projection; well suited to smaller rooms.

AUDIO ECTOR 3X £1,500

Substantial floorstander that delivers a superb in-room bass-to-mid balance, but treble is a bit restrained and presentation rather severe.

NAIM SBL £1,821
Very discreet wallmount floorstander's

elaborate three-box enclosure accounts for high price. Great dynamic range and good, if forward, balance.

ROGERS LS3/5A + AB1 £700

AB1 bass plinth allows the 'classic' LS3/5A BBC monitor to be used clear of walls for improved midband neutrality. Not a party animal.

REVOLVER COLT £140

A fine all-round budget bookshelf miniature with good balance and timing at a realistic price, if a touch bland in sound and appearance.

SYSTEM AUDIO 905 £250

Remarkable dynamics make this tiny sub-miniature a great deal of fun, despite the obvious lack of bass weight and power. It's a tad pricey.

TECHNICS SB-M20 £200

Lacks bottom-end weight and overall evenness, but fine overall balance with open treble gives excellent natural perspectives and neutrality.



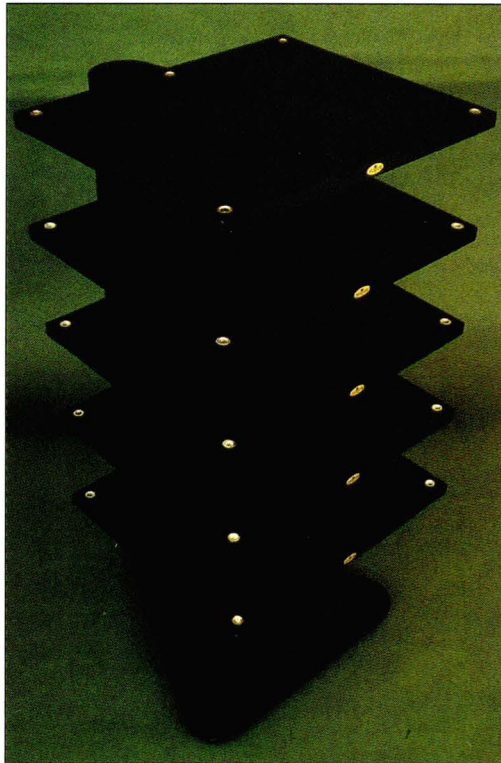
Linn Keilidh



Rogers LS3/5A & AB1



Left: Infinity Reference II



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CASSETTE DECK



BEST BUYS

AIWA AD-S950 £300



For £300, the AD-S950 does it all. In addition to Dolby B, C and HX Pro, there's the more advanced Dolby S. The transport is a full closed-loop, dual-capstan design, and three heads permit direct off-tape monitoring.

Sound quality has well balanced low frequencies, and voice reproduction that was occasionally expressive enough to raise hairs on the back of the neck. With the AD-S950, the money seems to have gone into the important engineering content, and the result is exceptional performance and sound quality for the price.

JVC TD-V662 £270



The heart of the £270 TD-V662 is a dual-capstan transport with three heads for direct off-tape monitoring, and elaborate meters and biasing to extract the most from the medium. It's nearly free from the slightly 'fuzzy' quality which often trouble the cassette medium.

This is not the most transparent-sounding deck, and it does have a perceptibly electronic character. But it also has a grip, self-assurance and positive projection which is most un-cassette-like, and which make it excellent value as a musical tool at a reasonable price.

DENON DRS-640 £200

This drawer-loader is a conventional two-head Dolby B/C deck, responding to Denon remote commands. Good quality meters cover a 60dB dynamic range, while fine bias adjustment is also provided.

The design seems like it has been thought through by someone who knows and understands the tape medium. A smooth, tactile and open quality extracts plenty of ambience from appropriate recordings, with subtle improvements as you move up the tape grade ladder. In all, a fine-sounding and attractively-priced all-rounder.



YAMAHA KX-580 £250

Incorporating Dolby S at £250, this is — in other respects — a straightforward two-head deck. It sports a single-button automatic tape tuning arrangement backed up by manual fine bias adjustment, so you can correct for the deliberately bright balance which the auto circuits contrive.

Listening tests confirmed a fine Dolby S implementation. Low frequencies are undistinguished, but this Yamaha sounds clean and transparent, imposing remarkably little of its own electronic signature on the music. Ultimately a high-value all-round performance.



AIWA AD-WD727 £170



This double transport cassette deck has auto-reverse, Dolby B or C noise reduction, plus HX Pro. Solenoid-operated logic controls are slick to use, and the controls and displays are well thought through.

Inevitably, the price of fitting two transports is that neither will be as good as a single unit at the same price. Happily, the sound quality was not as strongly affected as expected, and was generally competent and likable, given a slight lack in bass power and weight. All of which adds up to first rate value for money.

DENON DRM-540 £159

This recorder looks a trifle old-fashioned today, but its well-chosen features include an electronic/memory counter, meters with a wide 50dB range, and fine bias adjustment.

This Denon sounded remarkably good for a deck in this price stratum, with exceptionally stable and well focused stereo soundstaging, in addition to clean and articulate high frequencies. There's a characteristic transient quickness which is musically telling, and it makes fine sense of well recorded material.

Replacement: DRM-550 (£160).



BEST OF THE REST

KENWOOD KX-5060S £250

Fine musical communication skills and a friendly sound, but its bass is a little detached and the sound could be smoother and brighter.

PIONEER CT-S630S £300

Poor metal tape alignment but good underlying sound quality. Replacement: CT-S640S (£300).

TECHNICS RS-BX501 £200

Mechanically very good, especially for an auto-reverser. The BX501 sounds very stable but also a tad soft and smeary.

KENWOOD KX7060S £329

This three-motor, three-head deck is well equipped with features, and gives a fine, open if sometimes too bright balance.

ONKYO K-611 £429

A stripped-to-the-essentials mid-size machine well matched to audiophile separates, the K-611 delivers a good-to-excellent all-round performance.

PIONEER CT-S830S £500

Supplies much of the measured and sonic capabilities of the flagship CT-95 model at only half the price.

SONY TC-K461S £180

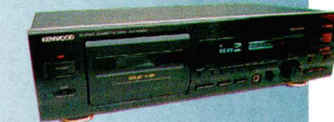
A well executed Dolby S implementation at £180, the other aspects of its performance also pass muster at the price.

TECHNICS RS-BX601 £250

A well-equipped three-head machine with strong all-round capabilities and good detail, but some loss of subtlety.



Pioneer CT-S830S.



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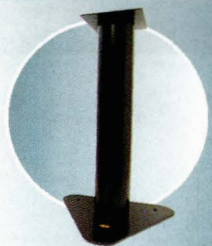
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SPEAKER STAND

BEST BUYS



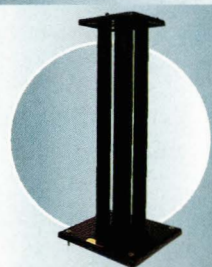
KUDOS \$50 £99



Four-spike supports might be the most common stands, but the tripod approach adopted by this Kudos self-levelling, so you can't get the set-up wrong. And the base footprint is reasonably large, so stability is assured.

The stand combines the substance, slam and control of a properly balanced mass-loaded design, with the dynamics and energy of the light-but-rigid approach. Essentially, these elegant stands made baby speakers sound very grown-up.

PARTINGTON TROPHY PF £100



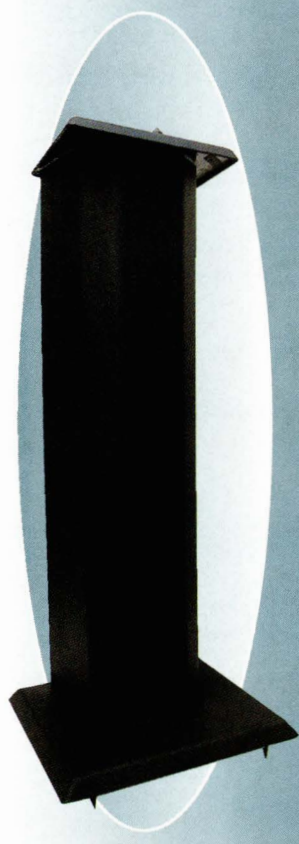
With PF as an abbreviation for Part-Filled, this is a lower-cost version of Partington's established *Trophy*, which generally uses a silicon-and-iron-resin damping compound. This variant restricts this damping to the top and base plates.

Used with sand-filled legs, the TPF sounded tight and cogent, with smoothly integrated detail. The solid, fast and well-textured bass end gave such good control that the amp could be turned up louder than with most stands.

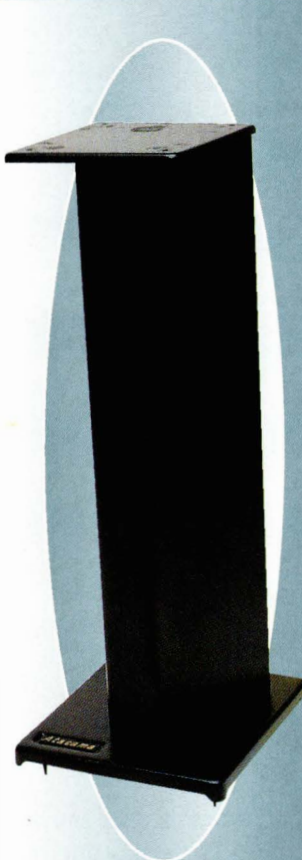
GALE REFERENCE 600 £60

Very similar to the Atacama SE24: the most obvious differences are that the Gale costs £10 less, and is only available via Richer Sounds outlets. Detail differences include a slightly smaller resin-damped top plate with no spike provision (self-adhesive cones or Blu-Tack are the options). Sand-filling is recommended and was already carried out on the review samples.

Careful comparison between the *Reference 600s* and *SE24s* showed (as expected) that the two designs were very similar sonically too, with the Gale just a little smoother and less vivid overall — perhaps worthwhile with some budget speakers. An obvious addition to the ever-growing list of Best Buys.



ATACAMA SE24 £70



Experience has shown that a pair of SE24s is a sure-fire way of extending the low-end weight of budget miniature loudspeakers, without introducing the turgid bloom or timing problems which can sometimes spoil things.

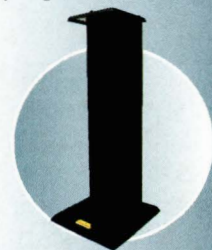
Sturdy base and top plates are welded to a large-section steel pillar, which ought to be part-filled with sand to provide some damping. A folded edge hides the floor-spikes, while the top has spike threads. The spikes themselves, however, are optional.

The SE24s stand out from the budget crowd for their consistency as well as their overall quality; all the more so considering the competitive price. These stands deserve their third straight Best Buy.

PARTINGTON DISCOVERY £80

The single-pillar stand is becoming increasingly popular. In the *Discovery*, top and base plates are damped with a silicon-and-iron-resin compound. Purchasers should fill the central column with damping/mass loading material.

These stands helped a modest pair of bookshelf speakers extract a remarkable amount of musical information from the system, with deep, rich guitar textures and believable presentation. High level control was particularly impressive.



RECOMMENDED MODELS

MANA SOUNDFRAMES £125 (EACH)

Not strictly a speaker stand — more of a platform for further coupling/decoupling a stand-mount or floorstanding speaker. Seemingly expensive but quickly seem very cost-effective in a serious system.

SOUND ORGANISATION Z124 £80

Tall self-assembly stand with a large central pillar and attractive lacquer finish — tonally even with good timing and dynamics.

SOUND ORGANISATION Z129 £110

A heavyweight four-pillar self-assembly design provides a truly solid support which confers good dynamics and transparency.

TARGET R1 £275

Pricey four-pillar heavyweight, welded throughout; enhances clarity, control, bass extension and dynamics of sophisticated speakers.



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As you might imagine, a breakthrough like this is no small feat. It's accomplished by multiplying the effects of Digital Sound Field Processing and Dolby Pro Logic.[®]

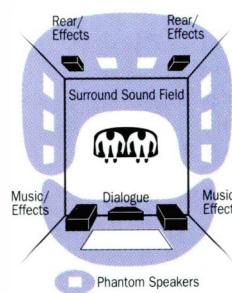
Digital Sound Field Processing is Yamaha's unique technology that electronically recreates some of the finest performance venues in the world. And Dolby Pro Logic is the technology responsible for placing sound around the room, matching the dialogue and sound effects with the action on the screen.

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CABLES

BEST BUYS



DNM-RESON TCC100 interconnect, £36

Made by the kings of solid-core, *DNM-Reson* is made up of a clear extruded LDPE sleeve, with two colour-coded 0.2mm oxygen-free copper conductors.

DNM-Reson makes for a big and fruity sound, with bags of enthusiasm and good-humour. On occasion, it bubbles over and sounds a little too large and gaudy with percussion and vocals. But for the most part, it sounds attractive, dynamic and bouncy.

IXOS 104-CUSTOM interconnect, £20

A surprising, modestly priced cable, which in our tests outperformed more expensive cables. Its construction is ordinary: standard, coaxial, high-purity copper cable with multi-stranded central core.

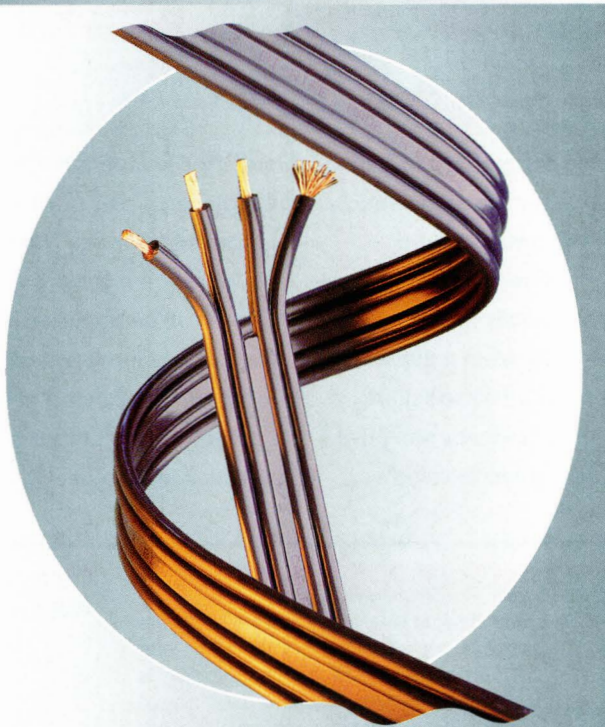
Overall, the *104-Custom* is open and detailed, without the splashy treble of cheap interconnects. It's blessed with full, clean bass which makes it a superb upgrade. Too smooth in absolute terms, but hugely detailed and excellent value for money.

VDH THE FIRST digital, £100

Dr AJ van den Hul was the first cable designer to create a cable made entirely from hundreds of minute strands of electrically conductive carbon-fibre. It was only fitting that this cable should be known as *The First*.

Used as an analogue cable, it demonstrated a freedom from harshness that won it a solid Recommendation in *Hi-Fi Choice*. However, as a digital interconnect, it really came into its own. *The First* sharpened digital resolution with its natural, if slightly dark, presentation.

CABLE TALK TALK 3 speaker cable, £2.25/M



Cable Talk's no-nonsense reputation is based around cables like *Talk 3*. It's a simple spaced-conductor design (as popularised by the likes of Linn, Naim and Exposure cables) thanks to its low resistance and capacitance. Beneath the royal blue sleeve sit two 42-strand conductors, with each strand made up of 0.3mm-thick 5N-purity copper.

Talk 3's biggest strength is its ability as a fine all-rounder, making a smooth yet colourful sound that's 'easy on the ear...but far from lazy'. It may not produce the widest soundstage around, but *Talk 3* is always expressive and boppy, though never brash. Its sound is not immediately impressive, but sonically this cable has real staying power.

BANDRIDGE LC1259 speaker cable, £1/M

Although this ultra-cheap cable is similar to give away bell-wire, but with thicker and more profuse copper strands, it manages to make the bell-wire sound very listenable.

LC1259 produced fresh and open vocals from a bubbly, naturally colourful soundstage. It suffers a slightly messy treble, lacking the smoothness of more expensive cables, but was never harsh or gritty sounding.

DNM SOLID-CORE BI-WIRE speaker, £15/M

DNM's solid-core rainbow ribbon cable is both subjectively and objectively better than the single-wired version. Each piece uses two single connectors separated by a clear LDPE sleeve. The bi-wiring simply lowers resistance without affecting capacitance.

It's the best sub-£1,000 speaker cable we've come across to date, possessing good extension, bounce and solidity. Though slightly spartan in low bass, it's always coherent and spacious.

IXOS SUPERSTRAND 603 speaker, £2/M

This is another modestly priced Ixos cable which outperformed cables costing much more. The *Superstrand 603* is made up of a flexible, spaced conductor cable, and sports seven bunches of 48 strands of oxygen-free copper side, wrapped in a blue PVC jacket.

A touch of sweetness and rounded-off fine detail keeps it out of the top league, but the big, expansive sound never intrudes onto the cable's neutrality. It is coherent and well-focused, with a sound that brims over with ambient detail.

RECOMMENDED (S=speaker; I=interconnect; D=digital)

S ABSOLUTE WIRE FORCE 4	£6/M	I LFD SPIROLINK I	£36.50
I AUDIO NOTE AN-S	£99	I LFD SPIROLINK II	£70
S AUDIO NOTE AN-B	£16.50/M	D LFD DIGILINK COPPER	£22
S AUDIO NOTE AN-L	£29.50/M	I LINN ANALOGUE INTERCONNECT	£40
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D IXOS 105-DIGITAL	£25	I KLO TYPE 0.1	£180

OVER £9,000 OF HI-FI



WIN!

We are giving away every hi-fi component* that has been awarded a Best Buy this year.† 38 hi-fi classics must be won in this easy-to-enter competition.

Yes indeed – you could win anything from a 99p Maxell UR cassette tape to JBL's mighty L90 speakers worth £1,500, or the £1,600 ECA Vista/Lectern pre/power amp combination. Other highlights include Mission's

superb *Cyrus III* amplifier, the acclaimed Sony CDP-561E CD player, a pair of Atacama's noted SE24 stands and the legendary Yamaha KX-580 cassette deck.

There are eight product categories to choose from, and prizes will be awarded in descending price order, so the first lucky winner out of the 'amplifier' hat will receive the most expensive amp in the list, the ECA Vista/Lectern combo; the next drawn will receive the £500 Mission *Cyrus III* and so on. Go ahead – try your luck!

COMPETITION RULES

- The Closing Date for this competition is January 12, 1996.
- Winners of the Best Buy Bonanza competition will be judged from all correct entries submitted by telephone and post, and drawn at random on the Closing Date. Prizes will be awarded in order of decreasing value within each competition category described above: i.e., the first entry out of the hat wins the most expensive prize.
- All winners will be notified by post.
- The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- The Best Buy Bonanza competition is not open to employees of Dennis Publishing Ltd., the companies whose 'Best Buy' products are listed above, their suppliers, agents or associates.
- We regret that this competition is open to UK residents only.
- No cash alternative will be offered.
- Entering the competitions will be taken as acceptance of the rules.
- You must notify us if you do not wish to be informed of any special offers or promotions. On postal entries, please indicate clearly on your entry if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products.
- On telephone entries, you will be asked to state whether you are over 18 years of age. Postal entries with no age certification will not be accepted.
- For a list of winners of the Best Buy Bonanza competition, write enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope, to: *Hi-Fi Choice* Winners, Dept 150/1, 19 Bolsover Street, LONDON W1P 7HJ.
- * In the case of Best Buy products that have been discontinued, a replacement model will be substituted as a prize.† Including cable reviews from 1994.

HOW TO ENTER

Because there is so much amazing hi-fi gear up for grabs, we've split the competition into eight different categories. You can go for as many categories as you like, and the quickest and easiest way to enter is to 'phone one of our special competition lines listed below. Give your name and address, then answer the oh-so-simple question:

HOW MANY ISSUES OF HI-FI CHOICE HAVE THERE BEEN?

a) 100 b) 150 c) 200

TO ENTER, PHONE THESE NUMBERS NOW!

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CASSETTE DECKS	0891 866934
SPEAKER STANDS	0891 866935
SPEAKER CABLES	0891 866936
INTERCONNECT CABLES	0891 866937
BLANK TAPES	0891 866938

Calls cost 39p per minute cheap rate and 49p per minute at all other times. Each call should take no longer than two minutes.

HOW TO ENTER BY POST

Write the answer to our question on the back of a postcard or sealed-down envelope, together with your name, address, daytime telephone number and your choice of category. Address this entry to:

Hi-Fi Choice Best Buy Competition
Bradley Pavilions
Bradley Stoke North
Bristol
BS12 0BQ

All postal entries must arrive by first post, Friday January 12th, 1996. To select your category, please use one of the following codes in the top left corner of your entry. If you wish to enter more than one category, simply send another postcard. You must state on your entry whether you are over 18.

CD PLAYERS	CHFC601B
AMPLIFIERS	CHFC601C
SPEAKERS	CHFC601D
CASSETTE DECKS	CHFC601E
SPEAKER STANDS	CHFC601F
SPEAKER CABLES	CHFC601G
INTERCONNECT CABLES	CHFC601H
BLANK TAPES	CHFC601J

THOSE FABULOUS PRIZES IN FULL

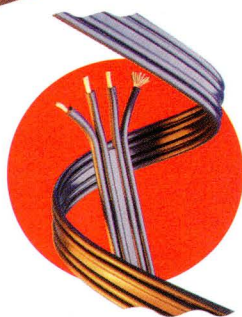
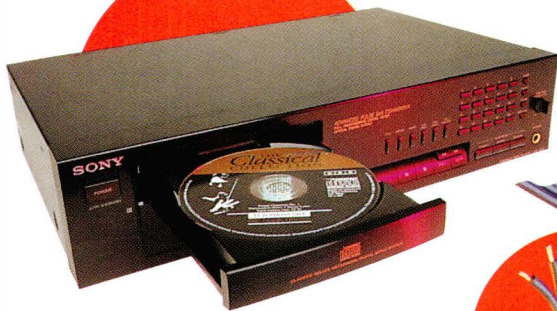


AMPLIFIERS



LOUDSPEAKERS

CD PLAYERS

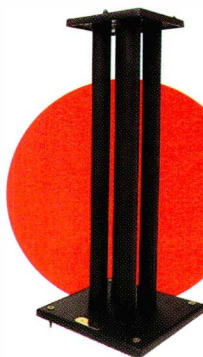


CABLES



CASSETTE DECKS

SPEAKER STANDS



AMPLIFIERS

ECA Vista/Lectern	£1,640
Mission Cyrus III	£500
Audio Innovations Alto	£329
Magnum IA170	£270
Harman/Kardon HK610	£200
NAD 310	£150

CD PLAYERS

Onkyo DX-750	£350
Sony CDP-915E	£300
Kenwood DP-3060	£200
Pioneer PD-S504	£200
Sony CDP-561E	£200

CASSETTE DECKS

Aiwa AD-S950	£300
Aiwa AD-WD727	£170
Denon DRS-640	£200
Denon DRM-550	£160
JVC TD-V662	£270
Yamaha KX-580	£250

LOUDSPEAKERS

JBL L90	£1,500
Keswick Audio Aria II	£300
Mission 733	£300
Musical Technology Kestrel	£250
JPW P1	£170
Tannoy 631	£150
KEF Coda 7	£130

SPEAKER STANDS

Partington Trophy PF	£100
Kudos S50	£99
Partington Discovery	£80
Atacama SE24	£70
Gale Reference 600	£60

CASSETTE TAPE

Ten Maxell XLII	£19.90
Teb That's MG-X	£14.90
Ten Maxell UR	£9.90

INTERCONNECT CABLE


1m pair DNM-Reson TCC100	£36
1m pair Ixos 104-Custom	£20

SPEAKER CABLE

5m pair DNM Solidcore B/wr	£150
5m pair Cable Talk 3	£23
5m pair Ixos Superstrand 603	£20
5m pair Bandridge LC1259	£10

Note: Where a product has been superseded, we will substitute the manufacturer's designated replacement.


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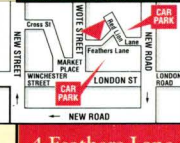
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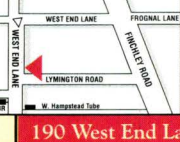
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ROTEL RCD965	CD player S/hand	299 199
RCD945	CD player S/hand	229 175
SONY KVX2952	29" Nicam TV Ex-dem	829 699
SOUNDSTYLE X053	Eqpt. rack Display	199 149

Cheltenham

AURA CD50	CD player	Ex-dem	400	319
VA80	Amplifier	Ex-dem	280	240
CASTLE Durham/stands	Speakers	S/hand	345	199
EPOS ES11/stands	Speakers	S/hand	540	299
LINN Klout	Amplifier	Ex-dem	1995	1495
MICROMEGA Junior	CD player	Ex-dem	299	199
QUAD 67	CD player	Ex-dem	825	745
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MUSICAL FIDELITY Synthesis	Amplifier	S/hand	389	89
ROTEL RCD965discrete	CD Player	Ex-dem	350	299

Swindon

ARCAM Delta 270	CD player	Ex-dem	799	675
Alpha 6	Amplifier	S/hand	330	230
Delta 70.3	CD player	S/hand	699	449
EPOS ES11	Speakers	Ex-dem	490	375
LINN Klout	Power amp	Ex-dem	1995	1650
LK1/Dirak/LK100	Pre/power	Ex-dem	2038	799
NAIM CDI	CD Player	Ex-dem	1997	1697
YAMAHA DSPE200	A/V process	Ex-dem	370	225

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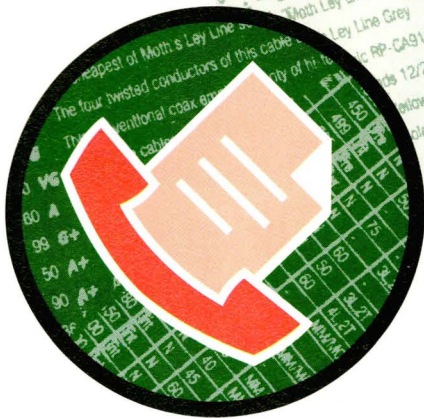
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Classified

Dealer Guide

SALES & SERVICES

EX-DEM

ex dem and second hand bargains

Apogee Centaur Minor
loudspeakers
9 months old ~~£360~~ **£850**

Arion EOS class A valve power
amplifier (old shape) new ~~£600~~
£600

Audio Innovations L1 pre - amp
ex dem ~~£360~~ **£225**

Audio Innovations L2 pre - amp
ex dem ~~£260~~ **£475**

Audio Innovations series 200
pre - amp ex dem ~~£360~~ **£225**

Audio Note OTO integrated
amplifier with phono stage
s/h **£750**

Audio IMT loudspeakers black

Audio IMT loudspeakers black
ex dem ~~£600~~ **£300**

Audio Silver Night mono-blocks
s/h mint ~~£600~~ **£1175**

Audio Silver Night SE stereo
power amp ex
dem ~~£400~~ **£650**

Celestion 300
loudspeakers
black
s/h ~~£1100~~ **£500**

Heybrook Heystak
Loudspeakers
ex dem
~~£600~~ **£325**



hi-fi for grown-ups

Heybrook Quartet loudspeakers
with matching mass loaded
stands black with burr yew
ex dem ~~£860~~ **£500**

Heybrook Sextet loudspeakers
light ash with burr yew trim ex
dem latest spec ~~£1176~~ **£850**

Keswick Audio
Research Volante
loudspeakers II
cherry s/h ~~£600~~
£350

Keswick Audio
Research Aria
loudspeakers Dk
Cherry ex dem
~~£600~~ **£175**

Naim NAT 101 tuner with SNAPs
s/h ~~£350~~ **£350**

Quad ESL 63 loudspeakers black
s/h ~~£2700~~ **£1250**

Rega ELA loudspeakers black
s/h ~~£275~~ **£275**

Royd Herald loudspeakers black
ex dem ~~£108~~ **£100**

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	Was	Now
Musical Fidelity F22/FX Pre Power amplifier	£2100	(£1500.00)
Musical Fidelity FCD Compact disc player	£1500	(£1100)
Exposure 17/18 Pre Power amplifier inc MM	£1500	(£1000)
Exposure I5 Integrated amplifier inc MM	£729	(£500)
Tannoy D100 Loudspeakers inc Tannoy stands	£799	(£500)
Teac VRD57 Compact disc player	£599	(£450)
Teac VRD510 Compact disc player	£769	(£600)
Teac D1 Digital to Analogue converter	£499	(£400)
Project 6 turntable with Ortofon MC15 cartridge	£435	(£300)
Project 7 integrated amplifier	£250	(£200)
Naim IBL loudspeakers, black ash inc crossover	£905	(£700)
Naim CD1 Compact disc player	£1997	(£1250)
S/H Audiolab 8000A integrated amplifier		£350.00

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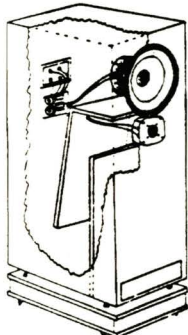
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XD AURA SP50	249.00
XD Bang & Olufsen RL6000	299.00
XD Meridian D6000 active monitors	3000.00
NEW Monitor Audio Studio 20 Rosewood	1500.00
XD ProAc Response One	699.00
SH Sendor SP2 inc. stands	199.00

Amplifiers:	Offer Price:
XD Arcam Alpha 6	280.00
XD Delta 290	399.00
XD Delta 290P	339.00
SH Audiolab 8000A	299.00
SH NAIM Nait 1mm	250.00
XD Nakamichi IA3	199.00
SH QED A270	195.00
SH QUAD 34 pre-amp	199.00

Compact Disc Players:	Offer Price:
XD AURA CD50	249.00
XD Meridian 506	599.00
XD Meridian 508	1150.00
XD Micromega Stage 3	720.00
XD Naim CD1	1500.00
XD Nakamichi CD4	249.00
SH QUAD 66	249.00

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Audio Innovations Alto	£230
Cyrus 2 + PSX	£299
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NVA P50 + 2 X A70 Monoblocks	£900
QED C300/P300 Pre/power	£300
QUAD 34/306 Pre/power	£475
QUAD 44/405.2 Pre/power	£395
Rotel RTC850L Pre/Tuner + Power amp	£310
Yamaha C4/M4 Pre/power	£375

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CD PLAYERS

Bang & Olufsen CD50	£100
Meridian 208 (Ex-dem)	£799
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Pioneer PDS901	£279
Quad 67	£499
Teac Transport & DAC	£799

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Michell Focus 1	£175
Oracle/Grado Arm/Signature 8	£675

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Bose 901	£875
Gale 301	£149
Harbeth HL3	£295
Linn Sara 9 (inc stands)	£299
Monitor Audio MA800Gold	£550
Musical Fidelity MC2	£295
ProAc Tablette 2	£300
Quad ESL63	£1599
Rogers LS4a/2	£249
Royd Sintras 2	£300
Sendor SP1	£599
Sendor SP2	£399
Tannoy 609 + stands	£250

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AIWA portable DAT HDS100 unused recorder, £250. Rockford Audiophile car amp, unused, £1550. Ian, Essex (0181) 519 4241

AUDIOLAB 8000, Arcam Alpha+ CD, Denon tuner, B&W DM2 speakers. £950 or split. Surrey (01932) 226327

AUDIOQUEST Cobalt speaker cable, 2 metre pair. Video Z cable. £100 ono. Leeds (0113) 294 5609

AUDIOQUEST Quartz interconnect cable, half metre, excellent cond., still with original packaging. £40. Birmingham (0121) 602 3260

BEARD BB100 integrated amp, £595. Meridian 200/300, £595. Denon DRW-750 deck, £125. Suffolk (01449) 676335

BEAUTIFULLY constructed passive preamp — ALPS 'Black Beauty' volume pot, silver plated selector switch, silver plated cable/silver solder, gold/PTFE phonos, 5 inputs, £135. Mark, Aberdeen (01224) 210875

CAMBRIDGE AUDIO DACMagic1, £110. Trichord Clock2 modification, £50. Fife (01383) 730626

CELESTION 3 speakers, with Sound Organisation floor spiked stands. Excellent cond. £95. Berkshire (01344) 305377

DENON DRS-640 separate cassette deck. Unused, perfect cond., boxed. Value £210, sell for £170. Thetford (01842) 862128

DENON TU260L tuner, £75. Meridian 203 DAC, £150. Both boxed and mint condition. Middlesex (01932) 787598

DPA Bigger Bit DAC7 and Kenwood DPX 9010 CD transport, boxed, mint cond., £500. Bath (01225) 833473

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LEAK 20 amplifier. Troughline tuner. TPV valve decoder. Offers. Rhyl (01745) 331681

LINN Isobarik DMS, mahogany + vdH cables. £750 or exchange for Audiolab, Arcam/TDL system etc. Jim, Colchester (01206) 861457.

LINN Isobariks, £850. KEF 104 Reference, £600. Inc. stands/cables exc. cond. London (0956) 993761

LINN Keilidh speakers. Ceramic plinths, as new with boxes, £500. London (0181) 852 7302 or e-mail:

keilidh@mail0.demon.co.uk. LINN LK280 amp. Linn LK1 pre-amp with remote. £500 pair. Linn Keilidh speakers plus stands £500 pair. All mint condition. High Wycombe (01494) 715673

MAGNEPLANAR MG1C speakers, £550. Hitachi FT5500 Mk2 tuner, £90. Cardiff (01222) 891314

MERIDIAN D6000 digital active system, 602 transport, 604 tuner, £6,500. Bristol (0117) 942 4169

MERIDIAN 208 CD player/pre-amp, Trichord clocked, exc cond. £475. W Sussex (01342) 315243

MERIDIAN 605 power amps, £1350. B&W 804 speakers, rosewood, £650 ono. W Kent (01892) 536919

M.F. CDT valve CD, £325. AT-OC5 vgc, £50. Gyrodec power supply (not QC), £50. Goodmans SCD100 cassette (made by Nakamichi), £55. N Kent (01474) 704382

MISSION 751, rosewood + Deflex panels, £165. REL Strata subwoofer, £315 or £425 for the pair. Jersey (01534) 66238

MISSION 753S, rosewood, boxed, £500. Tannoy 611s Mk2, £240. Revolver Purdeys, £160. Staffordshire (01782) 261237

MOD SQUAD Line Drive pre-amp. Rata-modified, excellent cond. £240. London (0171) 241 3410

MantiCore Madrigal/Musician, late spec. immac. cost £590 with mat. Half price, £295. Essex (01279) 410528

MUSICAL FIDELITY F22/15 pre/pwr amps. As new, under warranty (cost £3000) accept £1995 ovno. Audio Technica ART1 cartridge, as new, boxed, less than 50 hours use (cost £945) accept £595. Siltech interconnect balanced 0.5m pair, £225. Translucent interconnect 2.5m pair (silver), £95. Surrey (0181) 949 6723 eves.

NAIM NAC 52 preamp (new £5005), £3750 ono. Naim SBL speakers (new £1826), £1250 ono. Both 1 yr, boxed. Berkshire (01734) 461421 eve, (01256) 24311 day

NAIM SBL loudspeakers, £990. Meridian 563 D/A converter, £450. Rega Kyte speakers £125. Wanted: Arcam Nicam TV sound tuner. Middlesex (0181) 897 2385

NAIM 140, and walnut IBLs. Marantz CD64 and CDA94 DAC. Offers iro £400 each. Audiotech table £85, 2 Target TT2 tables £40 each. Croydon (0181) 668 9040 or (0836) 696096 mobile

NAIM 72/140/HiCap, £1300. New style, may separate. Radford SC25 preamp, £450. Ilford (0181) 559 9562

NAIM 92/90 pre/pwr, £490. Epos ES11, black, incl stands, £290. Both immac and boxed. Orpington (01689) 877230

NAKAMICHI ZX7 3HD cas/deck, forerunner of Dragon, similar spec exc A/rev, £375. London (0181) 995 3912

QUAD valve based system: 2 Quad II pwr amps, superb cond w/ passive preamp; Marantz CD273SE, little used, orig boxing; Technics 676 semi-pro cass deck (new £400); phono preamp; Dual 505 turntable; Sony tuner; JPW Sonata spkrs, black wood on dedicated Partington heavy black metal stands; all interconnects (some gold plated), leads and cables included. £649, or £599 without turntable. Can demo & deliver. Devon (01626) 772898

REGA Planar 3 & Linn K9, £95. Akai 4000DS Mk2 reel deck, £40. Sony CDP491, £50. London (0181) 989 4694

ROKSAN M1 monoblocks, £1995 new, £4500. Micromega Pro3 transport, £595. DAC-in-the-box, £120. Herts (01727) 822494

ROKSAN S1 pwr amp, Roksan L2 preamp w/ DS4 pwr supply (£3000), £950 ovno. Cornwall (01326) 564879

ROTEL RCD 965BX, perfect condition, £180. Meridian 101B preamp (MM input), £75. Essex (01621) 772884

SHAHINIAN Arc spkrs, £695. Albarry M1008 Monoblocks, £475. Wanted: Sonus Faber Minuetos. Glasgow (0141) 423 1323

SONY DAT 750, £300. QUAD 34-306, £350. 405, £150. New Sennheiser headphones 320, £35. Blackpool (01253) 594440

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TECHNICS SU-A800 MK1 AMP, 55W, MOS, class AA, brand new, £275. Quad 34 w/ Quad 306 pwr amp, £350. Collector's item: Thorens TD150 turntable, SME 3009 arm, Shure cartridge, £150. Manchester (0161) 748 3925

TWO Naim NAP250s, 1994, £1100 each. SBLs, black, £1050. Washington (0191) 4166866

UNWANTED prize: PS Audio 6.1 stereo preamplifier. Value £800, offers around £450. Crewe (01270) 586759 evenings

YAMAHA YST SW200 active subwoofer, mint cond, boxed, 120W of tight low bass, remote, perfect for AV & music. Cost £400, accept £300 ono. Steven, Birmingham (0121) 327 4830 (leave message)



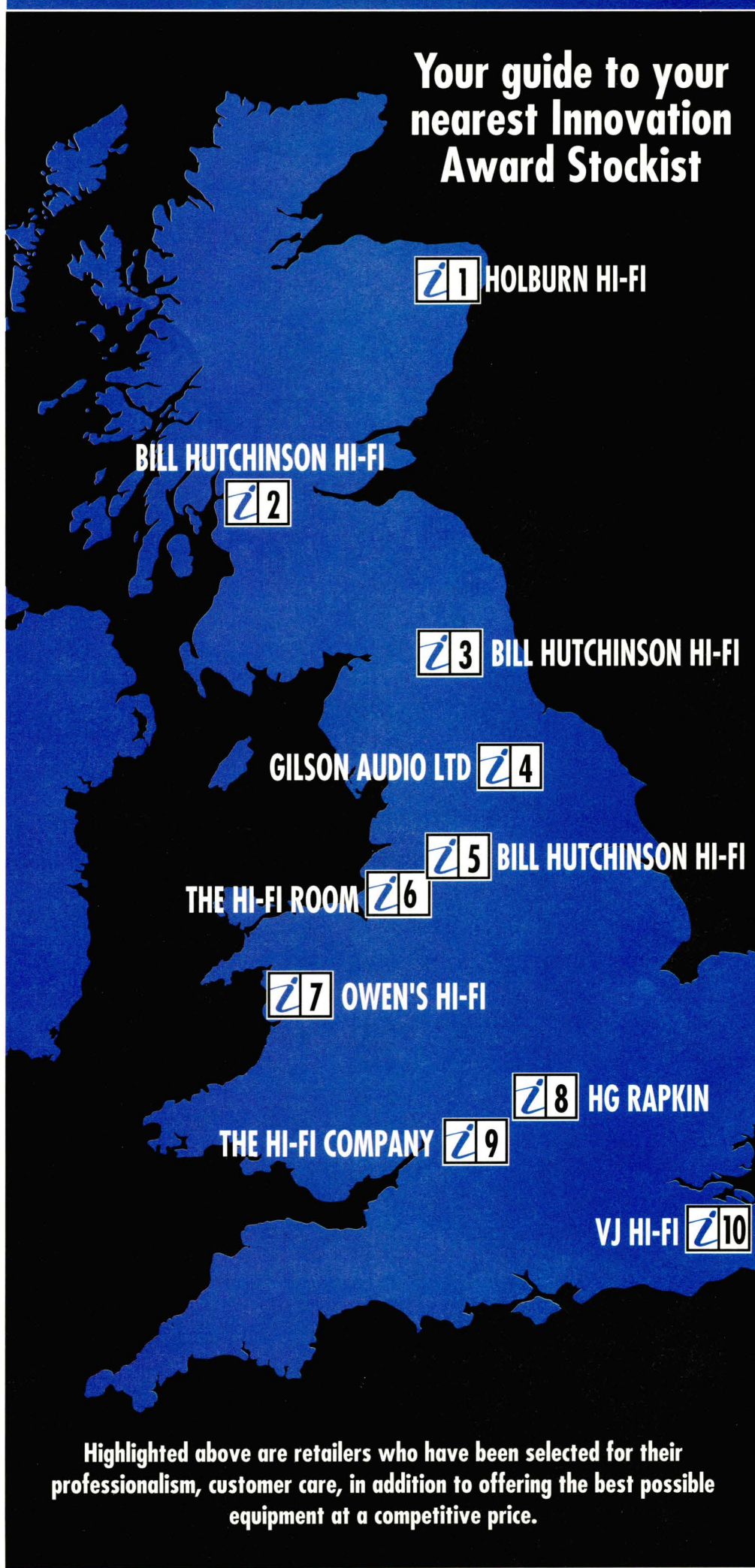
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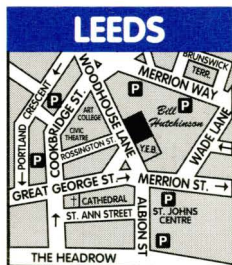
- YAMAHA DSP-2070 - AV AMPLIFIER - INNOVATION WINNER '94
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- MARANTZ- 1020 - LYFE STYLE SYSTEM - INNOVATION WINNER '94
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- SONY TV-KVS 3432 - TELEVISION - INNOVATION WINNER '95

PRICE PLEDGE

Should you find any local dealer offering a better price for goods currently in stock at Bill Hutchinson and the alternative quoting retailer, we will better that deal.

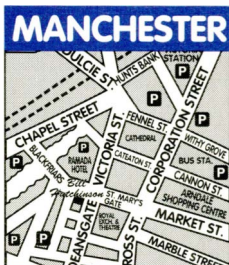
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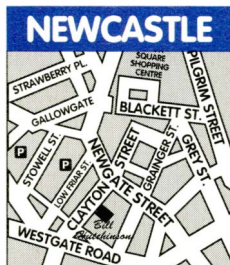
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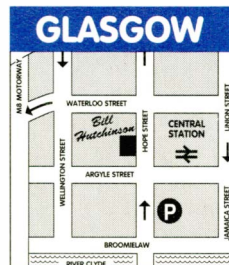
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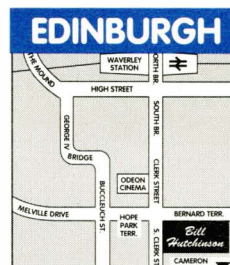
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THE ALL NEW HI-FI CHOICE - DIRECTORY -



Best Buys & Recommendations

The most influential symbols in our Directory are the **B'BUY** and **REC** commendations found at the end of the entries for particularly fine products.

■ **B'BUY** A product carrying the Best Buy swingtag is of excellent quality and good value for money in its price category.

■ **REC** Recommended products are runners up, but they are still definitely worth considering within their price bands.

Please note, however, that an expensive Recommended product will nearly always sound

better than an inexpensive Best Buy.

An ideal situation would be to choose suitably priced **B'BUY** or **REC** products from relevant categories and create a Best Buy system. However, due to the varieties in tonal balance that exist in many audio products, and differences in taste, system building is unfortunately not that simple. These ratings make a useful guideline for short-listing components, but only by experiencing the actual combination in a dealer's listening room will you be able to decide whether it works for you.

BUYING HI-FI EQUIPMENT

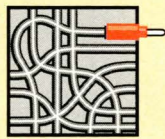
The key to putting together a great hi-fi system is finding a dealer with whom you can communicate, and who is sympathetic to your requirements. So the first stage in your quest is to look up your local dealers in our Dealer Directory, at the end of the product Directory, and go to see the people behind the counters. Listen to the sound they make, check out their record collections, sip their coffee and find the store with the right attitude. Then take your records in and listen to them through a variety of components within your budget. Use our Recommendations and Best Buys to narrow options down, but bear in mind that dealers have a lot of experience in putting systems together, so don't worry if parts of the system are not Best Buys. It's the end result that counts. Listen for the system that shows you the greatest differences in your software, (regardless of musical content, records should sound distinctly dissimilar). This is a good way of assessing which system is the most revealing.

If you can borrow equipment to try at home, do this before you buy. Loudspeakers in particular can sound very different according to the room they are in. Don't forget that cables and supports play an important part in the sound of a system: if you take your bits home and plonk them on the sideboard with a bit of mains flex to connect them up, don't expect sonic ecstasy!

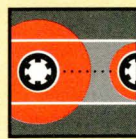
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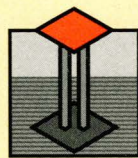
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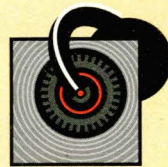
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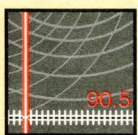
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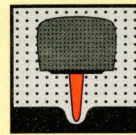
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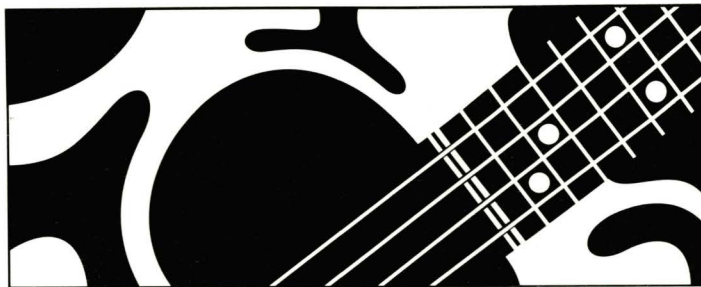


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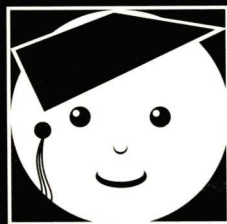
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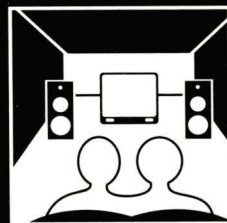
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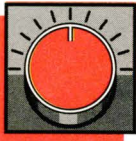
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Amplifiers

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 separated pre 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 around have outputs as low as 12 Watts, but team them with high efficiency loudspeakers and you can achieve loudness aplenty. Only when using loudspeakers of low sensitivity (below 87dB/W) or difficult load do you need lots of power. ■ As general rule, the more widgets an amplifier has (ie

tone controls, remote control, DSP) the more money will have to be spent on it to match the sound quality that can be achieved with a minimalist design. The sort of facilities that are useful include tape monitor switching and a source direct button on models with tone controls.

■ An increasing number of amplifiers are supplied without vinyl disc stages, or with the phono stage as an optional extra. If you use a turntable, make sure that the amp has an MM or MC stage to suit your cartridge.

A/V amps

In practice an A/V amplifier provides all the standard CD, tuner, tape, aux and phono inputs offered by a standard stereo amplifier. In addition many also incorporate an AM/FM tuner section, making them A/V receivers.

■ More importantly an A/V amplifier includes a Dolby Pro Logic decoding chip along with extra circuitry to effect the rear channel delay. Naturally there are at least four channels worth of amplification under the bonnet to feed the five loudspeaker outputs.

Key

integrated, preamp, power amp amplifier type
 A/V includes surround sound capability
 50W power output per channel in Watts RMS
 MM,5L,2T number of inputs of each type (L - line, T - tape, MM - moving magnet cartridge, MC - moving coil cartridge
 hdph headphone output available

PRODUCT

£ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

AMPLIFIERS	
Analogue Saturn	75 preamp • MM
Analogue Saturn MC	75 preamp • MC
Creek OBM-8	99 preamp • MM • 10,6,11cm • Phono step-up
Creek OBM-9	110 preamp • MC • 10,6,11cm • Phono stepup
Aiwa XA-003	120 integrated • 40W • MM,2L,1T • hdph • 2 speaker circuits
Grundig V210	130 integrated • 50W • MM,5L,1T • hdph • rem • 36,12,30cm • Pre-main split
Pioneer A-103	130 integrated • 30W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 42,11,31cm
Kenwood KA-1060	140 integrated • 140W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,13,25cm • 'Logical Flow' construction
Luxman A-312	140 integrated • 40W • MM,4L,2T • hdph • 13,44,36cm • CD direct, A/B speakers
Moth 30 Passive	149 109 preamp • 4L,1T • 5,10,35cm • Modular system gives cracking results. Passive pre/power amp warrant Best Buy (tested with 30 Stereo 60).
Grundig Fine Arts V1	150 integrated • 50W • MM,5L,1T • hdph • rem • 43,14,30cm • Tone defeat
Marantz PM-34	150 integrated • 40W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 42,14,28cm • Source direct
Pioneer A-203	150 integrated • 45W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 42,11,31cm
Sony TAF211B	150 integrated • 30W • MM/2L • hdph • 43,14,31cm • Source direct
Technics SU-V300	150 integrated • 25W • MM,2L,1T • hdph • 43,13,32cm • A/B speaker select
Denon PMA-250 III	160 121 integrated • 30W • MM,3L,1T • hdph • 44,10,28cm • High resolution amp, can lose its grip but is engaging and enjoyable.
Grundig V310	170 integrated • 70W • MM,5L,1T • hdph • rem • 36,12,30cm • Pre-main split
Kenwood KA-2060R	170 integrated • 65W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44cm • System control
Rotel RC970BX MkII	175 144 preamp • 3L,2T • hdph • 44,8,29cm • Confident, consistent-sounding. Reviewed with RB970BX MkII power amp in Sessions.
Teac A-X1030	180 integrated • 40W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,13,36cm • Mic input
NAD 302	189 116 integrated • 25W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • A spritely and uplifting performance. Sounds loud, but never intrusive nor fatiguing.
Moth 30 RIAA	199 preamp • MM/MC • 5,10,35cm • Stand alone phono stage
QED Vector One	199 preamp • 4L,1T
Grundig Fine Arts V2	200 integrated • 80W • MM,5L,1T • hdph • rem • 43,14,30cm • Tone defeat
JVC AX-R5BK	200 integrated • 45W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,15,31cm • Remote control
Kenwood KA-3020SE	200 134 integrated • 50W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,14,35cm • UK Special Edition
Marantz PM-44 MkIISE	200 134 integrated • 40W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 42,14,28cm • <i>Two generations on from the PM-40SE, this model gives a disappointingly grey view of music.</i>
Marantz PM-43	200 integrated • 55W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 42,14,30cm • Twin speaker sockets
Nakamichi JA4s	200 integrated • 30W • 3L,1T • 43,7,32 cm • 'Harmonic Time Alignment'
Onkyo A-801	200 integrated • 40W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 46,12,33cm
Philips FA930	200 integrated • 65W • MM,2L,3T • hdph • rem • 44,14,30cm
Pioneer A-303R	200 134 integrated • 45W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 42,13,36cm • Fresh and uncomplicated sound bests much of the audiophile competition.
Sony TAF244B	200 integrated • 40W • MM/2L • hdph • 43,14,31cm • MOSFET power stage
Technics SU-V500	200 integrated • 30W • MC/MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,13,31cm • New Class A
Teac A-X3030	220 integrated • 60W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,13,36cm • Mic input
Rotel RB970BX MkII	225 144 power amp • 60W • 44,8,29cm • Tested with RC970BX MkII in Sessions (see above).
NAD Monitor 1000	229 preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph
Rega Brio	229 integrated • 30W • MM,3L,1T • 43,7,15cm
Denon PMA-350 II	230 134 integrated • 50W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,12,28cm • Modifications give this amp a powerful, up-front and compelling performance.
Denon PMA-480R	230 integrated • 50W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,12,29cm
JVC AX-V6BK	230 integrated • A/V • 50W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,13,46cm • Dolby Pro Logic
Kenwood KA-3060R	230 142 integrated • 45W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,13,30cm • <i>Classy engineering, but sound is over-dry, often frustratingly restrained and rather unsophisticated.</i>
Technics SU-A600 MkII	230 integrated • 37W • MC/MM,3L,2T • hdph • 43,13,32cm • MOS, R-Core transformer
Moth 30 Series Power	239 power amp • 30W • 5,10,35cm
Yamaha AX-490	239 integrated • 85W • MM,MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,15,39cm • UK specified, system remote
Arcam Alpha 5 Plus	240 134 integrated • 40W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 43,8,30cm • <i>A pared down Alpha 6 that offers little penalty in power, but significantly poorer sound.</i>
Magnum IA120	249 integrated • 50W • MM,5L,2T • hdph
Moth 30 Active	249 preamp • 4L,1T • 5,10,35cm
NAD 304	249 121 integrated • 35W • MM,4L,2T • hdph • Good with CD and vinyl, this is a successful and entertaining amplifier for your shortlist.
Creek A42	250 power amp • 50W • 42,6,20cm • 150 watts in mono
Grundig Fine Arts V3	250 integrated • 120W • MM,5L,1T • hdph • rem • 43,14,30cm • Pre-main split
JVC AX-A472BK	250 142 integrated • 65W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,15,36cm • <i>Unpredictable performer that is initially impressive but often ends up sounding starchy and tiring.</i>
Luxman A-331	250 integrated • 60W • MM,4L,2T • hdph • rem • 13,44,36cm • Inc CD direct
Marantz MA-500	250 power amp • 125W • 9,15,45cm • D-bus, monoblocks, bridgable
Marantz PM-53	250 integrated • 65W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 42,14,30cm • Remote control
Rotel RA935BX MkII	250 integrated • 50W • 3L,2T • hdph • 44,10,35cm • Separate listen/rec selectors
Sony TAF444E	250 142 integrated • 50W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 43,15,38cm • <i>Sheds all frillery for an audiophile approach, but still sounds grubby and stilted.</i>
Lecson 380X	255 integrated • 35W • MM/MC,6L • 44,6,27cm
Pro-ject Model 7	259 142 integrated • 40W • MM,3L,2T • <i>A minimalist amplifier brimming with good intent, but too quirky for its own good. Either MM or MC.</i>
Onkyo A803	260 142 integrated • 60W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 46,12,33cm • <i>This amp sounds lifeless, vague and disinterested in the music at hand.</i>
Teac A-X5030	260 integrated • 75W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • 44,16,36cm
Creek P42	270 preamp • 50W • 4L,2T • hdph • 42,6,20cm • Plug-in modules available
Creek 4240	270 134 integrated • 40W • 3L,1T • hdph • 42,6,20cm • <i>Bearing no relation to earlier Creek designs, this radical rethink is more successful via MM than CD.</i>
Magnum IA170	270 142 integrated • 96W • 5L,1T • hdph • 43,7,26cm • Disarmingly powerful, capable of recreating a deep and naturally colourful sound.
Denon PMA-450SE	280 142 integrated • 60W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,14,36cm • Based on the original '450 offers a fast, furious and entertaining sound.
Kenwood KA-4060R	280 integrated • 70W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,14,35cm • System control
Technics SU-A700 MkII	280 integrated • 45W • MC/MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,13,32cm
AMC AV81 Control	289 preamp • A/V • 8L,2T • rem

PRODUCT

£ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

Lecson Stereo 383X	295	integrated • 60W • MM/MC,6L • hdph • 44,6,27cm	
AMC 2445	299	power amp • 45W • 4 channels	
Moth 30 RIAA 100VA	299	preamp • MM/MC • 5,10,35cm • Standalone phono stage	
QED Vector Reference	299	preamp • 4L,1T	
Yamaha AX-590	299	integrated • 100W • MM,MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,15,39cm • UK specified, system remote	
Denon PMA-715	300	integrated • 60W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,16,40cm	
Kenwood KA-V3700	300	integrated • A/V • MM,4L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,14,30cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
Marantz PM-63	300	integrated • 70W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 42,14,30cm • Remote control	
Mission PSX-R	300	22,8,36cm • Outboard PSU	
Musical Fidelity E10	300	144 integrated • 40W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • 44,10,34cm • Minimalist features	REC'D
NVA P-50	300	preamp • 3L,1T	
Pioneer A-400X	300	138 integrated • 50W • MM/MC4,2 • hdph • 42,13,36cm • On second audition, this amp was tonally unchanged but less compelling on audition.	REC'D
Rotel RA970BX	300	138 integrated • 60W • 4L,2T • hdph • 44,7,35cm • Lively, fresh and perky with plenty of power, but not so clever with complex recordings.	REC'D
Sony TAF542E	300	integrated • 90W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • 43,15,38cm • UK optimised sound	
Naim Flat-Cap	317	43,56,30cm • Power supply	
Moth 30 Integrated	320	integrated • 30W • 8L,T • 8,18,35cm	
Onix OA30	320	integrated • 40W • 5L,1T • hdph • 43,77,33cm	
Lumley Reference PP70	325	preamp • 6L,1T • 36,46,6cm • Passive, bolts to ST70	
Lumley Reference PP40	325	preamp • 6L,1T • 29,40,6cm • Bolts to ST40	
Lumley Reference PP1	325	preamp • 6L,1T • 29,44,6cm • Passive, stand alone	
Audio Innovations Alto	329	138 integrated • 35W • 4L,2T • 43,8,30cm • Despite a lack of bass, it still sounds open, natural and relaxed. Chrome version costs £50 extra.	B'BUY
Magnum Quartet	329	121 integrated • 36W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • An integrated model that incorporates four monoblocks optimised for bi-wiring, but sound is sandy in the treble.	
Analogue Jupiter	330	integrated • 30W • MM,4L,1T	
Aura VA100 II	330	138 integrated • 70W • MM,4L,1T • hdph • 43,6,31cm • Big, smooth yet slightly disjointed sound.	
JVC AX-A662BK	330	integrated • 90W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • 44,13,31cm • Compu-link system	
EMF Audio Sequel	349	109 integrated • 50W • MM,4L,1T • hdph • 43,65,28cm • Relaxed and restrained design from Mike Creek.	
Harman-Kardon PA2100	349	power amp • 45W • 45,11,37cm	
Moth 30 Active 100VA	349	preamp • 4L,1T • 5,10,35cm	
NAD Monitor 1000S	349	124 preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • Sounds a little restrained.	
NAD 306	349	integrated • 50W • MM,4L,2T • hdph	
Arcam Alpha 6 Plus	350	129 integrated • 50W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,8,30cm • A new MOSFET design with a subtle and melodic sound.	REC'D
Audiolink Sterling II	350	integrated • 60W • MM/MC • 43,7,270cm • Available in chrome	
Kenwood KA-5050R	350	129 integrated • 95W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,15,40cm • A listenable but neither particularly communicative nor captivating amplifier.	
Luxman A-353R	350	integrated • 60W • MM/MC,4L,2T • hdph • rem • 13,44,37cm • Motorised volume control	
Onkyo A-911	350	integrated • 70W • MM,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 28,12,33cm • Mini component, 4 Ohm rating	
Rotel RC980BX	350	109 preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • 44,7,33cm • Powerful, expansive but lacks poise, control and detail (tested with RB980BX).	
Technics SU-C1000	350	preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • rem • 43,70,31cm • Virtual Battery Operation; partners with SE-A1000	
Technics SU-A800 Mk2	350	134 integrated • 55W • MC/MM,3L,2T • rem • 43,14,37cm • Long term listening shows this model is a little bluff.	
Creek 424SE	358	integrated • 50W • 3L,1T • hdph • rem • 42,6,20cm • Optional MM/MC	
Quad 306	364	power amp • 50W • 33,7,21cm • Stereo power amp	
Audio Innovations P1	369	preamp • MM • 25,10,30cm • Phono stepup	
Audio Innovations L1	369	145 preamp • 3L,1T • 25,10,30cm	
NVA AP-30CD	370	integrated • 50W • MM/MC,3L,1T	
Onkyo A850	370	integrated • 60W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 46,15,35cm	
AMC 1030	379	preamp • MM	
If your product is missing from our Directory, please fax or write to us quoting the brand, model and relevant details.			
Alchemist Kraken	380	124 power amp • 60W • 32,9,25cm • Quirky Class A design with warm and colourful sound.	REC'D
Alchemist Kraken/mono	380	power amp • 60W • 32,9,25cm. Mono version of the Kraken power amp.	
Crede PMP003	385	preamp • 22,6,24cm • Phono amp MM/MC, & PSU	
Crede HMP003	388	preamp • hdph • Class A headphone amp	
Alchemist Kraken	395	124 integrated • 60W • 3L,2T • 32,9,25cm • Class-A objet d'art that's far too sensitive to RF interference. Can sound cold and fierce as a result.	
Rega Elex	398	116 integrated • 50W • MM,3L,1T • 43,7,25cm • Minimalist amplifier tsounds forward, hard and unforgiving.	
Alchemist Kraken/Pre	399	116 preamp • 5L,1T • 25,9,25cm • Hardly accurate, but entertaining nevertheless.	REC'D
EAR 834P	399	preamp • MM/MC • 40,40,15cm • Valve phono stepup	
Harman-Kardon HK1400	399	129 integrated • 40W • MM/MC,3L,2T • 45,11,37cm • Relaxed, confident sound is only troubled by the most dense recordings.	REC'D
Arcam Delta 290P	400	141 power amp • 75W • hdph • 43,9,30cm • Crisp, dynamic and detailed — tested in Sessions	
Inca Tech Oberon Pwr	400	power amp • 70W • hdph • 43,8,22cm • Two inputs	
Luxman A-373	400	integrated • A/V • 80W • MM/MC,4L,2T • hdph • rem • 13,44,37cm • Also has AV inputs	
NVA P-90	400	preamp • 5L	
Onix OA24	400	preamp • MM/MC,2L,2T • 75,23,37cm • Internally switchable MM/MC	
Onix OA401	400	power amp • 50W • 75,23,37cm • With internal supply for OA24	
Sony TAF-A3ES	400	integrated • 70W • MM/MC, 3L,2T • hdph • 43,14,38cm • Toroidal transformer, MOSFET	
Sony TA-AV570B	400	integrated • A/V • 70W • MM,4L,5T • hdph • 43,15,36cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
Technics SE-A1000	400	power amp • 70W • hdph • 43,14,35cm • Moving Coil meters, Master capacitors. Partners with SU-G1000.	
Michell Iso	412	preamp • MM or MC • Phono stage	
Quad 34	414	44 preamp • MM,2L,T • 33,7,21cm • Good filtering and above average tone controls, but lacks detail and dynamics.	
Naim NAP90/3	416	power amp • 30W • 43,56,30cm • Latest style. Suits 92	
Lecson Quattra	420	integrated • 30W • MM/MC + N/A • 44,6,27cm • Pre out/main in	
Audio Innovations T2	425	preamp • MC • 12,16,8cm • MC stepup transformer	
Naim NAC92	435	preamp • 5 (L or T) • 43,56,30cm • Latest style. Suits 90/3	
Crede MMP002	439	preamp • Mic amp, phantom power	
NVA AP-30	440	integrated • 80W • 3L,1T	
AMC 2030	449	power amp • 30W	
EAR 834L	449	preamp • 5L,1T • Valve, line-only	
Orelle SA-100	449	140 integrated • 50W • 6L,1T • 44,7,23cm • Clean, natural, articulate sound. Tested in Sessions.	
Crimson CS610C	450	preamp • MM/MC,3L,1T • 9,10,35cm	
Crimson CS620C	450	power amp • 40W • 9,10,35cm	
Inca Tech Oberon	450	integrated • MM/MC,6L,2T • hdph • 43,8,22cm • Preout, biwire	
Marantz PM-700AV	450	125 integrated • A/V • 45W • MM,5L,2T • hdph • rem • 42,16,34cm • Sounds great through front and centre channels but surround sound is very weak.	
Rose RV-23	450	77 preamp • MM,2L,1T • 33,9,26cm • You can pay more to get a more transparent sound, but it's hard to criticise at the price.	REC'D
Rotel RB980BX	450	109 power amp • 120W • 44,12,33cm • Sound is expansive but lacks poise, control and fine detail - disappointing (tested with RC980BX).	
Technics SU-A900 Mk2	450	138 integrated • 90W • MC/MM,3L,2T • rem • 43,14,37cm • Jekyll and Hyde amplifier with a dismal-sounding phono stage but transparent CD input.	REC'D
Moth 30 Mono/40	459	power amp • 40W • 5,10,35cm • 2x monoblocks	
Onix OA21S	460	97 integrated • 50W • MM/MC,3L,1T • 75,23,37cm • CD input sounds dead, but via MM disc this amplifier has a fresh, vibrant sound.	
Audiolink P400	467	preamp • 4L • 43,7,270cm • Available in chrome	
NVA Control Tube CD	470	preamp • 5L,1T	
NVA A70	470	power amp • 70W • Mono	
AMC S84	479	preamp • A/V • 8L • rem • Multiroom, bal/unbal inputs	
Arcam Delta 290	480	116 integrated • 75W • 4L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,9,32cm • Combines dry restraint with detail, dynamics and musical colour.	REC'D
Denon AVC-1530	480	integrated • A/V • 70W • MM,2L,2T • hdph • rem • 44,14,34cm	
Grant CD10	482	preamp • 4L	
Alchemist Kraken/Pre Anni	489	preamp • MM,3L,2T • 25,9,25cm • Stainless steel/gold finish	
NVA A60	490	power amp • 60W	
Arion Adonis (kit)	495	integrated • 20W • 4L,1T • Pre Class A integrated kit	
DPA DSP200S	495	124 preamp • 5L,1T • 22,30,8cm • Dramatic but detailed and transparent sound belies modest power rating (tested with DPA-200S).	REC'D

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

Unison Res. Simply Phono	495		preamp • MM/MC • For Simply series	
Alchemist Kraken Anniv	499		integrated • 60W • MM,3L,2T • 25.9,25cm • Stainless steel/gold finish	
Alchemist Kraken/Pwr Anni	499		power amp • 60W • 32.9,25cm • Stainless steel/gold finish	
AMC AV81 H.T. Control	499		preamp • A/V • 8L,2T • As AV81 plus Dolby Pro Logic	
Art Audio Minuet	499		preamp • 5L,1T	
CR Developments Kalypso	499		integrated • 15W • 5L	
Credo IMP702	499		integrated • 70W • 6L • 44.6,31cm	
Harman-Kardon AP2500	499		preamp • MM/MC,6L,2T • 45.11,35cm	
LFD Integrated Zero	499	140	integrated • 50W • 5L,1T • 30.6,37cm • Lively and brisk, but at the same time cold and unsympathetic.	
LFD Linestage LSO	499		preamp • 5L,1T • 30.6,37cm • Zero feedback	
LFD Powerstage PAO	499		power amp • 50W • 30.6,37cm • Stereo MOSFET	
Audiolab 8000A	500	140	integrated • 60W • MM/MC,2L,3T • hdph • 45.8,36cm • <i>The 8000A remains a highly disciplined and mature sounding amp.</i>	REC'D
Mission Cyrus III	500	140	integrated • 50W • MM,5L,1T • hdph • 22.8,36cm • <i>The classic Cyrus II sounds convincing, masterful and musical.</i>	B'BUY
Onix OA31	500	140	integrated • 60W • MM/MC,4L,1T • hdph • 43.77,33cm	
Rotel RC990BX	500		preamp • MM/MC,2L,2T • hdph • rem • 44.7,33cm	
Sentec PP9 RIAA MM	500		preamp • MM • 5.12,23cm • Phono step-up - MM	
Thorens TTP2000	500	139	preamp • MM/MC,4L • Minimalist, shoebox preamp; rhythmic; warm balance. Tested with TTA2000 in Sessions.	
Magnum MF125	515		power amp • 140W • Monoblocks	
Audiolab 8000C	520	97	preamp • MM/MC,2L,3T • hdph • 45.8,36cm • <i>Distinctive, stark neutrality that will not appeal to all. Good value engineering.</i>	
NVA AP-50CD	520		integrated • 60W • 5L,1T	
Linn Majik-1 (Line)	524		integrated • 33W • 4L,2T • hdph • 32.8,33cm • Works as preamp or integrated; multiroom capability.	
Rose RV-23S	525		preamp • MM/MC,2L,2T • 33.9,26cm • Tube, separate PSU	
AMC CVT3030	529	116	integrated • 30W • 6L,1T • hdph • rem • 43.8,35cm • <i>Attempt to mix transistors with valves only shines with simple musical styles.</i>	
Myryad M1120	530		integrated • 60W • 4L,2T • hdph • rem • 44.10,31cm • Optional MM or MC modules	
Electrocompaniet ECP-1	535		preamp • MM/MC • 24.7,16cm • Adjusts to match cartridge	
Credo IMP703	538		integrated • 70W • MM/MC, 6L • rem • 44.6,31cm • As above, with remote	
Rose Scion	545		integrated • 50W • MM/MC,3L,2T • 42.7,30cm • 2-box, purist design	
Linn LK100	549		power amp • 50W • 32.8,33cm • Stereo	
Moth 30 Stereo/60	549	109	power amp • 60W • 5.15,35cm • <i>Tested with 30 Passive - see comments earlier on page 113.</i>	
Naim NAIT	549		integrated • 30W • 3L,1T • 43.56,30cm	
Stemfort Audio SF60	549		integrated • 60W • 4L,1T • 43.8,35cm • Passive line amplifier	
Thule IA50	549	140	integrated • 50W • 4L,1T • <i>Best used as part of Thule's balanced-line system, otherwise its performance lacks any meaty substance.</i>	
KAL Magician	550		preamp • 3L,1T • hdph • Tube	
Pioneer VSA-701S	550		integrated • A/V • 55W • MM,2L,2T,5V • hdph • rem • 42.17,42cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
Rose RP-190 (Dual Mode)	550		power amp • 75W • 33.9,30cm • Low feedback monoblock mode	
Thorens TTA2000	550	139	power amp • 35W • Tested with TTP2000 (see above) in Sessions.	
Heybrook Integra	555		integrated • 75W • MM/MC • hdph • 77.44,30cm	
Adyton PSU	569		PSU for Chorus, Temper, Modus	
Tube Tech Seer Line	575		preamp • 5L,1T • 35.8,25cm • Entry level, 10 yr guarantee	
Harman-Kardon PA2200	579		power amp • 70W • 45.14,38cm	
Naim NAC92R	579		preamp • 5(L or T) • rem • 43.56,30cm	
Audiolink PR401	583		power amp • 100W • 43.10,37cm • Available in chrome	
NVA AP-50	590		integrated • 60W • MM/MC,5L,1T	
Linn Majik-1 (Phono)	593	129	integrated • 33W • MM,MC,3L,2T • hdph • 32.8,33cm • <i>The cornerstone of Linn's modular hi-fi system is innovative, but sounds vague and confused.</i>	
DPA Renaissance	595	140	integrated • 40W • MM,4L,1T • hdph • 40.28,8cm • <i>DPA's first integrated amp is typically innovative, but a little too 'crisp n' dry' for our tastes.</i>	
Magnum MF300	595		power amp • 180W • Monoblocks	
Monrio ADN	595		preamp • MM/MC • 14.8,36cm • Phono preamp, ext PSU	
AVI S2000MA	599		power amp • 90W	
Fullers Pre 1	599		preamp • MM/5L,2T • 48.9,30cm • Optional MC stage	
Magnum Class A	599	116	integrated • 60W • MM/MC,3L,1T • <i>Lashings of rich and compelling music, but the Class A trades lushness for accuracy.</i>	REC'D
Musical Fidelity E200	599	145	preamp • 5L,2T • hdph • rem • 44.12,35cm • Weighty, luxuriant, but hardly scintillating. Tested with MFE300.	
Musical Fidelity E100	599	140	integrated • 70W • MM,4L,1T • hdph • rem • 44.12,35cm • <i>Beautifully crafted with a vibrantly colourful, almost dramatic sound.</i>	REC'D
Art Audio Headline	600		preamp • hdph • Single ended triode Class A	
Kenwood KA-V7700	600		integrated • A/V • MM,11L,1T • hdph • rem • 44.13,30cm • Pro Logic, learning remote	
Nakamichi IA2	600		integrated • 50W • MM/MC,3L,2T • hdph • rem • 43.12,36cm • 'Harmonic Time Alignment'	
Pioneer VSA-D802S	600	125	integrated • A/V • 55W • MM,2L,2T,5V • hdph • rem • 42.17,42cm • <i>The grey sound lacks attack and confidence, undermining tension</i>	
Sentec PP9 RIAA MC	600		preamp • MC • 5.12,23cm • Phono step-up - MC	
Shearne Phase 3	619		power amp • 50W • Can biamp with Phase 2	
NVA Power Tube	620		power amp • 60W	
NVA The Tube	620		integrated • 60W • 5L,1T	
Meridian 501	625	145	preamp • MM,4L,T • hdph • 33.9,34cm • Tight, positive sound, but also dispassionate; intense at high levels. Tested with 555.	
Meridian 555	625	145	power amp • 60W • 33.9,32cm • Tested with 501 — see comments above.	
Bryston 4	641		preamp • A/V • 4L,1T • 48.5,25cm	
Fullers Pre 1+	649		preamp • 6L,2T • 48.9,30cm • No phono option - hard wired	
Heybrook SIG CA	649		preamp • MM/MC,5L,2T	
Naim Hi-Cap	649		psu • 21.76,30cm • Power supply	
Shearne Phase 2	649		integrated • 50W • 5L • MM/MC phono i/p £87 extra	
Tube Tech Seer Phono	649		preamp • MM,4L,1T • 35.8,25cm • Tube phono stage	
Quad 77	650	139	integrated • 50W • 2L,T • 33.6,30cm • Stylish remote-driven amp, bright and lively. Tested in Sessions.	
Triangle TE60SE	650		integrated • 70W • MM/MC,3L,1T • hdph	
Lecson Quattra Plus	655		integrated • 50W • MM/MC + N/A • 44.6,27cm • Separate PSU	
Naim NAC72	670		preamp • 2MM/MC, L,2T • 21.76,30cm • Upgradable with PSU, MC I/P	
NVA Control Tube	670		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T	
Bryston BP1	673		preamp • A/V • MM or MC • 48.5,25cm • Phono stepup, bal & unbal	
LFD Int. Zero (Ph)	679		integrated • 50W • MM/MC,5L,1T • 30.6,37cm • Phono version of Integrated Zero	
Lynwood Opal	685		integrated • 80W • 7L,1T	
Meridian 562	685		preamp • MM,8L,T,6D • 33.9,34cm • Digital main out. MC option	
Meridian 551	695		integrated • 55W • MM,4L,T • hdph • rem • 33.9,34cm • MC option	
Heybrook SIG MNEX	698		power amp • 140W • Mono, uses ext SIG/DCPS PSU	
Electrocomp't ECP-1 SF	699		preamp • MM/MC • 24.7,16cm • auto-adjusts, blue stone fascia	
Exposure XX Super	699		integrated • 55W • 4L,2T • 43.85,35cm • Upgraded model	
Gamma Gemini	699	148	integrated • 12W • 3L • 33,23,8cm • <i>Genuine single ended triode design, but low power, mundane sound and poor build.</i>	
Marantz AV-500	699		preamp • A/V • MM,7L,2T • rem • 42.10,34cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
Musical Fidelity E300	699	145	power amp • 100W • 44.12,35cm • Tested with E200 — see comments above.	
Naim NAP140	699		power amp • 45W • 21.76,30cm	
Audiolab 8000P	700		power amp • 100W • 45.8,36cm • Bi-wire speaker terminals	
Aura CA200	700		preamp • MM,7L,2T • hdph • rem • 43.6,34cm • Chrome finish, add £50	
Micromega Tempo 1	700		integrated • 50W • 6L,1T • hdph • 43.9,28cm • Optional MM/MC	
Technics SU-C2000	700		preamp • rem • 45.13,35cm • Rotary resistor attenuator	
Woodside SC27 Line	705		preamp • 2L,1T	
Michell Argo	715		preamp • 3L,1T • 33.7,19cm • 2 pairs of outputs	
Quad 606	718	124	power amp • 140W • 33.14,24cm • <i>Amplifier with classic lineage but compromised by an equally dated, soft and undynamic sound (tested with 66).</i>	
Naim NAIT R	724		integrated • 30W • 3L,1T • 43.56,30cm	
Sonic Link DM30	725		integrated • 25W • MM/MC,3L,1T • 23.8,43cm	
NVA A80	730		power amp • 70W • Mono	



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DEFLEX[®] acoustic PRODUCTS

Designed by Engineers - Used by Professionals

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effective way to upgrade
your existing system

A. DEFLEX ACOUSTIC PANEL

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

Standard Panel 28cm x 21cm	£7.95 each
Small Panel (LS3/5A) 24 x 13cm	£5.95 each
Sub-woofer Panel 34cm dia.	£14.95 each

B. FOCULPODS

Foculpods are high performance vibration absorbing supports designed to be placed under Compact Disc Players, Turntables, Amplifiers, Loudspeakers and All other Audio, Video & Computer equipment. The spherical surface provides even contact and uniform energy distribution.

Foculpods	£14.95 pack of 4
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C. TURNTABLE PLATTER ISOLATION MAT

This turntable mat has been carefully designed to incorporate 3 layers of Deflex material, all of differing hardness. Top layer 25°A hardness (anti-static); Sandwich layer 0-1°A hardness (shock absorbing); Base layer 15°A hardness (support).

Turntable Mat	12" diameter	£55.50 each
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D. MAGNAPAD GOLD

Magnapads have been specifically designed to absorb unwanted vibrations directed at the speaker chassis, coils & magnets and to prevent further sound reflections of the flat surfaces.

Magnapad Gold 3 (75mm dia.)	£7.95 pair
Magnapad Gold 5 (125mm dia.)	£12.95 pair
Magnapad Gold 7 (175mm dia.)	£15.95 pair
Magnapad Gold 9 (225mm dia.)	£19.95 pair

E. DEFLEX WRAP

Unwanted vibrations transmitted from the reflex ports will distort the music. To prevent this, the only remedy is to suppress the distorted sound. Wrap's dense composition and unequalled shock absorbing properties significantly remove this unwanted colouration.

Wrap 28cm x 21cm x 15mm thick	£14.95 sheet
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F. DEFLEX SHEET

Sheet is for the enthusiast who wants to damp out resonances wherever they are perceived to be influencing the natural sound of the system. Ribbed sheet can be used for lining ports, etc.

Plain Sheet - 2mm thick (28cm x 21cm)	£7.95 sheet
Plain Sheet - 3mm thick (28cm x 21cm)	£8.95 sheet
Plain Sheet - 4mm thick (28cm x 21cm)	£9.95 sheet
Plain Sheet - 6mm thick (28cm x 21cm)	£11.95 sheet
Plain Sheet - 8mm thick (28cm x 21cm)	£13.95 sheet
Plain Sheet - 5mm thick (47cm x 22cm)	£27.00 sheet
Ribbed Sheet - 3mm thick (28cm x 21cm)	£8.95 sheet
Ribbed Sheet - 6mm thick (28cm x 21cm)	£11.95 sheet

G. ISOLATION BLOCKS

Isolation blocks are offered in a range of shapes and sizes, designed to accommodate all types of equipment of varying weights and sizes.

Isolation Block - 43mm dia x 26mm thick	£4.50 each
Isolation Block - 80mm dia x 20mm thick	£8.50 each
Isolation Block - 120mm dia x 30mm thk (40mm hole)	£7.50 each
Isolation Block - 75 (75mm square x 20mm)	£5.50 each
Isolation Block - 115 (115mm square x 20mm)	£8.50 each
Isolation Block - 150 (150mm square x 20mm)	£16.50 each

H. DE-COUPLING GASKETS

De-coupling gaskets not only help isolate unwanted vibrations between cabinets and drive units but because of the material composition provide a perfect air-tight seal without the need to use a mastic sealant. The range is continually expanding. Phone for details.

Gasket - KEF B110B	£3.00 each
Gasket - SEAS 17cm	£3.00 each
Gasket - MOREL MW 142	£3.00 each
Gasket - MOREL MW 160's	£3.00 each
Gasket - SCAN-SPEAK D2008	£2.50 each
Washers 20mm & 25mm dia x 6mm thick	£0.30 each
Toriodal transf. supports 120mm dia x 5mm thick	£3.50 each

I. CORNER BLOCKS

Corner blocks are designed to be fitted in rectangular areas of enclosures to prevent recurrent sound reflections - "cat's eye phenomenon."

Corner Block - Theoretical edge 50mm	£1.25 each
Corner Block - Theoretical edge 75mm	£2.50 each

J. TUNEABLE PORT SYSTEM

The port system ranges from 30mm to 100mm dia. and can be built up from 30mm length onwards, in 10mm increments. Phone for full data sheet.

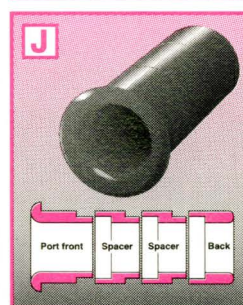
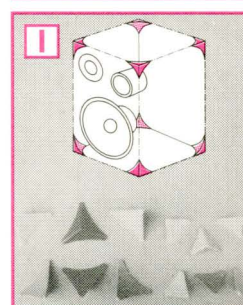
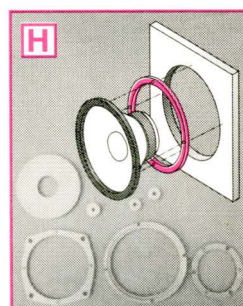
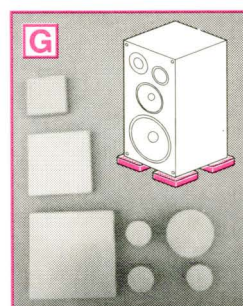
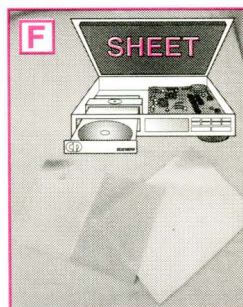
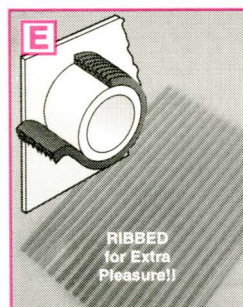
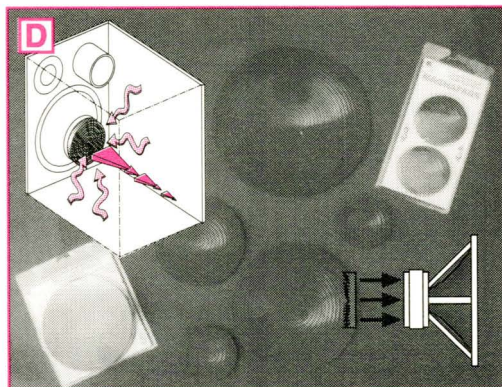
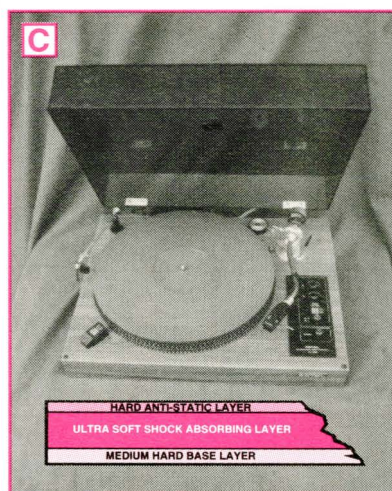
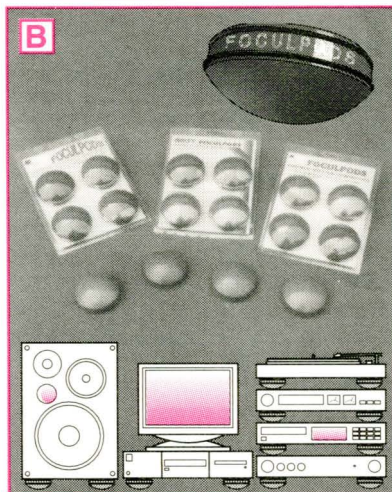
Port System	Components from	£0.75 each
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* SPECIALIST SERVICES *

Deflex material can be used to encapsulate crossovers and other components, etc. Telephone for further information or fax your details.

Specialist Services	Filling charge	£12.00 per kilo
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DEFLEX ACOUSTIC PANELS

"...a marked improvement was obvious from the first few bars of REM's *Automatic for the people* album..."
Hi-Fi News & Record Review - March 1994

"...Deflex panels seemed to give greater tightness and control, improved internal clarity, and pitch definition - all without deadening the sound in any way..."
Audiophile - January 1994

"What the experts have to say..."

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

CHOICE VERDICT
Sound Quality
Value for money

Hi-Fi Choice - January 1994

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

Audio Video - November 1994

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
Rega Elicit	730		integrated • 70W • MM,MC,3L,1T • 43,7,25cm • Full dual mono	
Art Audio VPL	741		preamp • 6L,2T	
Audio Innovations L2	749		preamp • 4L,1T • 50,12,30cm	
Audio Innovations P2MM	749		preamp • MM • 50,12,30cm • Phono stage	
Arcam Delta 110	750		preamp • MM/MC,2L,2T • hdph • rem • 43,7,30cm • On-board DAC, 2 inputs	
Art Audio Conductor Phono	750		preamp • MM/MC • Separate PSU, upgradable	
Audiolab 8000M	750	145	power amp • 125W • 45,8,36cm • Strong, controlled sound; confident bass, but also colourless. Tested with 8000Q	
Bryston 2B-LP	750		power amp • A/V • 75W • 48,5,25cm • Bridgeable	
DPA 200S	750	124	power amp • 60W • 22,30,8cm • <i>Dramatic but exceptionally detailed and transparent sound belies its modest power rating tested with DSP-200S.</i>	REC'D
KAL Harlequin	750		preamp • MM/MC,2L,1T • hdph • Tube	
Rotel RB990BX	750		power amp • 200W • 44,12,38cm	
ECA Vista S	760	145	preamp • 4L,1T • 39,10,39cm • <i>Wind up the volume and blow a breath of fresh music into your system (tested with Lectern).</i>	B'BUY
Grant G100P	764		preamp • MM,2L,1T	
Meridian 501V	785		preamp • A/V • MM,4L,T • hdph • 33,9,34cm • As 501, plus video switching	
Michi RHC-10	795		preamp • 5L • 47,8,34cm • Passive	
AVI S2000MI	799		integrated • 100W • 4L,1T • rem • 31,25,9cm • Includes S200RC handset	
AVI S2000MP	799		preamp • 5L,1T • 31,25,9cm • includes S2000RC handset	
Credo CMP004	799		preamp • 6L • 44,6,31cm • 3 outputs	
Exposure XIX	799		preamp • 5L • 43,85,35cm • Line only version of XVII	
Exposure XV Super	799		integrated • 55W • MM,MC,3L,2T • 43,85,35cm	
LFD Int. Zero LE	799		integrated • 60W • 5L,1T • 43,7,33cm	
PS Audio 6.1	799		preamp • 4L,1T • 43,6,19cm • Outboard PSU	
Chimera X-150C	800		preamp • 4L,1T • Balanced CD in, balanced out	
Chimera X-80	800	138	integrated • 80W • 4L,1T • Striking looks, powerful, but lacks ultimate dynamics. Tested in Sessions.	
Crimson CS630C	800		power amp • 90W • 9,10,35cm	
Sentec SC9	800		preamp • 4L,2T • hdph • 34,7,15cm	
Sherwood AM/AVP8500	800		A/V • 230W • hdph • rem • A/V Pre/power amp	
Bryston BP4	802		preamp • A/V • 4L,1T • 48,5,25cm • Balanced out	
Heybrook SIG CAP	829		preamp • 6L,2T • Line only	
Exposure XVII	849	142	preamp • MM,MC,3L,2T • 43,85,35cm • Superbly rhythmic; maybe a little overpowering in the midband. Tested with XVIII Super in Sessions.	
Exposure XVIII Super	849	142	power amp • 70W • 43,85,35cm • Tested with XVII; see comments above.	
Stemfoot Audio SF100	849		integrated • 100W • 4L,1T • 43,8,40cm • Passive line amplifier	
Audiolab 8000PPA	850		preamp • MM/MC • 45,8,36cm • Phono preamplifier	
Michell Iso HR	879		preamp • MM or MC • smallcm • Phono stage	
Moth 30 Mono/100	879		power amp • 100W • 5,15,35cm • 2x mono, separate PSU	
Shearpe Phase 5 Mono	879		power amp • 100W • Monoblocks - bal/unbalanced	
ECA Vista HD	880		preamp • 4L,1T • 39,10,39cm • High definition version	
ECA Lectern S	880	145	power amp • 50W • 39,10,30cm • Tested with £760 Vista S - see above for comments.	B'BUY
ECA Prisma	880		preamp • MM,MC • 39,10,23cm • Phono stepup	
Woodside SC27 MM	881		preamp • MM,2L,1T	
Bryston BP5	889		preamp • A/V • MM/MC,3L,1T • 48,5,25cm • MM or MC, balanced out	
Dawn Audio Cmd 2 by 200	890		power amp • 200W • 38,11,26cm • Single monoblock	
Meridian 562V	895	140	preamp • A/V • MM,8L,T6D • 33,9,34cm • As 562, plus video switching	REC'D
Monrio Primus	895		preamp • 6L,1T • 26,8,36cm • Line only preamp	
Shearpe Phase 6 Pre	895		preamp • MM,6L • Bal/unbal, can use battery	
Quad 66	897	124	preamp • MM,4L,2T • rem • 33,8,26cm • Amplifier with classic lineage but compromised by an equally dated, soft and undynamic sound (tested with 606).	
Alchemist Forseti	899		integrated • 100W • 4L,2T • 47,10,39cm	
Harman-Kardon PA2400	899		power amp • 120W • 45,16,41cm	
PS Audio 6.2	899		preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • 43,6,19cm • Outboard PSU	
PS Audio Phono Link	899		preamp • MM/MC • 43,6,19cm • Outboard PSU	
Woodside ISA230 Disc	899	116	integrated • 30W • MM,2L,1T • Smooth and inoffensive valve amplifier, though lacking the sparkle and euphony required for a truly entertaining sound.	
Woodside ISA230 Line	899		integrated • 30W • 4L,2T	
Concordant E hilharant	900		preamp • 5L • 6 tube pre, wood case option	
Marantz SC-22	900		preamp • 4L,1T • 25,9,22cm • Audiophile micro component	
Micromega Tempo 2	900		integrated • 75W • 6L,1T • hdph • 43,9,28cm • Optional MM/MC	
Minstrel Ultra Linear	900		integrated • 26W • 3L,1T • 38,310,16cm • Low feedback hybrid	
Heybrook SIG/SP	922		power amp • 140W • Stereo power amp	
Audio Innovations P2MC	949		preamp • MM/MC • 50,12,30cm • Phono stage	
LFD MC1 Phonostage	949		preamp • MC • 30,7,36cm • Discrete circuit	
Thule IA100	949		integrated • 100W • 4L,2T • Fully balanced operation	
Woodside ISA 240	949		power amp • 40W	
DNM 3 Start	950		preamp • MM/MC,2L,1T • 27,13,16cm • Solid core, slit foil caps	
Monrio MC-200S	950		integrated • 60W • 6L,1T • 43,10,37cm • Simplified version of MC-20S	
Dawn Audio Prelude +50	951		preamp • MM/MC,2L,2T • 38,9,26cm • Pre out line driver	
Art Audio VP1	952		preamp • MM,5L,2T	
Lynwood Ruby	985		power amp • 120W	
Naim NAP180	987		power amp • 60W • 43,76,30cm	
Electrocomp't EC1-2	990		integrated • 50W • 3L,1T • 46,11,38cm	
Conrad-Johnson PV10AL	995		preamp • 5L • Line version of PV-10A	
Counterpoint Solid 1EM	995		power amp • 100W • 25,6,27cm • Mono	
Michi RHB-05	995		power amp • 100W • 47,8,36cm	
Michi RHQ-10	995		preamp • MM,MC • 47,8,34cm • Phono equaliser	
Michi RHA-10	995		preamp • 5L • rem • 47,8,34cm • Active	
Monrio MC-25	995		power amp • 80W • 43,10,36cm • Dual mono construction	
Roksan ROK-L2.5	995		preamp • 4L,1T • 43,8,33cm • Revised	
Unison Res. Simply Two	995	148	integrated • 12W • 4L,1T • 25,16,40cm • Single ended triode Class A - looks fantastic, but sound is confused.	
CR Developments Romulus	998		integrated • 35W • 5L	
Linn Kairn Pro	998		preamp • 4L, 2T • 32,8,33cm • Multi-room compatible	
Arcam Xeta One	999		integrated • A/V • 50W • MM,5L,2T • hdph • 43,13,32cm • Video switching, 5ch Dolby	
Audio Innovations Ser 800	999	148	power amp • 25W • 41,15,34cm	
Copland CSA14	999		integrated • 60W • MM,3L,1T • 43,13,38cm • Great sound, great looks, great sound - but watch out for high capacitance cables.	REC'D
Gamma Era Standard	999		preamp • MM,3L,1T • 44,17,30cm • Triode, fully regulated	
LFD LSI Linestage	999		preamp • 4L,1T • 48,7,33cm • Zero feedback	
LFD PA1 Powerstage	999		power amp • 60W • 48,7,33cm • MOSFETs, custom parts	
LFD PPS	999		preamp • 2L,1T • 13,6,27cm • Switched attenuator, passive	
Musical Fidelity F22	999		preamp • 5L,1T • rem • 49,12,33cm • Optional phono/digital boards	
NAD Monitor 208	999	124	power amp • 250W • Truly a beefy amplifier.	
Teac A-BX10	999		integrated • 100W • MM/MC,3L,2T • Balanced input	
Woodside SC27 MC	999		preamp • MC,2L,1T	
YBA Integre Line	999		integrated • 45W • 4L,1T • 43,9,33cm	
Audiolab 8000Q	1,000	145	preamp • 3L,2T • hdph • rem • 45,8,36cm • Tested with £750 8000M monoblocks - see comments.	
Lumley Reference LV1	1,000		preamp • 6L,1T • 29,44,6cm • Active valve circuit	
Marantz PH-22	1,000		preamp • MC,MM • 25,9,22cm • Phono stepup	
NVA TSS (Pre)	1,000		preamp • 5L,1T	
Sentec PA9	1,000		power amp • 60W • 20,8,30cm • Monoblocks	

PRODUCT

£ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

Alchemist Freya	1,020	preamp • 6L,1T • 31,7,30cm	
Alchemist Odin	1,020	power amp • 80W • 31,14,30cm • Stereo	
Electrocomp't EC1-2SF	1,095	integrated • 50W • 3L,1T • 46,38,11cm • As EC1-2 + Blue Stone facia	
Sonic Frontiers SFP-1	1,095	preamp • MM/MC • 45,12,28cm • Tube/J-FET phono stage	
Audio Innovs Classic 25	1,099	integrated • 25W • 4L,1T • 46,15,34cm • Enclosed valves	
AVI S2000MM	1,099	power amp • 150W • 2x monoblocks	
LFD Integrated 1	1,099	integrated • 65W • MM/MC,4L,1T • 48,7,37cm • A more powerful integrated Zero	
Musical Fidelity FX	1,099	power amp • 90W • 49,12,38cm • Bal/unbalanced in	
Tube Tech Unisis Power	1,099	power amp • 30W • 35,17,27cm • Stereo power amp	
Art Audio Conductor	1,100	preamp • 6L,2T • hdph • Upgradable	
Technics SE-A2000	1,100	power amp • 100W • rem • 45,19,44cm • Meters, R-Core, MOS AA	
Credo CMP005	1,119	preamp • 6L • rem • Remote controlled preamp	
Bryston BP20	1,126	preamp • A/V • 8L,1T • 48,5,25cm • Balanced in/out	
Grant G50A	1,128	power amp • 60W • Monoblocks	
Arion Eros Line Mk II	1,150	preamp • 4L,1T • Dual mono construction	
Micell Alecto Stereo	1,150	power amp • 50W • 32,20,36cm	
Bryston 3B-NRB	1,159	power amp • A/V • 150W • 48,13,23cm • Bridgeable, balanced & unbalanced	
Counterpoint SA-1000E	1,195	preamp • MM/MC,3L,1T • 49,12,32cm	
Counterpoint Solid 8E	1,195	preamp • 3L,1T • 49,6,27cm	
Audio Innovs Ser 500	1,199	integrated • 25W • MM,3L,2T • 41,15,34cm	
Audio Innovs Ser 700	1,199	116 integrated • 25W • 4L,1T • 41,15,34cm • Turns the roughest of digital sounds into understated and graceful music.	REC'D
Tube Tech Prophet	1,199	preamp • 4L,1T • 35,8,25cm • Two box pre, separate PSU	
YBA 3 Power	1,199	72 power amp • 45W • 43,9,33cm • Tested with £1250 3 Pre - see below for comments.	
YBA Integre	1,199	121 integrated • 45W • MM,4L,1T • 43,9,33cm • Audiophile spec French integrated with good resolution and nice phono stage.	
Aura PA200	1,200	power amp • 110W • 43,10,34cm • Balanced & unbalanced in	
Chimera X-150P	1,200	power amp • 150W • MOSFET, balance, bridgeable	
Chimera X-100	1,200	integrated • 100W • 4L,1T • Outboard PSU, s/steel & chrome	
Fullers A10	1,200	power amp • 10W • 48,13,30cm • Single ended Class A	
Woodside MA50 Class A	1,224	power amp • 60W • 1 channel monoblock	
Conrad-Johnson PV-10A	1,250	139 preamp • MC,4L • Fabulous preamplifier. Beautiful imaging, superb detail, classy build quality. Tested in Statements.	
Copland CTA-301	1,250	preamp • MM,3L,1T • 43,13,38cm • Tube, soft start	
Lumley Reference ST40	1,250	power amp • 40W • 30,40,17 • Pentode	
Micromega Amp	1,250	power amp • 100W • 43,9,28cm	
Micromega Tempo P	1,250	preamp • 7L,1T • hdph • 43,9,28cm • Optional MM/MC	
YBA 3 Pre	1,250	72 preamp • MM,3L,1T • 43,9,33cm • See-through, ethereal stereo images, but more convincing towards centre of soundstage (tested with £1,199 3 Pwr).	
McIntosh MC7100	1,259	power amp • 100W • 45,9,54cm • System controller	
Bryston THX3B	1,262	power amp • A/V • 150W • 48,13,23cm • 2 channels, THX approved	
Aydon CHORUS	1,295	preamp • MC • 44,3,25cm • RIAA phono stage	
Magnum MA500	1,295	power amp • 280W • Monoblocks	
Arion EOS Export Mk II	1,299	power amp • 18W • With volume control	
NVA TIS	1,300	integrated • 60W • 5L,1T	
Electrocomp't EC-4 Line	1,315	preamp • 5L,2T • 48,9,23cm • inc XLR balanced in/out	
Classe Audio Audio 3D	1,320	preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 48,7,28cm	
Woodside STA35	1,323	100 power amp • 35W • Synergistic with SC26, with a cool, controlled sound, good focus and transparency. More poise than grunt (tested with SC26).	
Micell Argo HR	1,339	preamp • 3L,1T • 36,8,22cm • 2 pairs outputs	
Arion Eros Phono Mk II	1,350	preamp • 3L,1T • Dual mono construction	
Art Audio Quintet	1,393	109 power amp • 15W • Switchable triode, ultralinear output stage. In triode mode, these are 15 of the sweetest Watts around. Surprisingly gutsy.	REC'D
Sonic Frontiers SFL-1	1,395	preamp • 4L,2T • 45,12,28cm • Tube/FET hybrid line stage	
Linn Kairn Preamp	1,398	preamp • MM, MC 3L,2T • 32,8,32cm • Multi-room compatible	
Arion Triton Mk II	1,399	power amp • 10W • Triode, volume control	
Arion Elektra Export Mk	1,399	integrated • 18W • 4L,1T • Class A valve amp	
Classe Audio Audio 70	1,399	power amp • 75W • 48,12,30cm • Single ended, balanced	
Musical Fidelity A1000	1,399	integrated • 50W • MM/MC,3L,1T • 49,13,36cm • Separate PSU	
Shearne Phase 1 Pre Ref	1,399	preamp • MM/MC,5L,2T • Owners of old non-ref model can have their amps upgraded	
Tube Tech Unisis Sup Line	1,399	integrated • 30W • 4L,1T • 35,17,27cm • Line level version of Unisis	
Tube Tech Unisis	1,399	integrated • 30W • MM,3L,1T • 35,17,27cm • One tube phono stage	
Exposure XIV	1,400	preamp • MM,MC,3L,2T • 48,8,30cm • Needs 9 power supply	
Copland CTA-501	1,420	power amp • 30W • 2L • 43,18,38cm • Tube, has vol control	
Woodside SC25 Line	1,420	preamp • 2L,2T	
Papworth TVA50	1,425	power amp • 50W • 43,19,33cm • Tube stereo	
Arion Talos Line Mk II	1,450	integrated • 10W • 4L,1T • Triode Class A valve amp	
McIntosh C712	1,479	preamp • 6L, 2T • hdph • rem • 45,9,45cm • System controller	
ECA Lectern HD	1,480	power amp • 50W • 39,10,23cm • High definition version	
Electrocomp't EC-3MM	1,485	preamp • MM,4L,2T • 48,9,23cm • Balanced XLR in/out	
Copland CTA-401	1,495	integrated • 30W • MM,3L,1T • 43,18,38cm • Tube push/pull ultra-linear	
Counterpoint SA100E	1,495	power amp • 100W • Hybrid	
Counterpoint Solid 1E	1,495	power amp • 100W • Mono	
Dynavector P100	1,495	preamp • MM,MC • 44,6,22cm • Phono stepup	
Roksan ROK-S1.5	1,495	power amp • 70W	
Sonic Frontiers SFP-1 Sig	1,495	preamp • MM/MC • 45,12,28cm • Tube/J-FET phono stepup	
Unison Res. Simply Four P	1,495	integrated • 24W • 4L,1T • 35,16,40cm • Single ended Pentode	
Art Audio Integra	1,499	integrated • 30W • 5L,2T • Class A Pentode	
LFD Phonostage MC2	1,499	preamp • MC • 30,7,36cm • Hand tuned MC1	
Minstrel Partridge	1,499	integrated • 26W • 3L,1T • 38,31,16cm • Zero feedback hybrid	
PS Audio 100 Delta	1,499	power amp • 120W • 42,15,35cm	
Audio Note Oto SE	1,500	126 integrated • 24W • MM/MC,4L,1T • Transparent, dynamic, clear and subtle, but limited power.	REC'D
DNM 3A Start	1,500	preamp • MM/MC,2L,1T • 27,13,16cm	
Lumley Reference PV1	1,500	preamp • MM,5L,1T • Phono version of LV1	
Tesserac TAADA	1,500	preamp • MM/MC	
Tesserac TALA	1,500	preamp • 5L,1T	
Thorens TRP3000	1,500	preamp • MM/MC • Phono stepup, valve	
Alchemist Genesis	1,525	power amp • 110W • 25,14,30cm • Pair monoblocks	
Grant G100AMS	1,528	power amp • 100W	
Naim NAP135	1,529	power amp • 70W • 43,76,30cm	
Naim NAP250	1,529	power amp • 70W • 43,76,30cm	
Unison Res. Simply Four T	1,545	integrated • 11W • 4L,1T • 35,16,40cm • Single ended triode Class A	
Triangle Nemo Allion 02	1,550	integrated • 80W • 5L,2T	
Electrocomp't EC-4 SF L	1,565	preamp • 5L,2T • 48,9,23cm • XLR in/out, blue stone facia	
EAR 859	1,595	integrated • 13W • 6L • 40,40,15cm • Single ended valve	
Monrio MC-205	1,595	integrated • 80W • 6L,1T • 43,10,36cm • Inc pre-out sockets	
EAR 834	1,599	integrated • 50W • 6L • 40,40,15cm • Valve	
Exposure XVIII (pr)	1,599	power amp • 65W • 43,85,35cm • Upgraded 2x monoblocks	
LFD Linestage LS2	1,599	preamp • 4L,1T • 48,7,37cm • Hand tuned LS1	
LFD Powerstage PA2	1,599	power amp • 75W • 48,7,33cm • Hand tuned PA1	
Marantz MA-22	1,600	power amp • 50W • 23,9,22cm • Audiophile monoblock x2	

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS
Arion Talos Phono Mk II	1,650		integrated • 10W • MM,3L,1T • Triode Class A phono amp
Michi RHB-10	1,650		power amp • 200W • 47,19,37cm
Art Audio Concerto	1,669		power amp • 50W • 2x mono triode/pentode
Counterpoint SA-2000E	1,695		preamp • 4L,2T • 49,12,33cm
Monrio Cento HP	1,695		power amp • 135W • 43,10,36cm • Dual mono, high current
Sonic Frontiers SFS-40	1,695		power amp • 40W • 40,18,32cm • Stereo tube power amp
Classe Audio Audio 4L	1,697		preamp • 5L,1T • 48,9,34cm • Remote option
Credo PMP154	1,699		power amp • 150W • 44,16,31cm
Credo PMP303	1,699		power amp • 30W • Class A power amp
YBA 2 Pre	1,699	56	preamp • MM,3L,1T • 43,9,33cm • <i>Superb finish, good space and transparency. Needs transformer for MC cartridges (tested with £2,150 2 Pwr).</i> REC'D
Classe Audio Audio 4	1,735		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 48,9,34cm • Remote option
Audio Innova First Audio	1,749		power amp • 7.5W • 41,15,34cm
ATC SCA2	1,750		preamp • 6L,2T • rem • 44,36,10cm • Balanced & unbalanced in/out
DNM PA1	1,750		power amp • 45W • 27,13,18cm • Triwire output
LFD Linestage LS2P	1,750		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 48,7,37cm • As LS2 with phono stage
Unison Res. Mystery One	1,750		preamp • 4L,1T • For Smart 845
Bryston 4B-NRB	1,756		power amp • A/V • 300W • 48,13,39cm • Bridgable, bal & unbalanced
Adyton TEMPER	1,795		preamp • MC,2L • 44,3,25cm • Phono & line source preamp
Sonic Frontiers SFC-1	1,795	126	integrated • 50W • 4L,2T • 45,19,43cm • <i>Smooth, sophisticated Canadian valve amp with a decent direct input and more features than average.</i>
Sonic Frontiers SFL-1 Sig	1,795		preamp • 4L,2T • 45,12,28cm • Tube/FET hybrid line stage
Audio Innova Ser 1000	1,799		power amp • 50W • 41,15,34cm • Monoblocks
Tesserac IAHA	1,800		preamp • MC, • hdph
Electrocomp't EC-3MC	1,810		preamp • MC,4L,2T • 48,9,23cm • XLR in/out, adj MC input
Bryston 7B-NRB	1,815		power amp • A/V • 500W • 48,13,39cm • Single monoblock
Audio Research LS-3	1,845		preamp • 5L,1T • 48,14,26cm • 1 direct input
Arion Tycho Pwr Mk II	1,850		power amp • 50W • Pure Class A
Bryston THX4B	1,858		power amp • A/V • 300W • 48,13,39cm • 2 channels, THX approved
Linn Klout	1,895		power amp • 80W • 32,8,33cm • Stereo, tri-wire connectors
Musical Fidelity F15	1,899		power amp • 100W • 49,19,38cm • Bal/unbalanced in/hybrid
Naim Super-Cap	1,909		43,76,30cm • Power supply
Bryston THX7B	1,917		power amp • A/V • 500W • 48,13,39cm • 1 channel, THX approved
Woodside SC26 Phono	1,931	100	preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • <i>Synergistic with STA35, with a cool, controlled sound, good focus and transparency (tested with STA35).</i>
Concordant Exquisite	1,950		preamp • 5L • 10 tubes, 2 line out, ext PSU
Lumley Reference ST70	1,950		power amp • 70W • 36,46,18cm • Switchable triode/pentode
Michell Alecto Mono	1,989		power amp • 100W • 32,20,36cm
Counterpoint NPS-100E	1,995		power amp • 100W
Dynavector L100	1,995		preamp • 3L,2T • 44,6,24cm • Line preamp
Electrocomp't EC-3MM SF	1,995		preamp • MM,4L,2T • 48,9,23cm • XLR in/out, blue stone facia
Unison Res. Phono One	1,995		preamp • MM,MC • For Mystery/Perf/Absolute
Naim NAC82	1,997		preamp • 6 (L or T) • rem • 43,76,30cm
Arion Tycho Int Mk II	1,999		integrated • 50W • 4L,1T • Pure Class A integrated
Copland CTA-504	1,999		power amp • 50W • 43,18,38cm • Switchable tetra/triode
LFD Linestage LSB	1,999		preamp • 4L,1T • 48,7,37cm • Balanced LS2
LFD Powerstage PA2M	1,999		power amp • 90W • 30,7,37cm • Mono PA2
Art Audio Conductor Export	2,000		preamp • 6L,2T • hdph • rem • Separate PSU, mono
Thorens TRA3000	2,000		power amp • 90W • Valve
Electrocomp't AW1000MB	2,030		power amp • 100W • 48,13,36cm • High current (80A)
Electrocomp't EC-3MC SF	2,075		preamp • MC,4L,2T • 48,9,23cm • XLR in/out, blue stone facia
Adyton MODUS	2,095		preamp • 4L,2T • 44,5,25cm • Line control amp
McIntosh C38	2,095		preamp • MM, 5L,3T • hdph • rem • Multi-room, balanced out
McIntosh C22	2,099		preamp • 8L • hdph • rem • Retro style valve pre
Electrocomp't EC1-1	2,100		integrated • 100W • 5L,2T • 45,13,36cm • High current (80A)
YBA 2 Power	2,150	56	power amp • 70W • 43,9,33cm • <i>Superbly finished, but with slightly softened bass (tested with £1,699 2 Pre).</i> REC'D
Electrocomp't AW1000MB	2,175		power amp • 100W • 48,13,36cm • High current, blue stone facia
Credo PMP102	2,181		power amp • 100W • 44,21,31cm • Class A power amp
Bryston 8B-NRB	2,195		power amp • A/V • 150W • 48,13,39cm • 4 channels, bridgeable
Counterpoint SA-3000E	2,195		preamp • MM/MC,4L,2T • 49,12,33cm • Separate PSU
Exposure IV	2,199		power amp • 80W • 48,13,35cm • Fully regulated
Shearpe Phase 1 Power R	2,199		power amp • 100W • <i>Owners of old non-ref model can have their amps upgraded</i>
McIntosh MC7108	2,249		power amp • A/V • 40W • 45,16,51cm • 8 channel (5-way) 8x45 watts
Audio Research LS-3b	2,250		preamp • 5L,1T • 48,14,26cm • 1 direct input
Conrad-Johnson PV-12L	2,250		preamp • 5L • Line version of PV-12
Roksan ROK-L1.5	2,250		preamp • 4L,1T • 43,8,33cm
PS Audio 200 Delta	2,279		power amp • 200W • 42,15,45cm
McIntosh MC7150	2,295		power amp • 150W
Classe Audio Audio 10	2,299		power amp • 125W • 48,17,42cm • Single ended, bal bridgable
Matisse Fantasy	2,300		preamp • A/V • 6L,2T • Line stage
NVA TCS	2,300		integrated • 70W • 5L,1T
Electrocomp't EC1-1 SF	2,350		integrated • 100W • 5L,2T • 45,13,36cm • High current, blue stone facia
Adyton OPERA	2,395		integrated • 50W • MM/MC,3L,2T • 21,33,13cm • Optional phono
Classe Audio Audio 5L II	2,395		preamp • 5L,1T • 48,15,43cm • Remote option
Bryston THX8B	2,400		power amp • A/V • 150W • 48,13,39cm • 4 channels, THX approved
Marantz MA-24	2,400		power amp • 30W • 21,17,36cm • Class-A monoblock x2
Audio Research VT60	2,430		power amp • 35W • Single ended tube mono
PS Audio 200b Delta	2,490		power amp • 200W • 42,15,45cm
Counterpoint Solid 2E	2,495		power amp • 200W • 49,17,49cm • Hybrid
Art Audio Tempo	2,499		power amp • 30W • 2x mono Class A triode
Audio Innova Ser 1000SE	2,499		power amp • 50W • 41,15,34cm • Silver circuit board
Gamma Rhythm	2,499		integrated • 22W • MM,3L • 38,30,21cm • Single ended phono integrated
Credo PMP252	2,509		power amp • 250W • 44,21,31cm
EAR 802MC	2,599	63	preamp • MM/MC,2L,2T • <i>Tested with £3,499 509 Mk II - see comments</i> REC'D
Tube Tech Genesis	2,599		power amp • 100W • 35,15,27cm • 2x monoblocks
Papworth M100	2,645		power amp • 100W • 25,17,38cm • Tube monoblock
Classe Audio Audio 5 II	2,657		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 48,15,43cm • Remote option
McIntosh MC7104	2,729		power amp • A/V • 100W • 45,16,51cm • 4 channels
Conrad-Johnson PV-12	2,750		preamp • MC,4L • Tube
Meridian 601	2,750		preamp • MM,4L,T • hdph • rem • DSP tone control, MC option
Audio Research SP9 II	2,850		preamp • MM/MC,4L,2T • 48,14,26cm • Hybrid
McIntosh MC150	2,855		power amp • 150W • 45,14,45cm • Blue meters
Audio Research PH-2	2,895		preamp • MM/MC • 48,14,26cm • Balanced
Sonic Frontiers SFS-80	2,895		power amp • 80W • 45,22,35cm • Stereo tube power amp
PS Audio 250 Delta	2,980		power amp • 250W • 42,15,45cm • Monoblocks
Counterpoint NPS-200E	2,995		power amp • 200W • Rated at 4 Ohms, hybrid
Unison Res. Smart 845	2,995		power amp • 24W • Single ended triode monoblocks
Audio Research LS-2 II	2,997		preamp • 5L,1T • 48,14,26cm • 1 direct input/hybrid

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
DNM 3B Twin E	3,050		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 27,13,16cm	
McIntosh C39	3,129		preamp • A/V • MM, 10L (6 Vid) • hdph • rem • 45,17,45cm • Two zone, THX compatible	
McIntosh MC7300	3,195		power amp • 300W	
Lumley Reference M120	3,200		power amp • 120W • 29,44,18cm • 2xmono, triode/pentode	
NVA TDS	3,200		power amp • 70W • Mono	
McIntosh C40	3,239		preamp • MM, 6L, 3T • hdph • 45,14,45cm • Balanced in/out	
Audio Research D-200	3,248		power amp • 110W • 48,14,31cm • Single ended, balanced	
Audio Innova 2nd Audio	3,299		power amp • 15W • 41,15,34cm • Monoblocks	
Audio Research V35	3,355		power amp • 30W • 48,18,37cm • Balanced in, hybrid	
Audio Research LS-2b II	3,398		preamp • 5L,1T • 48,14,26cm • 1 balanced direct input/hybrid	
Adyton CORDIS 1.6	3,399		power amp • 120W • 45,9,35cm • Stereo power amp	
Classe Audio Audio 15	3,399		power amp • 175W • 48,19,42cm • Single ended, bal bridgable	
McIntosh MC7106	3,425		power amp • A/V • 100W • 45,16,51cm • Six x 100W THX amp	
Mark Levinson 29	3,450		power amp • 50W	
Grant G350A	3,455		power amp • 350W	
Classe Audio Audio 6L II	3,469		preamp • 5L,1T • 48,15,43cm • Remote option, sep PSU	
EAR 509 Mk II	3,499	63	power amp • 100W • 36,20,25cm • <i>Combining sonic strengths of transistors and valves, this amp warrants attention (tested with £2,599 802).</i>	REC'D
Conrad-Johnson Prem 11A	3,500		power amp • 70W • Baby Premier 8	
Matisse Reference	3,500		preamp • A/V • MM/MC,5L,2T	
Art Audio Maestro	3,524		power amp • 100W • 2x mono triode/pentode	
Counterpoint SA4	3,575		power amp • 140W • Hybrid	
McIntosh MC275	3,595		power amp • 75W • Classic valve amp	
Electrocomp't AW250DMB	3,620		power amp • 250W • 48,22,45cm • High current (100A)	
DNM 3B Primus E	3,630		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 27,13,16cm	
KAL Empress	3,660		preamp • MM/MC,2L,1T • hdph • Tube	
Krell KSA-50s	3,690	141	power amp • 50W • 48,22,40cm • Sustained Plateau Bias	B'BUY
NVA TSS (Power)	3,700		power amp • 70W	
McIntosh MA6800	3,735		integrated • 150W • hdph • rem • 45,18,51cm • Blue meters	
YBA 1 Pre	3,750	62	preamp • MC,4L,1T • 43,9,33cm • <i>Tested with £4,250 1 Pwr - see below for comments.</i>	REC'D
Grant G200AMS	3,760		power amp • 200W • Monoblocks	
McIntosh MC300	3,765		power amp • 300W • 45,16,46cm • Bridgable to 600w, blue meters	
Sonic Frontiers SFL-2	3,795		preamp • 4L,2T • 45,12,33cm • Tube, dual mono, balanced	
Classe Audio Audio 6 II	3,817		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 48,15,43cm • Remote option, separate PSU	
Papworth M200	3,825		power amp • 200W • 46,20,31cm • Tube monoblock	
Conrad-Johnson Prem 10	3,900		preamp • 5L • Line version of Premier 7B	
Electrocomp't AW250DMB	3,980		power amp • 250W • 48,45,22cm • High current stereo, stone facia	
Counterpoint SA-5000E	3,995		preamp • MM/MC,4L,2T • 49,12,27cm • Separate PSU	
Counterpoint SA-9	3,995		preamp • MM/MC • 49,12,37cm • Phono stepup	
Dynavector HK1.2	3,995		power amp • 130W • 44,13,37cm • High current capability	
Mark Levinson No 38	3,995		preamp • 6L,2T • rem • Fully remote, balanced	
Gamma Space Reference	3,999		power amp • 18W • 3L • 43,22,31cm • Line integrated	
Gamma Era Reference	3,999		preamp • MM,3L • 44,17,30cm • Single Triode	
Musical Fidelity F18	3,999		power amp • 220W • 49,19,67cm • Bal/unbalanced in/hybrid	
Tube Tech Synergy 1	3,999		integrated • 150W • 5L,1T, • rem • 47,18,47cm • Bias monitor, soft-start	
Exposure XVI	4,000		power amp • 125W • 48,13,35cm • Pair of regulated monoblocks	
Counterpoint Nat Progress	4,125		power amp • 150W • Mono, hybrid	
Krell KRC-2s	4,190	141	preamp • 6L,1T • rem • 48,7,36cm • Opt MM/MC stage	B'BUY
Electrocomp't AW180MB	4,200		power amp • 180W • 28,29,48cm • High current, price per pair	
DNM PA2BE	4,250		power amp • 90W • 27,13,18cm • Triwire output	
YBA 1 Power	4,250	62	power amp • 85W • 43,14,33cm • <i>Well finished pre/power amp with front rank imaging and transparency (tested with £3,750 1 Pre).</i>	REC'D
KAL Emperor	4,375		power amp • 9W • Single ended tube Class A	
Counterpoint NPS-400E	4,395		power amp • 400W • Rated at 4 Ohms, hybrid	
Electrocomp't AW180MB	4,430		power amp • 180W • 28,29,48cm • High current, price per pair, stone facia	
LFD Disc Preamp	4,499		preamp • MC • 30,5,36cm • Battery powered	
Roksan ROK-M1.5	4,500		power amp • 160W • 48,11,34 • Pair of monoblocks	
Unison Res. Perf One	4,500		integrated • 25W • 4L,1T • Single-ended triode	
Classe Audio Audio 25	4,639		power amp • 250W • 48,20,53cm • Single ended, balanced bridgeable	
EAR 519	4,699		power amp • 100W • 43,14,20cm • Valve monoblock x1	
Jadis JPL	4,720		preamp • 5L,1T • 43,17,30cm • Tube	
Jadis JPP-200	4,778		preamp • 4L,1T	
DNM 3B Six E	4,780		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • 27,13,16cm	
Audio Research D-300	4,800		power amp • 160W • 48,18,33cm • Single ended, balanced	
Naim NAC52	5,006		preamp • 6 (see note) • rem • 43,76,30cm • Optional phono board	
DNM PA2BS	5,250		power amp • 90W • 27,13,18cm • Triwire output	
Jadis DEFY-7	5,290		power amp • 100W • 49,23,63cm • Tube	
Tesserac TAP-A	5,300		preamp • MM,3L,2T	
McIntosh MC2600	5,395		power amp • 600W	
Mark Levinson 27.5	5,399		power amp • 100W	
Sonic Frontiers SFS-160	5,495		power amp • 160W • 45,22,35cm • Twin tube monoblocks	
CAT SL1 Sig line	5,500		preamp • 3L,1T • 31,48,14cm • 2 outputs, valve	
Audio Research VT130	5,600		power amp • 65W • Stereo tube, balanced	
DNM PA2BS-1	5,650		power amp • 90W • 27,13,18cm • Triwire output	
Audio Research LS-5 II	5,690		preamp • 5L,1T • 48,14,30cm • Full balanced in/out	
Jadis JA-30	5,760	60	power amp • 30W • 21,21,46cm • <i>French tubes, JP-30MC has beautiful build, nostalgic styling and delightful midrange (tested with £5,978 JP30).</i>	REC'D
Krell KSA-100s	5,843		power amp • 100W • 48,22,50cm • Sustained Plateau Bias	
Jadis JP-30MC	5,978	60	preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T • <i>French tubes; JP-30MC has beautiful build, nostalgic styling and delightful midrange. (tested with £5,760 JA30).</i>	REC'D
CAT SL1 Sig phono	6,000		preamp • MM,2L • 31,48,14cm • 2 outputs, valve	
McIntosh MC500	6,265		power amp • 500W • 45,27,51cm • Blue meters	
Mark Levinson No 38S	6,495		preamp • 6L,2T • rem • Special Edition, balanced	
Audio Research D-400II	6,600		power amp • 200W • 48,23,33cm • Single ended, balanced	
Conrad-J Evolution 20 SP	6,700		preamp • MC,4L • Poor man's Premier 7B	
Krell KRC-HR	6,949		preamp • 6L,1T • rem • 48,7,36cm • Opt MM/MC stage	
EAR 549	6,999		power amp • 200W • 43,27,22cm • Valve monoblock x1	
EAR G88	6,999		preamp • MM/MC,3L,2T • Valve	
Conrad-Johnson Prem 12	7,000		power amp • 140W • Monoblock pair	
Tesserac TAMP-60	7,350		power amp • 60W • 2x Monoblocks	
Mark Levinson 23.5	7,399		power amp • 200W	
Classe Audio Audio M-700	7,690		power amp • 700W • 48,19,44cm • Single ended, balanced monoblock	
Matisse Ref Monoblocks	7,800		power amp • 115W • Switchable triode (40watt)	
Jadis JP-S2	7,900		preamp • 6,1T	
Krell KSA-200s	7,987		power amp • 200W • 48,22,54cm • Sustained Plateau Bias	
Counterpoint NPM-E	8,995		power amp • 150W • 49,18,49cm • Twin monoblocks	
Krell KSA-300s	9,500		power amp • 300W • 48,22,62cm • Sustained Plateau Bias	
Jadis JA-80	9,912		power amp • 60W • 23,26,58cm • Tube, 1x monoblock	
Classe Audio M-1000	9,968		power amp • 1kW • 48,22,53cm • Single ended, bal monoblock	

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

Conrad-Johnson Prem7B	11,000	Col	preamp • MC,4L • <i>The 7 is designed without compromise, and is clearly one of the finest (valve) preamplifiers money can buy.</i>	REC'D
McIntosh MC1000	11,215		power amp • 45,27,51cm • Pair 1kW monoblocks, blue meters	
Jadis JP-80MC	11,250		preamp • MM/MC,4L,1T	
Adyton CORDIS 3B	11,950		power amp • 290W • 49,39,43cm • Reference 2x dual mono	
Unison Res. Absolute 845	11,995		integrated • 40W • 4L,1T • Parallel S-E845 triode	
Gamma Rhythm Ref	11,999		power amp • 30W • 29,21,53cm • Single ended Class A, stereo	
Lumley Reference M500	12,000		power amp • 35,80,30cm • 2xmono, triode/pentode	
KAL Conqueror	12,500		integrated • 30W • MM/MC,3L,1T	
CAT JL1	13,500		power amp • 200W	
Audio Research VT150	14,940		power amp • 130W • 37,31,56cm • 2 x monoblocks, tube	
Jadis JA-200	15,518		power amp • 160W • 26,23,58cm • Tube, monoblock (four boxes)	
Mark Levinson 20.6	15,790		power amp • 100W • Monoblocks, Class A	
EAR P52	15,999		preamp • MM/MC,4L,2T • Valve	
EAR Yoshino P52	15,999		preamp • MM/MC,4L,2T • Valve	



Cables

Cables are not accessories, but an integral part of a system. Inevitably some cables are greater 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. ■ Symmetrical indicates where a twisted pair of conductors

are used. Coaxial means that there is a central 'hot' conductor and a shield that carries the negative signal. Stranded cables have multiple strands and solid core use individually insulated strand(s). ■ 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 for a terminated five metre pair unless otherwise indicated.

Key
 loudspeaker; interconnect;
 digital, electrical; digital, opticalthese are the different
types of cable
 this information is followed by
 for loudspeaker cablesconstruction type, materials used,
capacitance (high, med. or low)
 for analogue interconnectsconstruction type and topology,
materials used
 for digital interconnectstype of cable (elec. or optical),
materials used, impedance in Ohms

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

CABLES				
QED 42 Strand	1		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • med • low • copper • PVC outer, figure-of-8	
Cable Talk Flat One	2		speaker cable • stranded • copper • low intrusion budget cable	
Cable Talk Theatre 2	2		speaker cable • stranded • copper • entry level for AV purposes	
Ixos 603	2		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • copper	
QED FI-4	2		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • med • low • copper • Flat construction, poly outer	
QED 79 Strand	2		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • low • low • copper • PVC outer, fig-of-8	
QED Qudos	2	145	Loudspeaker cable • stranded • low • low • OFHC copper • Polyethylene cover	
Cable Talk Talk 3	3		speaker cable • stranded • copper • budget hi-fi cable	
Ixos 601	3		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • OFC • 6 core	
QED RI-4	3		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • med • low • copper • 4-core, round construction	
Cable Talk Overture 2	4		speaker cable • stranded • copper	
Heybrook Heywire	4	109	Loudspeaker cable • solid core • copper • <i>This well-meaning facsimile of earlier ribbon cables ends up sounding lumpy and uneven.</i>	
Cable Talk Talk 3 Biwire	5		speaker cable • copper • 4 conductors, 6N	
Cable Talk Talk 4	5		speaker cable • stranded • copper	
Ixos 604	5		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • copper • Bi-wire	
Ixos 602	5		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • OFC • 12 core	
QED Qudos Profile 8	5		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • OFHC • Flat 8-core OFHC poly	
Cable Talk Concert 2	6		speaker cable • stranded • copper • Signal Return Flow System	
Cable Talk Talk 4 Biwire	9		speaker cable • stranded • copper • 4 conductors, 6N	
If your product is missing from our Directory, please fax or write to us quoting the brand, model and relevant details.				
Mission Quartet	9		Loudspeaker cable • solid core • copper • 4-conductor OFC solid core	
Sonic Link First Mains	10		Mains cable • stranded • 12A • silver plated copper • PTFE insulated	
Arion LS0.5	12		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • silver • Priced per meter	
Cable Talk Concert 4	12		speaker cable • stranded • copper • 4 conductor version of Concert	
DNM DIG75	18		Digital, electrical • copper • Non-coaxial	
QED DigiFlex	19	108	Digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • copper • <i>A top performance, low-loss 75 Ohm coax with a very open, almost liquid quality.</i>	B'BUY
DNM DIGS100	20		Digital, electrical • coaxial • copper	
DNM DIG100	20		Digital, electrical • copper • Non-coaxial	
DPA Opti-link	20	108	Digital, optical • plastic • <i>Very similar to Bantbridge AL560; sound is lacklustre</i>	
Ixos 104	20		Interconnect • coaxial • stranded • OFC • 24 karat plugs	
Ixos 603/10	20		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • copper • Unterminated	
Mission Stranded	20	109	Loudspeaker cable • stranded • copper • <i>This Swedish made cable proved a real fit with our listeners — a slick performer and Best Buy upgrade.</i>	B'BUY
Sonic Link Pure Mains	20		Mains cable • stranded • 3A • HPMC • PTFE insulated	
QED P2 Gold	22		Interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • OFHC copper	
QED Incon P1 Gold	23		Interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • OFHC copper	
Cable Talk Improved 2/CD	25		Interconnect • Symmetrical • coaxial • solid core • copper • Entry level phono-phono	
DNM ML125UK	25		Mains cable • solid core • 13A • High purity copper	
Ixos 105	25		Digital, electrical • 75ohms • copper • OFC screen	
QED Optiflex	25		Digital, optical • plastic fibre	
QED Incon P2 Seold	25		Interconnect • coaxial • stranded • OFHC copper	
QED Incon P1 Seold	26		Interconnect • Symmetrical • coaxial • stranded • OFHC copper	
DPA Digi-link	28	108	Digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75 Ohms • copper • <i>Can seem slightly impassive but there's no avoiding its exceptionally detailed sound.</i>	B'BUY
Arion LS1	30		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • silver • Priced per meter	
Chord Chrysalis	30		Interconnect • stranded • copper	
Sonic Link Super Mains	30		Mains cable • stranded • 30A • silver plated copper • PTFE insulated	
Sonic Link Light Brown	30	108	Digital, electrical • coaxial • 75ohms • PTFE • <i>Deviates from the 75 Ohm standard and provides an unbalanced sound.</i>	
vdH MV Videolink 75	30	108	Digital, electrical • coaxial • 75 Ohms • copper • <i>An AV-cum-digital cable that nearly beats QED's DigiFlex, but emphasises sibilants.</i>	REC'D
Chord Codac	32	108	Digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75ohms • copper • <i>A connection with a stranded inner core and a sound that lacks integration.</i>	
QED Qudos Terminated	33		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • low • low • OFHC copper • Various lengths, terminated	
Cable Talk Advanced 2	35		Interconnect • Symmetrical • coaxial • solid core • 6N copper • phono-phono, for CD etc	
Sonic Link Pink	35		Interconnect • coaxial • stranded • silver plated copper	
Kimber Cable PSB D'link	37	108	Digital, electrical • copper • <i>An analogue interconnect inappropriately pressed into digital service. A visible deterioration in the digital signal results.</i>	
Chord Cobra	39		Interconnect • stranded • copper	
Ixos 103	40		Interconnect • coaxial • stranded • OFC • Double shielded, locking plugs	
Sonic Link AST150	40		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • low • copper	
Naim NAC05	44	109	Loudspeaker cable • stranded • copper • <i>Described as a 'dinosaur of a cable', this stiff wire rod doesn't belong outside Naim systems.</i>	
Audioquest F-14	45	109	Loudspeaker cable • solid core • copper • <i>Ideal for laying under carpets, F-14 encourages a slightly warm and vibrant sound</i>	REC'D

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

Monster Interlink LS100	45	108	Digital, optical • plastic • Well constructed stepped-index fibre with polished ends and connectors. Lean, fuzzy, engaging performance.	REC'D
Monster Datalink 100	45	108	Digital, electrical • coaxial • 75ohms • copper • A colourful coaxial interconnect with an equally colourful and up-beat sound. Very compatible.	REC'D
Sonic Link Red	45		Interconnect • coaxial • stranded • HPMC	
DPA Slink	47		Interconnect • coaxial • stranded • low • silver • phono terminated	
Chord Prodac	49		Digital, electrical • 75 Ohms	REC'D
Chord Cobra-mono	49		Interconnect • stranded • copper	
Kronos Konnekt 3	49		Interconnect • coaxial • stranded • copper	
Arion LS-2	50		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • silver • Biwire, priced per meter	
Audioquest Video Z	50	108	Digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75 Ohms • copper • The very best available, with an expressive sound, but generously priced.	B'BUY
Cable Talk Monitor 2	50		Interconnect • copper • Signal Return Flow System	
Cable Talk Improved 2/T1	50		Interconnect • Symmetrical • coaxial • solid core • copper • Entry level, phono-phono	
Sonic Link Green	50		Digital, electrical • coaxial • 75ohms • PTFE	
Sonic Link Derwent	50		Interconnect • stranded • silver plated copper	
vdH The Clearwater	50	109	Loudspeaker cable • stranded • silver/copper • Despite its evocative title, the Clearwater turns out to be a disappointingly murky sounding cable.	
Kimber Cable KC-1 D'link	52	108	Digital, electrical • copper • This cable adopts a woven construction with the addition of a conductive screen. Music lacks detail and spirit.	
Kimber Cable Opti-link	59	108	Digital, optical • plastic • Hardly cheap for what appears to be a bog-standard PMNA fibre, yet it sounds a little brighter and livelier than most.	REC'D
Ixos 102	60		Interconnect • coaxial • stranded • OFC • Double shielded, locking plugs	
Trichord Pulsewire 75/D	64		digital interconnect • Symmetrical • coaxial • solid core • 75 Ohms • silver plated copper • mono	
Cable Talk Studio 2	65		Interconnect • Symmetrical • coaxial • solid core • copper • Enhanced version of Monitor 2	
Chord Siren	65		Interconnect • coaxial • stranded • Silver plated copper	
Chord Chameleon	68		Interconnect • stranded • copper	
Arion SA0.5	75		Interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • silver	
Audioquest Type 4	75	109	Loudspeaker cable • copper • Four 18-gauge OFHC copper conductors wound in a Litz-type fashion increases capacitance but restrains the cable's 'bite'.	
DPA White Slink	75		interconnect • coaxial • stranded • silver plated OFC • polyethylene/PTFE dielectric	
Sonic Link AST150X2	80		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • low • copper • Biwire	
DNM Rainbow	84	109	Loudspeaker cable • solid core • copper • High impedance can influence the treble response, but this was a winner on sound per pound.	B'BUY
Cable Talk Professional 2	85		interconnect • Symmetrical • coaxial • solid core • copper • MGT Multi Ground construction	
Sonic Link Violet	85		Interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • HPMC	
Audioquest Digital PRO	90	108	Digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75 Ohms • silver • A silver cable with all the drive of Video Z but lacking its clear cut transparency.	
Sonic Link Grey	90	109	Loudspeaker cable • solid core • silver plated copper • A spaghetti-thin silver plated cable lacks bass impact and treble 'air'	
If your product is missing from our Directory, please fax or write to us quoting the brand, model and relevant details.				
Kimber Cable KC-AG D'link	95	108	Digital, electrical • silver • An asymmetric cable using silver conductors that deviates from the 75 Ohm standard. Not ideal for digital applications.	
Arion DAC1	99		Digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75 Ohms • silver	
Kronos Konnekt 2	99		Interconnect • coaxial • solid core • copper	
Audio Note AN-D	100	109	Loudspeaker cable • solid core • copper • Supplied in linear, non-polarised lengths that should be twisted into stereo pairs. Sounds rather grippy and forward.	
Audioquest OptiLink Z	100	108	Digital, optical • glass • Good level of midband detail but frequency extremes lack depth and extension.	
Electrocomp't EC-K3 Mk 2	100		Mains cable • stranded • 13A • copper • Terminated, woven conductors	
Ixos 101	100		Interconnect • coaxial • stranded • silver plated OFC • Double shielded, locking plugs	
Sonic Link AST75X2	100		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • copper • Biwire	
Sonic Link Blue	115		Interconnect • solid core • HPMC	
Arion SA1	125		Interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • silver	
Chord Solid	130		Interconnect • coaxial • solid core • copper/silver	REC'D
Cable Talk Reference	140		interconnect • Symmetrical • coaxial • solid core • copper • Phonos, anti-microphonic	
Moth Leyline Datalink	140	108	Digital, electrical • coaxial • 75 Ohms • copper • A thin, coaxial version of Leyline Black with a rather hard and unforgiving character. Too expensive.	
Sonic Link Care Music	150		Loudspeaker cable • stranded • low • silver plated copper	
Trichord Pulsewire 75	150		interconnect • Symmetrical • coaxial • solid core • 75 Ohms • silver plated copper • stereo	
Audio Note AN-B	165	109	Loudspeaker cable • solid core • copper • High capacitance Litz-type cable may act as a taming influence in many systems.	REC'D
Sonic Link Black	165		Interconnect • stranded • silver plated copper	
Arion DAC2	199		Digital, electrical • coaxial • stranded • 75 Ohms • silver	
Arion SA2	199		Interconnect • Symmetrical • stranded • silver	
Kronos Konnekt 1	199		Interconnect • coaxial • stranded • copper	
Sonic Link Blue	200		Loudspeaker cable • solid core • high • HPMC • Biwire	
Sonic Link Derwent/spkr	200		Loudspeaker cable • low • silver plated copper • Biwire	
Audioquest Midnight Hyp	260	109	Loudspeaker cable • solid core • copper • Similar to Type 4, but with a delicate smoothness.	
vdH The Magnum	265	109	Loudspeaker cable • stranded • copper/silver • Touted as vdH's most prestigious twinlead cable, Magnum sounds soft and old fashioned.	
DPA IS19	275	109	Loudspeaker cable • solid core • silver/copper • Clear, neutral and transparent sound of the older 8S without the clarity of Gortex Black 16.	



Cassette Decks

The compact cassette is still the world's most versatile and ubiquitous music storage medium. Buffs may wrinkle their noses, but they're happy to use cassette decks to make up tapes for the car. ■ 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.) Lab performance and sound quality often go hand in hand, and are frequently somewhat dependent upon factory alignment. The mechanical integrity of the mechanism is another crucial factor. ■ Twin decks offer the option to dub tapes and play two cassettes sequentially. Autoreverse is a useful feature, but

usually with some mechanical compromise.

Key	
single, twin	.....type of cassette deck
Dolby B, C, HX-Pro	.....noise reduction and other circuitry
2 head	.....number of heads

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

CASSETTE DECKS				
Sherwood DS1150	80		single • Dolby B, C • 2 head	
Goodmans Delta 700W	100	123	twin • Dolby B • 2 head • 36,13,28cm • Compact and ultra-basic twin deck which is rough and bass shy, with a less than stable tape path.	
Sherwood DS1010C	100		single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • Mic input	
Sherwood DD1030C	100		twin • Dolby B • 2 head	
Sony TC-FX211B	100		single • Dolby B, C • 2 head • 43,12,29cm	
Aiwa AD-F450	120	136	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • Basic but well designed budget deck, astonishing value; only the poor metering gives the game away.	B'BUY
JVC TD-W106BK	120		twin • Dolby B • 2 head • 44,13,24cm • One recording deck	
Sherwood DS3010C	120	117	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • Good range of facilities, let down by poor transport and iffy electronics.	
Goodmans GSW650	130		twin • Dolby B • 2 head • 43,12,27cm • Both auto-reverse	
Sony TC-k215B	130		single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,12,31cm • Tape calibration	
Sony TC-K311B	130		single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,12,31cm • Auto calibration	
Grundig CCF210	150		twin • auto reverse • Dolby B • 2 head • 36,12,30cm • AMS, CD copy, hi speed dub	
Sony TC-W445B	150		twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,12,31cm • Full logic control	
Teac V-600	150		single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,15,29cm • Fine bias	
Denon DRM-540	160	146	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,28cm • Exceptionally stable and well focussed sound quality and a bargain price.	B'BUY
Yamaha KX-380	169		single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,29cm • Play Trim, manual bias	
Aiwa AD-WX727	170	146	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • High class twin for those who want bells, whistles - and music.	B'BUY
Grundig Fine Arts CCF2	170		twin • Dolby B • 2 head • 44,13,30cm • AMS, remote, display off	

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
JVC TD-218BK	170	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,33cm • 'Compu' auto tape calibration	
JVC TD-X372BK	170	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,33cm • Entry level single deck	
Kenwood KX-W4070	170	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • Auto bias function	
Kenwood KX-3060	170	139 single • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,12,37cm • <i>Based on CD-53 DAC/filter, but with a more transparent, sober and insightful sound.</i>	B'BUY
Pioneer CT-S330	170	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,13,28cm • Audio tape setup, FLEX	
Sony TC-K461S	180	146 single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,13,31cm • <i>Transport is a good point, and sound quality is fine, though not especially dynamic.</i>	REC'D
Sony TC-K415B	180	136 single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 43,12,31cm • <i>Mainly UK designed with audiophile intent, but spoiled by erratic output, at worst with metal tape.</i>	
Grundig CCF310	190	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 36,12,30cm • Elapsed time, CD copy, AMS	
NAD 602	199	127 single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • <i>Minimalist deck for the audiophile market. Unfortunately engineering is minimalist too.</i>	
Yamaha KX-W282	199	twin • Dolby B, C • 2 head • 44,13,28cm • Twin auto-reverse, one deck records	
Yamaha KX-480	199	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,28cm • Auto-tape tuning, Play Trim	
Denon DRW-580	200	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • Music search, hi speed dub	
Dual CC8000 RS	200	twin • Dolby B, C • 2 head • 44,13,25cm • Remote via 9000RS	
Grundig Fine Arts CCF3	200	146 twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,30cm • <i>Unstable sounding twin thanks to a primitive transport mechanism.</i>	
JVC TD-318BK	200	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,14,34cm • 'Silent' mechanism	
Kenwood KX-W6070	200	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • Auto-bias function	
Luxman K-322	200	146 single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 13,44,18cm • <i>Gives best value results with lower bias tapes, helped by a successful Dolby C installation.</i>	
Marantz SD-53	200	146 single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,14,30cm • <i>Modestly equipped player is short-changed by a rough transport, and dull prerecorded quality.</i>	
Pioneer CT-W503R	200	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,13,25cm • Auto NR, FLEX	
Pioneer CT-S430S	200	136 single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,13,28cm • <i>Against the odds — a 2-head Dolby S deck that works. Well set up and fully equipped.</i>	B'BUY
Sony TC-WR545B	200	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,12,29cm • Auto calibration	
Teac R-550	200	Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,14,29cm • Blank scan	
Teac W-750R	200	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,15,29cm	
Technics RS-TR373	200	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • 2 head • 43,14,29cm • Play transport unidirectional	
Technics RS-BX501	200	Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,13,30cm • Centre tray, ATC	
Denon DRS-640	210	140 single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,31cm • <i>Drawer loading deck, with simple facilities and smooth, well adjusted sound.</i>	B'BUY
JVC TD-V562BK	220	123 single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,13,33cm • <i>Ultra-sophisticated transport at a silly price; sound quality is stable but slightly opaque.</i>	REC'D
Technics RS-TR474	220	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,14,29cm • High speed FF/REW	
Aiwa AD-F850	230	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • Super DX head, twin capstan	
NAD 613	230	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,29cm • Block repeat, R/C links	
Pioneer CT-W603RS	230	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,13,25cm • Auto tape setup, FLEX, Dolby S	
Kenwood KX-5060S	235	140 single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,12,30cm • <i>Well engineered transport and Dolby S star in this refined and detailed design.</i>	REC'D
Yamaha KX-W482	249	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,28cm • Twin recording auto-reverse	
Yamaha KX-580	249	146 single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,28cm • <i>Stable and clean, if bright. Play Trim helps wake up recalcitrant recordings.</i>	B'BUY
Grundig Fine Arts CF4	250	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,13,30cm • Manual bias, AMS, monitor	
JVC TD-718BK	250	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,14,34cm • Tape calibration, stabiliser	
Marantz SD-535	250	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,14,32cm • Synchro record	
Onkyo TA-RW313	250	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 46,12,31cm	
Sony TC-WR645S	250	twin • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,12,31cm • UK optimised sound	
Sony TC-K511S	250	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 43,12,31cm • UK optimised sound	
Teac V-1010	250	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,15,29cm • Fine bias adjust	
Technics RS-BX601	250	146 Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 43,13,29cm • <i>Remarkably fast cassette wind means it will suit those with large collections. Good all-round sound.</i>	REC'D
Denon DRW-760	260	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,28cm	
Denon DRM-740	270	136 single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,13,28cm • <i>Breathed-on DRM-710, with good external treatment, offers good if somewhat detached sonics.</i>	
JVC TD-V662BK	270	146 single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,13,33cm • <i>Assured, clean and agile sounding recorder, if not quite the most refined in its class.</i>	B'BUY
Marantz SD-63	270	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 43,14,30cm • D-bus	
NAD 614	270	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,32cm • Play Trim, CAR compression	
Kenwood KX-W8070S	280	twin • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • Auto bias function, power load	
Technics RS-TR575	280	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,14,29cm • Optical quick reverse	
Aiwa AD-S950	300	140 single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • <i>High-value, high-spec package is both well set up and musically sorted.</i>	B'BUY
Pioneer CT-W803RS	300	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,13,25cm • Twin record, mic i/p	
Pioneer CT-S630S	300	140 single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 42,13,38cm • <i>3 heads and Dolby S feature in an excellent deck that is underbiased with Type IV tapes.</i>	REC'D
Sony TC-K611S	300	127 single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 43,12,30cm • <i>Good Dolby S deck — slightly let down by lack of attention to detail.</i>	REC'D
Technics RS-BX701	300	136 Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 43,13,30cm • <i>Costly, but well built, this decks is a pleasure to operate and listen to.</i>	REC'D
Denon DRS-810	310	127 single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,13,32cm • <i>Drawer loading deck, carefully designed yet lacking in subtlety on audition.</i>	
NAD 616	320	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,13,32cm • Twin auto-reverse, R/C link	
Kenwood KX-7060S	329	146 single • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,13,30cm • <i>Although slightly dull sounding with prerecorded tapes, this is a well equipped and fine sounding deck.</i>	REC'D
Onkyo KR-609	350	Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 28,12,31cm • Mini component	
Onkyo TA250	350	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 46,12,31cm	
Teac V-3010	350	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,15,36cm • Remote control, pitch adjust	
Technics RS-BX747	350	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 43,13,30cm • Fine bias adj, THC lo-red base	
Onkyo K-W606	370	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 28,12,32cm • Mini component	
Pioneer CT-M601R	380	Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,14,38cm • Six tape record/play, r/cntrl	
Luxman K-373	400	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 13,44,35cm • System bus, mic inputs	
Marantz CP-230	400	single • Dolby B • 2 head • DC portable, semi-pro	
Marantz SD-635	400	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,9,32cm • Drawer loading	



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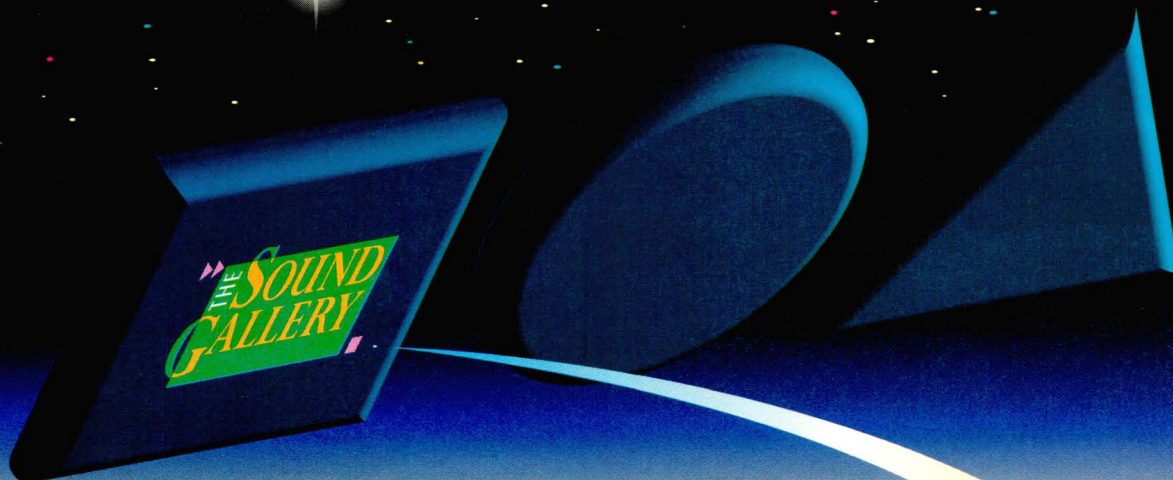
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PRODUCT	£	ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
Technics RS-TR979	400	twin • auto reverse • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 43,13,28cm • Both decks record, quick rev	
Onkyo K-611	430	146 Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 28,12,32cm • Cute drawer loading mini-size component with 3-heads and dual capstan transport.	REC'D
Marantz DC-1010	450	single • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 42,8,31cm • Inc CD player module	
Nakamichi DR3	450	123 single • Dolby B, C • 2 head • 43,10,32cm • Refined, exquisitely detailed and solid sounding 'budget' Nakamichi 2-header.	REC'D
Teac W-6000R	450	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,15,33cm • Pitch control, remote	
Marantz CP-430	500	single • Dolby B • 3 head • Portable, dbx NR, anti-roll	
Pioneer CT-S830S	500	146 single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 42,14,38cm • High class mechanism with superb sound to match.	REC'D
Teac R-9000S	500	105 Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 3 head • 49,15,36cm • Much better than average auto-reverse deck, well worth considering. Nicely engineered too.	
Teac V-6030S	550	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • Dual capstan	
Yamaha KX-W952	599	twin • Dolby B, C • HX Pro • 2 head • 44,16,37cm • iwin record, opt remote	
Teac V-8030S	650	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • Quartz locked, dual capstan	
Teac V-8000S	699	105 single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 48,15,36cm • Superb stability and real subtlety, this must be the best Teac yet.	REC'D
Nakamichi DR2	700	127 single • Dolby B, C • 3 head • 43,10,32cm • Accomplished design with simple features (manual tape select!) but superb sound and serviceability.	B'BUY
Nakamichi DR1	850	117 single • Dolby B, C • 3 head • 43,10,32cm • Typically oddball Nakamichi with everything. Good azimuth adjustment and dynamic sound.	REC'D
Arcam Delta 100	899	111 single • Dolby B, C, S • 3 head • 43,12,34cm • Superb transport and a ripe, spacious sound. Dolby S is more successful than some.	REC'D
Pioneer CT-95	1,000	single • Dolby B, C, S • HX Pro • 3 head • 44,15,38cm • Copper plated chassis	
Nakamichi Dragon	2,350	Dolby B, C • 3 head • 45,14,30cm • Auto azimuth correct	



CD Players, Transports & DACs

Now established as the prime audio source, the CD player continues to evolve. Manufacturers have accepted that 'Perfect Sound Forever' (an early Philips slogan) was a trifle optimistic. Now the medium is being slowly transformed into something worthy of the audiophile's enthusiasm.

■ 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.

Transports & DACs

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.

■ The first thing listed for a DAC is the type of convertor chip employed. However, in much the same way that an amp's output is not indicative of its sound quality, the DAC chip is only one factor in a CD player's sound.

Key	
multibit, 1-bit	.....DAC type
electrical/optical out	.....digital output(s)
rem	.....remote control

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
CD PLAYERS			
Eclipse CD101a	80	144 multibit • rem • 36,8,29cm	
Eclipse CD420	100	multibit • rem • 42,8,29cm	
Pioneer PD-77	100	1 bit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,13,33cm • Satin gold finish	
Goodmans Delta 700	110	128 multibit • rem • A 16-bit alternative to the CD650II that furnishes a colourful and animated sound.	REC'D
Goodmans GCD360R	120	multibit • rem	
Grundig CD210	120	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 36,8,30cm • 30 mem, random repeat	
Philips CD710	120	multibit • rem • 16 bit continuous technology	
Philips CD740	130	139 multibit • electrical out • rem • One of several Philips players using hybrid DAC technologies. Still sounds insufferably boring, however.	
Philips CD720	130	multibit • rem • 16 bit Continuous Calibration	
Sherwood C03020R	130	119 bitstream • Although this budget wonder has little respect for musical convention, what emerges is still remarkably entertaining.	B'BUY
Sony CDP-M302	130	1 bit • rem • 36,10,33cm • Midi-size, full remote control	
Technics SL-PG370	130	mash • Remote control ready	
Dual CD1135RC	140	multibit • electrical out • rem • 42,8,28cm • Variable headphone output	
Grundig Fine Arts CD1	140	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,9,30cm • 30 track memory, auto-space	
JVC XL-V284BK	140	147 1 bit • rem • 44,11,28cm • Featuring a new set of bitstream innards, this flexible player also boasts a refined, if occasionally unpredictable sound.	REC'D
JVC XL-V184BK	140	1 bit • 44,11,28cm	
Pioneer PD-103	140	1 bit • 42,11,28cm • Display off	
Aiwa XC-300	150	1 bit • optical out • rem	
Cambridge Audio CD4	150	147 electrical out • rem • 43,9,29cm • Basic appearance and sluggish track access/track search belies its up and at 'em sound quality.	REC'D
Denon DCD-315	150	bitstream • rem • 44,11,28cm	
Dual CD1150RC	150	multibit • electrical out • rem • Variable headphone output	
Sony CDP-312	150	139 1 bit • rem • 43,10,29cm • Something of a rough diamond, offering a raft of features and good build but a decidedly Technicolor sound	
Teac CD-P3200	150	147 multibit • rem • 44,12,28cm • A primitive looking CD player, housing primitive 16-bit electronics which deliver an equally primitive and uninspiring sound.	
Technics SL-PG470AK	150	mash • optical out • rem • CD edit	
Kenwood DP-2060	160	147 1 bit • rem • 44,10,26cm • A player that bears absolutely no relation to the DP-3060, despite appearances. Sounds vague and thoroughly uninteresting.	
Pioneer PD-203	160	1 bit • rem • 42,11,28cm • As PD103, variable output & rem	
Yamaha CDX-480	169	147 bitstream • rem • 44,10,28cm • A dispassionately calm sounding player that delivers the musical goods with little or no apparent enthusiasm.	
Dual CD1000RS	170	bitstream • electrical out • Remote control via CR9000RS	
Technics SL-PG570AK	170	mash • rem • Digital servo, THCB base	
Teac CD-P3450	179	1 bit • optical out • rem • 8x oversample tape rec edit	
Dual CD1180RC	180	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,9,29cm • Variable headphone output	
JVC XL-F116BK	180	1 bit • 44,13,40cm • 5-disc carousel	
NAD 501	189	139 bitstream • A thoroughly typical frills-free player with a slightly too cautious, even restrained musical outlook.	
Grundig Fine Arts CD2	190	128 bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,9,30cm • A stylish looking player, with a disappointingly vague approach to music making.	
Philips CDC745	199	bitstream • electrical out • rem • Multi-disc tray	
Philips CD750	199	137 bitstream • electrical out • rem • The costliest model in Philips range, and the last to use its BS DAC, lacks a sense of integration and stereo focus.	
Yamaha CDC-555	199	multibit • rem • 44,11,39cm • Entry level	
Denon DCD-825	200	137 multibit • electrical out • rem • Despite extensive revisions, this latest player still sounds like a typical 18-bit Denon, which is no bad thing!	REC'D
Denon DCD-625	200	147 multibit • electrical out • rem • 44,11,29cm • DCD-615 replacement is generously equipped but lacks sophisticated sound of its forebear.	
JVC XL-F216BK	200	1 bit • rem • 44,13,40cm • 5-disc carousel	
Kenwood DP-R4070	200	1 bit • rem • 5-disc tray loading	
Kenwood DP-3060	200	139 1 bit • rem • 44,10,26cm • Based on the same filter/DAC as Marantz's CD-53, but with a more transparent, sober and highly insightful sound.	B'BUY
Luxman D-322	200	147 bitstream • rem • 44,10,28cm • Well bred player sounds smooth and cultured without appearing grey or boring.	
Marantz CD-53	200	139 bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43,9,30cm • Looks identical to CD-63, but internal costs are cut, exposing a slightly ragged performer.	REC'D
Onkyo DX710	200	1 bit • optical out • rem • 46,11,31cm	
Pioneer PD-S504	200	147 bitstream • electrical out • rem • 42,11,29cm • More consistent than the old PD-S503 and capable strong atmosphere and 'occasion'.	B'BUY
Rotel RCD-930AX	200	1 bit • rem • 44,9,29cm	
Sherwood CDC5030R	200	132 1 bit • rem • 44,10,38cm • This replacement for the 5-disc CDC5010R sounds messy, disjointed and generally unpleasant. A disappointment.	
Sony CDP-561E	200	147 bitstream • optical out • rem • 43,11,30cm • Combines plenty of features with an open, transparent and sparkling sound.	B'BUY
Technics SL-PS670AK	200	mash • optical out • rem • 45,12,29cm • Virtual Battery operation	
Yamaha CDX-580	229	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,10,28cm • UK specified o/p stage	
Harman-Nardon HD7225	230	bitstream • rem • 45,10,33cm	
Sony CDP-C325M	230	1 bit • rem • 36,10,39cm • Midi size, 5-disc player	
Sony CDP-C345	230	132 1 bit • rem • 43,13,39cm • Sony's Hybrid Pulse DAC sounds great in the CDP-311 but in this 5 disc carousel it provides a mere skeleton of a performance.	

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PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
NAD 502	239	119	mash • electrical out • rem • Updated 5425 trades spontaneity for precise but mechanical style.	REC'D
Denon DCD-825	240		multibit • electrical out • rem • 44,11,28cm • UK design	
Grundig Fine Arts CD3	240		bitstream • rem • 44,9,30cm	
Grundig CD3	240		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,9,30cm • FTS, display off, fade, DAC7	
Onkyo DX703	240		1 bit • optical out • rem • 46,11,31cm	
Yamaha CDC-655	249		bitstream • optical out • rem • 44,11,39cm • Tray load multi-player	
JVC XL-V574BK	250	139	1 bit • optical out • rem • 44,11,28cm	
Kenwood DP-M5570	250		1 bit • rem • 6+1 disc changer	
Kenwood DP-5060	250		1 bit • optical out • rem • 44,12,31cm • D.R.I.V.E.	
Marantz CC-45	250		bitstream • optical out • rem • 44,12,40cm • 5 disc carousel	
Marantz CD-63	250	137	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,9,30cm • New technology has enabled Marantz to steal a march on CD-52 series.	REC'D
Pioneer PD-M603	250		1 bit • rem • 42,11,30cm • Six disc	
Rotel RCD-940BX	250	137	multibit • rem • 44,10,32cm • <i>A sea change in transport and DAC technology lies behind this untidy-sounding and irritating player.</i>	
Sony CDP-761E	250	147	bitstream • optical out • rem • 43,11,40cm • Torted up CDP-561E with less widgets and a slightly overcooked performance.	REC'D
Teac PD-D880	250		multibit • rem • 44,11,38cm • 5-disc carousel	
Teac CD-3	250		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 45,13,28cm • Central mechanism	
Technics SL-PS770A	250	147	mash • optical out • rem • 43,13,29cm • <i>A mellow sounding player that never quite rouses from its slumber to really tackle the music at hand.</i>	
Onkyo DX-7210	260	147	bitstream • rem • Well-bred CD player features an unusual digital filter is smooth and cultured without appearing grey or boring.	REC'D
Teac CD-P4500	280	107	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,12,29cm • Teac's first genuine 1-bit player has a certain 'organic warmth'.	REC'D
Onkyo C-711	290		1 bit • optical out • rem • 28,8,30cm • Mini component	
Harman-Kardon HD7325	299		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 45,10,33cm	
Arcam Alpha One	300	137	delta sigma • electrical out • rem • 43,8,29cm • <i>The first UK-built player under £300 is hampered by a tidy but rather grey and uninspiring sound.</i>	
Denon DCD-1015	300	141	multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,11,28cm • Excellent, middle range player — fast, fluid and lean	REC'D
JVC XL-2674BK	300		1 bit • rem • 44,11,28cm	
JVC XL-M408BK	300		1 bit • rem • 44,13,32cm • Six disc	
Marantz CD-1010	300		1 bit • optical out • rem • 42,8,31cm • Slim Series component	
Musical Fidelity E60	300		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,10,34cm	
Nakamichi MB4s	300	132	multibit • rem • 43,9,27cm • Entry level Music-Bank player has plenty of dynamics and detail but little stereo depth.	REC'D
Pioneer PD-S703	300	137	1 bit • optical out • rem • 42,13,27cm • Legato Link and bitstream player sounds as manipulative and intriguing as ever.	REC'D
Pioneer PD-M703	300		1 bit • rem • 42,13,30cm • Six disc, DSP soundfield ctrl	
Rotel RCD-965BX	300	100	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,10,32cm • Exceptionally refined: transparent, exquisitely detailed and powerfully emotive. A landmark.	B'BUY
Marantz CD-1020	334		1 bit • optical out • rem • 42,8,31cm • Slim Series, motorised cover	
Yamaha CDX-880	339	141	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,10,29cm • UK specified components	
AMC CD6	349	124	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • Based on Rotel's RCD-965BX, but has a raunchier, beefier but less transparent sound.	REC'D
Harman-Kardon HD7425	349	141	multibit • electrical out • rem • 45,10,33cm	
Onkyo DX750	350	141	1 bit • optical out • rem • 46,11,31cm	B'BUY
Rotel RCD-970BX	375		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,8,30cm	
Rotel RCD-965BX D	375	141	bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,10,32cm • Discrete output	
Kenwood DP-7060	380	141	1 bit • optical out • rem • 44,12,31cm • D.R.I.V.E.	REC'D
Audio Innovations Alto	399		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43,8,30cm • Dual diff DAC	
Aura CD100	400		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43,6,28cm • Chrome finish, £50 extra	
NAD 517	400		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,108,40cm • 5-disc carousel player	
Pioneer PD-S904	400		1 bit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,14,29cm • S-Advanced Legato Link	
Sony CDP-XA2ES	400		optical out • rem • 43,13,35cm • Motorised volume	
Rotel RCD-965BX LED	425		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 44,10,32cm • Discrete & slit foil caps	
Audio Innova Alto Chrome	449		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43,8,30cm • Dual diff DAC	
Harman-Kardon HD7525	449		multibit • electrical out • rem • 45,10,33cm	
Pioneer PD-DM802	450		1 bit • rem • 42,14,31cm • Dual magazine 12-disc	
Technics SL-PS840	450		mash • optical out • rem • 43,13,34cm • Advanced MASH converter	
Arcam Alpha 5 Plus	450	139	multibit • electrical out • rem • 43,8,27cm • Upgradable DAC, display off	
Pioneer PD-S901	499		1 bit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,13,33cm • SPM, Legato Link, Twin DAC	
Aiwa DX-C100M	500		1 bit • optical out • rem • 100+1 disc autochanger	
Nakamichi MB3s	500		multibit • rem • 43,9,38cm • 6+1 Music Bank, 18 x 8 o/s	
Orelle CD-100	500		multibit • electrical out • rem • 44,10,28cm • DC coupled	
Pioneer PD-IM3	500		1 bit • rem • 42,18,35cm • Triple magazine, 18-disc	
Harman-Kardon HD7625	549		multibit • electrical out • rem • 45,10,33cm	
Luxman D-373	550		multibit • optical out • rem • 44,11,35cm • System bus remote	
Micromega Stage 1	550		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43,28,88cm • Upgradable	
Musical Fidelity E600	599		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,12,35cm • Balanced XLR output	
Teac VRDS-7	599		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 45,15,34cm • Twin BS, VRDS mech	
Arcam Alpha 6	600		electrical out • rem • 43,8,27cm • Upgradable from 5/5 Plus	
Kenwood DP-J2070	600		1 bit • rem • 44,19,38cm • 100 disc autochanger	
Marantz CD-72 Mk II	600		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,13,30cm • DAC7	
Pioneer PD-F100	600		1 bit • rem • 42,19,40cm • 100 disc, Legato Link	
Micromega Stage 2	700		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43,28,88cm • Upgradable	
Nakamichi MB2s	700		multibit • electrical out • rem • 43,9,38cm • 6+1 Music Bank, 18 x 8 o/s	
Teac VRDS-10	770	119	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 45,15,34cm • <i>A basic analogue stage compromises performance. Lacks bass energy.</i>	
Linn Mimik	798		delta sigma • electrical out • rem • 32,8,33cm • BNC digital	
Harman-Kardon HD7725	799	124	multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 45,10,33cm • This flagship implementation of RLS sounds impressively bold and dynamic.	REC'D
Arcam Delta 270	800	124	hybrid • 2 electrical out • rem • 43,9,28cm • <i>Dry, tightly-focussed sound will either beguile or aggravate, depending on taste!</i>	
JVC XL-MC100	800		1 bit • rem • 36,37,38cm • 100 disc player	
Sony CDP-CX100	800		1 bit • optical out • 43,13,38cm • 100 disc autochanger	
Thule CD100	849		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • Balanced out, Crystal chipset	
Teac VRDS-10SE	850		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 45,15,34cm • Imp. mechanism & chassis	
Meridian 506	875		delta sigma • electrical out • optical out • rem • 33,9,34cm • Recently improved sound	
Quad 67	875	124	delta sigma • electrical out • rem • 33,8,26cm • Powerful, fluid and captivating sound reminiscent of Meridian's 206.	B'BUY
DPA Renaissance	895		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 40,28,8cm • DPA DP16 DAC	
Micromega Stage 3	900		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 43,28,88cm • Upgradable	
Mission DAD7	900	145	multibit • electrical out • rem • 22,8,36cm	
Nakamichi MB1s	900		multibit • electrical out • rem • 43,9,27cm • 6+1 Music Bank, 20 x 8 o/s	
Naim CD3	949		multibit • rem • 43,56,30cm • 1 box	
AVI S2000 MCII	999	119	bitstream • 31,25,9cm • <i>A stylish, midi-width player with an exceptionally refined and comfortable sound. Lacks passion.</i>	
Onix CD33	999		bitstream • 43,8,33cm • DAC7	
Technics SL-P2000	1,000		mash • optical out • rem • 45,13,33cm • THCB base, R-Core transformer	
Sentec Diana	1,100		multibit • electrical out • optical out • 12,5,23cm • 20 bit	
AVI S2000MC	1,149		multibit • electrical out • rem • 31,25,9cm • 20 bit Burr Brown DACs	
Marantz CD-10	1,200		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 46,14,36cm • Twin DAC-7, heavy build	
Audiomeca Kreatura	1,299		multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 25,14,39cm	
Teac VRDS-20	1,299		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 50,15,34cm • Twin DAC7, balanced output	
Meridian 606	1,350		1 bit	
Marantz CD-16	1,400		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 25,29,13cm • Twin DAC-7	
Audiomeca Kreatur SE	1,450	141	multibit • electrical out • rem • 25,14,39cm • Trichord clocked	
Meridian 508	1,475	140	delta sigma • electrical out • optical out • 33,9,34cm	REC'D
Roksan ATT-DP2P MkII	1,495		delta sigma • electrical out • rem • 46,12,35cm • Player, four level isolation	

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

Linn Karik	1,497	144	delta sigma • electrical out • optical out • rem • 32,8,33cm • Based on early Linn transport, the Karik is dry but very positive, detailed and engraving.	
Musical Fidelity FCD	1,499		bitstream • 2 electrical out • optical out • rem • 49,12,33cm • XLR balanced out, tube o/p	
Mission Disc/Dacmaster	1,900		multibit • electrical out • rem • 22,8,36cm • Two box, inc Dacmaster DAC	
Naim CD2	1,997		multibit • rem • 43,56,30cm • One box	
NVA T.E.S.	2,000		bitstream • electrical out • rem	
McIntosh MCD7008	2,195		multibit • electrical out • rem • 45,14,45cm • Seven disc multiplayer	
Pioneer PD-95	2,500		1 bit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,16,34cm • Balanced output, Legato, SPM	
Teac X-1	2,500		multibit • rem • 46,14,40cm • Balanced out, 4x20bit	
McIntosh MCD7009	2,635		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 45,14,38cm • VRDS CD player	
YBA 2	2,999		multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 43,10,33cm • Outboard power supply	
Marantz CD-15	3,000		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 46,14,36cm • Twin Star Mark DAC-7	
NVA T.T.S.	3,200		bitstream • electrical out • rem	
Naim CDS	3,642		multibit • rem • 43,56,30cm • Two box	
Micro-Seiki CD-M2DC	3,695		multibit • electrical out • rem	
Marantz CD-23	4,000		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 25,29,13cm • CDM-9/DAC-7 DAC	
Luxman D500XS	4,500		multibit • optical out • rem • 44,12,39cm • Top loading	
Micro-Seiki CDM2000X	4,689		multibit • electrical out • rem	
Krell CD-DSP Mk II	5,000		rem • 42,13,28cm • Digital inputs facility	
Krell CD DSPII 5000	5,000		multibit • 2 electrical out • rem • 42,13,28cm • Has digital in, balanced out	
Micromega Trio	6,450		bitstream • electrical out • rem • 34,48,31cm • AES/Toslink digital output	
Wadia 16	7,395		multibit • Glass, plastic, BNC & AES/EBU	
Jadis JS-1	8,068		multibit	
Krell KSP20i	9,950		electrical out • rem • Balanced out, top loader	
Krell KPS20i	9,990		electrical out • rem • Balanced out, Bitstream	

CD TRANSPORTS

Teac VRDS-T1	499	144	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,15,33cm • Superb quality engineering is mated to tidy and composed sound (tested with D-T1).	
DPA Enlightenment	635		transport • rem • 40,28,8cm • Clock locks to DPA DACs	
Audio Alchemy DDS III	700		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • Designed primarily as transport, has analogue output	
Micromega Drive 1	700		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 43,28,88cm • Upgradable, AES/EBU out	
Thule TR200	749		transport • rem • Balanced AES/EBU input	
Arcam Delta 250	750	130	transport • rem • 43,9,28cm • Arcam's best effort yet is a new design based on Philips CDM9 transport. Specification includes Sync Lock facility.	REC'D
Pink Triangle Cardinal	795	144	transport • 46,8,36cm • Soud quality is warm and communicative, but over-polished compared to PT Ordinal (tested with DaCapo and DC PSU).	
Meridian 200	895	96	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 32,32,10cm • Light, fresh and very bubbly sound that is natural, engaging and unfatiguing.	REC'D
Teac P-700	899	120	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 23,14,40cm • Tested with D-700, low resolution sound is warm, bubbly and entertaining.	B'BUY
Audiomeca Damnation	950		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 29,10,32cm	
Micromega Drive 2	1,000		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 43,28,88cm • Upgradable, AES/EBU out	
Meridian 500	1,095	133	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 32,33,9cm • Used with the 563 DAC, the combination is thin, brash and uncomfortable.	
Audiomeca Damnation SE	1,100		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 29,10,32cm • Trichord clocked	
Audiomeca Kreatura	1,199		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 25,14,39cm • Heavily modified CDM	
Micromega T-Drive	1,200		transport • electrical out • rem • 22,28,88cm • Tray loading, AES/EBU out	
Audiomeca Kreatura SE	1,250		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 25,14,39cm • Trichord clocked	
Roksan ATT-DP2 MkII	1,295		transport • electrical out • rem • 46,12,35cm • AT&T optical, AES/EBU optional	
Audiolab 8000CDM	1,300		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 45,8,36cm • Precision master clock	
Micromega Duo CD3.1	1,500		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 34,9,31cm • Top loading, AES/EBU out	
Meridian 602	1,750	120	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 32,33,10cm • With matching 606 DAC, Meridian's top player sounds distinctive and elegant.	REC'D
Counterpoint DA-11.5E	1,895	130	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • This model delivers a remarkably vivid and natural sound.	REC'D
Theta Data Basic	1,997	130	transport • electrical out • rem • 42,8,34cm • Includes a budget version of Teac's VRDS mechanism in a fancy case: overpriced.	
Audiomeca Mephisto	2,100	144	transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 43,15,33cm • Tested with Trichord Pulsar; the duo provides a highly composed and tactile sound.	REC'D
PS Audio Lambda tr	2,250	133	transport • electrical out • rem • 38,8,34cm • With Ultralink Two, sound positively sparkles with colour and resonant detail.	REC'D
Micromega Duo CD2.1	2,750		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 34,9,31cm • Top loading, AES/EBU out	
Wadia 8	3,195	130	transport • rem • 35,16,41cm • Includes a budget version of Teac's VRDS mechanism in a fancy case; just too expensive for the performance on offer.	
Theta Data II NTSC	3,290		transport • electrical out • rem • 42,12,40cm • AT&T, AES/EBU option	
Theta Data II PAL	3,490		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,12,40cm • AT&T, AES/EBU balanced in	
ATD Drive 1	3,499		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,9,34cm • Top load, 2-box acrylic	
Teac P-2S	4,299	130	transport • rem • 23,14,49cm • The latest version of Teac's luxury P-2 transport sounds as over-engineered as it looks.	
Wadia 20	4,370		transport • Glass, plastic, BNC, AES/EBU	
Krell MD-20	4,999		transport • rem • 42,13,28cm • Top load, AT&T optical out	
Krell MD-10	7,990		transport • 2 electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,13,28cm	
Jadis JCDT	8,000		transport • rem • Top load	
Krell KPS 20T	8,490		transport • electrical out • optical out • rem • AT&T, AES/EBU balanced in	
Krell DT-10	9,090		transport • 2 electrical out • optical out • rem • 42,13,28cm • Front loader	
Wadia 7	9,995		transport • rem • 35,16,46cm	

DACs

QED Positron	89		Upgrade PSU for Digit	
QED Digit Plus	139	113	bitstream • electrical out • Bearing in mind its expensive but very forgiving performance, the Digit is almost embarrassingly cheap.	B'BUY
Cambridge DACMagic 1	150	136	hybrid • Ridiculously under-priced, this DAC is best suited to high end transports.	REC'D
Audio Alc DAC-in-the-Box	230	127	multibit • electrical out • This giveaway DAC may still rescue the oldest of players from obsolescence.	REC'D
Counterpoint AD20	255		multibit • DACCard for DA-10E	
QED Digit Reference	299	136	bitstream • No great advance on the basic QED Digit yet its enthusiastic sound is more than competitive at the price.	REC'D
Mission DAC5	300	113	bitstream • 7,11,29cm • Another modest DAC, but one capable of a lean but clean and detailed sound that's typical of the DAC7 breed.	REC'D
NVA Dacon	320		bitstream • electrical out	
Micromega Microdac	349	113	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 22,5,15cm • Modest but entertaining performer, the Microdac is brilliant with Arcam's D170.3 transport.	
Counterpoint CS18	395		multibit • DACCard for DA-10E	
Audio Alchemy DDev1.1	399		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • Upgradable external PSU	
Orelle DA-188	449		multibit • 22,7,23cm • DC coupled, optical & coax in	
Teac D-T1	450	144	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 44,10,33cm • Teamed with VRDS-T1 for test, this superb quality unit is tidy and composed.	
Arcam Black Box 50	480	127	hybrid • electrical out • optical out • 43,7,28cm • Measured and sophisticated sound from a DAC that leaves plenty in reserve for future upgrades.	B'BUY
EMF Audio Crystal	500		bitstream	
Woodside DAC2	509	101	multibit • electrical out • optical out • Sharp, dynamic sound is captivating for its lack of grain and 'tizz'.	REC'D
AVI S2000MD	549	136	multibit • 31,25,9cm • Despite using a very different chipset, the S2000MD sounds as civilised and refined as AVI's other digital separates.	
Roksan ATT-DA2	549		delta sigma • 22,10,33cm • DAC 4 inputs, optional AT&T	
DPA Renaissance	550		bitstream • 20,28,8cm • Unique DPA DX16 DAC	
Teac D-700	599	120	multibit • electrical out • optical out • 23,14,40cm • With P-700, the D-700 may lack the resolution, but is bubbly and entertaining.	B'BUY
Audio Note DAC1	600	127	multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • Oddball DAC with manual deemphasis switch. Needs a high preamp input impedance or bass will suffer.	
Micromega Duo BS2	650	101	bitstream • 8,28,9cm • Has a tendency to sound light, airy and 'fast' but it can also become a little hard or fatiguing with some digital outputs.	
Counterpoint BB69	655		multibit • DACCard for DA-10E	
PS Audio DigiLink II	688		multibit • 38,8,16cm	
Perception DAC	695		multibit	
Audio Alchemy DDev3.0	699		multibit • Upgradable external PSU	
Sonic Frontiers Transdac	699		multibit • 24,5,17cm	
Sonic Ftrs Ultra Jitter Bug	699		multibit • 24,5,17cm • Jitter reduction interface	
Micromega DAC	700		bitstream • 43,28,88cm • AES/EBU input	
Audiomeca Elixir	745		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 25,39,9cm	
Arcam Black Box 500	750	136	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • rem • 43,9,28cm • Sophisticated unit with Sync Lock and discrete DAC. Early samples sounded grubby and restrained.	

PRODUCT

£ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

Meridian 563	750	127	delta sigma • 3 electrical out • optical out • 33,9,34cm • <i>Warmer than the earlier 200-series, the 563 flies with a top rate transport.</i>	REC'D
DPA Enlightenment	795		multibit • 20,28,8cm • Unique DPA DX32 DAC	
Audiolab 8000DAC	800	127	bitstream • 45,8,36cm • <i>Just as smooth and refined as its predecessor yet, sadly, still manages to obscure the passion or fire of music.</i>	
Micromega 17DAC	800		bitstream • 22,28,88cm • Four inputs	
Pink Triangle Ordinal	837	136	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 23,8,35cm • <i>The cheapest dual-differential DAC7 converter available offers top-flight sound quality.</i>	B'BUY
Thule DAC-200	849	87	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • <i>A good first effort from Thule, even though its fizzy and over-eager sound could do with some house-training.</i>	
Woodside DAC1	909	87	multibit • electrical out • optical out • <i>Fine but slightly dated and costly package in performance terms — but flexible, musical and well built.</i>	
Monrio 18B	925		multibit • electrical out • optical out • 14,8,36cm • Inc outboard PSU	
Sentec Diana	993		multibit • electrical out • optical out	
Linn Numerik	1,075	144	multibit • 32,8,33cm • <i>A new 20 bit DAC and revised Karik transport have cleaned up, but sounds a tad dry and humourless.</i>	
PS Audio SuperLink 2	1,230		multibit • 38,8,16cm	
Counterpoint UA20	1,295		multibit • DACCard for DA-10E	
Counterpoint DA-11E	1,495	144	electrical out • optical out • rem • 49,6,27cm • <i>(Tested with DA-11E). Harsh and fatiguing sound.</i>	
Micromega Duo Pro 2	1,500		bitstream • 34,48,31cm • AES input	
Wadia 12	1,530		multibit • electrical out • optical out • Balanced and AT&T input	
Pink Triangle DaCapo	1,536	144	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 46,8,35cm • <i>With Cardinal and DC PSU, the DaCapo is best with its 22bit option. It is warm but over-polished.</i>	
Pink Triangle DC Supply	1,590	144	46,8,35cm • Massive battery PSU for DaCapo	
Audio Note DAC3	1,650		multibit • rem	
Theta Pro-Prime II	1,800		bitstream • electrical out • 42,5,23cm	
Counterpoint DA-10E	1,895	144	electrical out • optical out • rem • Interchangeable DACs, optional	
Theta Probasic II	2,299		multibit • 42,5,29cm	
Sonic Frontiers SFD-1/2	2,495		multibit • 48,10,33cm • HDCD compatible, tune output	
Teac D-2	2,499	133	multibit • 23,14,49cm • <i>Assessed with the P-2s, Teac's VRDS statement sounds thin and uninvolving. A disappointment.</i>	
PS Audio UltraLink 2	2,650	133	multibit • 38,6,20cm • <i>With Lambda transport, the sound positively sparkles with colour and resonant detail.</i>	REC'D
LFD DAC3	2,699		multibit • 48,7,37cm • Optional balanced output	
DPA PDM256	2,995	133	bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 20,28,8cm • <i>Highly advanced, with adjustable dither, but the different settings only leads to compromise.</i>	
Krell Studio 2	3,198		multibit • 42,13,27cm • AT&T in	
Wadia 15	3,790		multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 35,9,41cm • Software upgradable	
Audio Research DAC2	3,940		multibit • 48,14,26cm • 20bit, 8x o/s	
Mark Levinson No 36	3,995		multibit • electrical out • 20 bit, FIFO input buffer	
Krell Studio	4,450		multibit • 42,6,32cm • AT&T in	
PS Audio Ref Link	4,550		multibit • 38,8,36cm • AT&T input	
Wadia 64.4	4,750		multibit • electrical out • optical out • 35,8,28cm • Balanced output	
Sonic Frontiers SFD-2/2	5,295		multibit • 48,10,33cm • HDCD compatible, tune output	
Theta Pro Gen III	5,690		multibit • 42,8,34cm • AT&T input option	
DPA PDM10924	5,995		bitstream • electrical out • optical out • 40,30,8cm • Unique DPA DX128 DAC	
Theta Pro Gen V	8,500		multibit • electrical out • 42,8,34cm	
Wadia 9	12,790		multibit • electrical out • optical out • rem • 44,9,36cm • Digital volume, separate PSU	
Krell Reference 64	14,900		multibit • 42,13,39cm • AT&T in	



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 tapes. 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. In the last year or so it has begun to carve itself a niche at the top end of the market, replacing reel to reel tape recorders as the audiophile's tape-based medium. CD-R is just coming into its own with the release of Pioneer's PD-Ros.

Key

- MiniDisc, Digital Audio Tape, Digital Compact Cassettetype of recording medium
- electrical, optical indigital input(s)
- electrical, optical outdigital output(s)
- bitstream, multibit etc.....DAC type

PRODUCT

£ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

DIGITAL RECORDERS				
Nakamichi 10007	POA		Digital Audio Tape • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out	
Philips DCC300	179		Digital Compact Cassette • electrical in • 36,11,30cm	
Philips DCC600	199	123	Digital Compact Cassette • electrical in • 44,12,30cm • <i>Simplified circuit and mechanism, but the Philips badly needs a DA converter transplant.</i>	
Philips DCC951	300		Digital Compact Cassette • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • multibit • Turbodriven mech, 18 bit	
Sharp MD-M11E	450		MiniDisc • 8,3,11cm • Recorder, title generator	
Pioneer D-05	800		Digital Audio Tape • 96kHz sampling	
Sony MBS501	800		MiniDisc • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out • bitstream • 43,9,35cm • Sample rate converter	
Sony DTC80ES	800		Digital Audio Tape • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out • bitstream • 43,11,55cm • SBM	
JVC XM-D1BK	900		MiniDisc • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out • bitstream • 18,5,13cm • Minidisc record and player	
Pioneer D-07	1,150		Digital Audio Tape • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out • 44,14,38cm • 96kHz record, Legato Link	
Teac R-9	1,200		Digital Audio Tape • electrical in • optical in • electrical out • optical out • bitstream • 45,16,36cm • Based on TASCAM technology	
Meridian CDR	4,500		CD-R • electrical in • optical in • electrical out	



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 include particle board, hardwood, glass and all manner of steel tube and section. The majority are built for sound quality first, aesthetics second, but there are attractive examples.

Speakers stands come in a variety of sizes and styles to suit different models. Use dealer or manufacturer recommendations to narrow down the choice of types, but as a general rule the you want the tweeter at ear height.

Key to stands & supports

- shelf pitchgap between shelves
- 60, 39, 48cmsize width, depth, height in cm
- MDFmedium density fibreboard
- pillar/framemulti leg stand
- columnsingle leg stand

PRODUCT

£ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

EQUIPMENT SUPPORTS		
Ixos 800	35	Equipment support • single shelf • Mini/midi pedestal
Deadrock 701	40	Equipment support • Single module
Ixos 701	40	Equipment support • single module

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ONIX OA21S	£430.00	£329.95	Tannoy D500	£1595	£1199
ONIX OA24 + SOAP2 +			Heybrook Heystak	£499.95	£359.95
OA601 Power Amp	£1400	£999.95	Epos ESII	£445.00	£369.95
Nakamichi IA4S	£199.95	£139.95	RECORD DECKS:		
Kinshaw Overture	£499.95	£379.95	Roksan TMS Piano Black		
Densen "The Beat"	£599.95	£529.95	+ Naim Aro Arm	£3450	£1895
CD PLAYERS:			Linn LP12, Akito Arm,		
Onix CD33	£999.95	£759.95	ATOC7 Cartridge		
Roksan Attessa II	£1495	£959.95	(Second Hand)		£579.95
Naim CDI	£1997	£1595	A. V. AMPLIFIERS		
TEAC T1 Transport	£499.95	£429.95	Arcam Xeta	£999.95	£799.00
Musical Fidelity E600	£599.95	£459.95	Yamaha DSPA780	£630.00	£529.95
DAC CONVERTERS:			Denon AVC1530	£480.00	£449.00
Pink Triangle D'Capo 18bit	£1537.00	£1099	QUAD:		
Pink Triangle Ordinal 18bit	£837.00	£629.95	34/FM4/306. 66/66FM/67CD		
Kinshaw Perception	£825.00	£569.95	606		

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PRODUCT	£	ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
JPW Add-on	50	Equipment support • Add-on shelves (x2)	
Ixos 711	60	Equipment support • 1 shelf • Toughened glass shelf	
Sound Organisation Z022	60	Equipment support • Wall mountable • 50w,47dcm • Removable shelf	
Ixos 802	70	Equipment support • 2 shelf • Mini component, 215mm spacing	
Sound Organisation Z230	70	Equipment support • 3 shelf • 50,40,43cm • Satin finish, self assembly	
Sound Organisation Z021	75	Equipment support • 2 shelf • 50,40,36cm	
JPW 3 tier	80	Equipment support • 3 shelf rack	
Ixos 803	90	Equipment support • 3 shelf • Mini component, 125mm spacing	
Sound Organisation Z030	95	Equipment support • 3 shelf • 50,40,43cm	
Alphason R24/24	100	Equipment support • 3 shelf, MDF • 60,39,48cm	
Alphason R17/17	100	Equipment support • 3 shelf, MDF • 60,39,34cm	
Alphason R12/12	100	Equipment support • 3 shelf, MDF • 60,39,24cm	
Ixos 802P	100	Equipment support • 2 shelf • mini - with pedestal/CD store	
Ixos 703	100	Equipment support • 3-shelf	
JPW 5 tier	100	Equipment support • 5 shelf rack	
Ixos 803P	110	Equipment support • 3 shelf • mini - with pedestal/CD store	
Ixos 804	110	Equipment support • 4 shelf • Mini component, 125mm spacing	
Sound Organisation Z060	115	Equipment support • 4 shelf • 50,40,62cm	
Alphason TV24/17	120	TV base module • 3 shelves, MDF • 67,39,41cm	
DNM DOMOWS	125	Turntable wall stand • Lightweight • 37 deepcm	
DNM DOMOPS	125	Turntable support • Lightweight • 37,50,46cm	
Mana Acs Sound Frame	125	Equipment supports • 1 shelf • <i>Used singly (glass) for equipment, or in pairs for speakers</i>	REC'D
Sound Organisation Z550	125	Equipment support • 5 shelf • 50,40,77cm • Satin finish, self assembly	
Alphason GR24/24	130	Equipment support • 3 glass shelves • 60,39,48cm	
Alphason GR17/17	130	Equipment support • 3 glass shelves • 60,39,34cm	
Alphason GR12/12	130	Equipment support • 3 glass shelves • 60,39,24cm	
Ixos 713	130	Equipment support • 3 shelf • Toughened glass shelf	
Sound Organisation Z038	130	Equipment support • 5 shelf • 50,40,84cm	
Ixos 804P	140	Equipment support • 4 shelf • mini - with pedestal/CD store	
Ixos 704	140	Equipment support	
Alphason TV24/175	150	TV base module • 3 shelves, MDF • 67,39,34cm • Swivel top	
Mana Acs Mini Table	150	Equipment support • Glass shelf	
Alphason VR24/24	160	Equipment support • 3 shelves, rosewood • 60,39,48cm	
Alphason VR17/17	160	Equipment support • 3 shelves, rosewood • 60,39,34cm	
Alphason VR12/12	160	Equipment support • 3 shelves, rosewood • 60,39,34cm	
Ixos 705	170	Equipment support • 5 shelf	
Soundstyle X300	170	Equipment support • 4 legs • 59,38,51cm • Glass shelves	
Ixos 714	190	Equipment support • 4 shelf • Toughened glass shelves	
Alphason AV24/17	200	AV base module • 5 shelves, MDF • 127,39,94cm • 'L' shaped	
Mana Acs Sound Stage	200	Upgrade unit • <i>Upgrades amp stand or Reference table</i>	
Soundstyle X305	200	Equipment support • 3 shelf • 77,44,51cm • Glass shelves	
Soundstyle X053	200	Equipment support • 4 shelf • 64cm • 3 pillar, 16.9cm shelf pitch	
Soundstyle X050	200	Equipment support • 4 shelf • 64cm • 3 pillar, 12.8cm shelf pitch	
Soundstyle X100	210	Equipment support • 4 glass shelves • 58,49,64cm • 16.9cm shelf pitch	
Alphason AV24/17S	230	AV base module • 6 shelf, MDF • 127,39,94cm • Swivel base for TV	
Ixos 715	230	Equipment support • 5 shelf • Toughened glass shelves	
Soundstyle X058	230	Equipment support • 5 shelf • 78cm • 3 pillar, 15.3cm shelf pitch.	
Mana Acs Sound Table	235	Equipment support	
Soundstyle X310	240	Equipment support • 3 shelves • 103,44,51cm • Glass shelves	
Soundstyle X120	240	Equipment support • 6 glass shelves • 59,49,109cm • 16.9cm shelf pitch	
Soundstyle X105	240	Equipment support • 5 glass shelves • 59,49,84cm • 16.9cm shelf pitch	
Mana Acs 2 Tier Amp std	325	Equipment supports • 2 shelves • <i>Infinitely upgradable</i>	
Mana Acs Reference Table	350	Equipment support	B'BUY
Mana Acs 3 Tier Amp std	450	Equipment supports • 3 shelves • <i>Infinitely upgradable</i>	
Mana Acs 4 Tier Amp std	500	Equipment supports • 4 shelves • <i>Infinitely upgradable</i>	
Mana Acs 5 Tier Amp std	600	140 Equipment supports • 5 shelves • <i>Infinitely upgradable. Gets the whole system organised</i>	B'BUY
Mana Acs 6 Tier Amp std	700	Equipment supports • 6 shelves • <i>Infinitely upgradable. King among equipment stands</i>	

SPEAKER STANDS			
JPW WB	30	speaker supports • wall brackets	
Alphason NC1-60	40	speaker stands • pillar type • 23w,60hcm • Double column, steel	
Alphason NC1-50	40	speaker stands • pillar type • 23w,50hcm • steel	
Alphason NC1-40	40	speaker stands • pillar type • 23w,40hcm • steel	
Sound Organisation Z023	42	speaker wall bracket	
JPW MS2	45	speaker stands • 3 leg • 39,29,45cm • for Sonata	
Ixos 903	50	speaker stands • single column • 60cm	
Ixos 902	50	speaker stands • single column • 47cm	
Ixos 901	50	speaker stands • single column • 39cm	
Sound Organisation Z026	50	speaker stands • high - tripod base • 60cm	
Sound Organisation Z027	50	speaker stands • mid - tripod base • 45cm	
Sound Organisation Z037	50	speaker stands • low - tripod base • 30cm	
JPW MS3	55	speaker stands • 3 leg • 37,30,61cm • For Minim	
Alphason NC11-40	70	speaker stands • pillar type • 23w,40hcm • Double column, steel	
Alphason NC11-50	70	speaker stands • pillar type • 23w,50hcm • Double column, steel	
Alphason NC11-60	70	speaker stands • pillar type • 23w,60hcm • Double column, steel	
Sound Organisation Z040	70	speaker stands • frame type • 45cm • Fixed top spikes	
Sound Organisation Z055	72	speaker stands • frame type • 60cm • Fixed top spikes	
Sound Organisation Z010	76	speaker stands • pillar type • 25cm	
Sound Organisation Z018	78	speaker stands • pillar type • 46cm	
JPW MS1	80	speaker stands • 4-leg • 39,32,46cm • For AP2, AP3, P1	
Sound Organisation Z024	80	speaker stands • pillar type • 61cm	
Alphason Titan S-50	100	speaker stands • pillar type • 29w,50hcm • cast iron	
Alphason Titan S-40	100	speaker stands • pillar type • 29w,40hcm • cast iron	
Soundstyle X024	100	speaker stands • 61cm	
Soundstyle X020	100	speaker stands • 48cm	
Soundstyle X016	100	speaker stands • 41cm	
Soundstyle X012	100	speaker stands • 31cm	
Sound Organisation Z128	108	speaker stands • column type • 45cm • Adjustable top/bottom spikes	
Sound Organisation Z129	110	speaker stands • pillar type • 61cm • Adjustable top/bottom spikes	
Alphason Titan L-40	130	speaker stands • pillar type • 27w,40hcm • cast iron	
Alphason Titan L-50	130	speaker stands • pillar type • 29w,50hcm • cast iron	
Alphason Titan S-60	130	speaker stands • pillar type • 29w,60hcm • cast iron	
JPW HS2	130	speaker stands • for Ruby 2 • 26,29,45cm	
JPW HS1	130	speaker stands • for Ruby 1 • 23,25,58cm	



Headphones

There are a variety of different approaches to headphone design. Among the more expensive models, electrostatic drivers are used in open-backed phones. The more down-to-earth 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-aural (in-ear) rest inside the ear itself, *à la* personal stereos.

Key

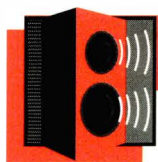
open back, sealed, in-ear headphone type
 275g weight in grams
 16 Ohm impedance

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

HEADPHONES		
Maxell EB-425	10	in-ear model • 13g • 32 Ohm • Stereo ear buds, winder case
Maxell HP-700	10	open back • 56g • 22 Ohm • Adjustable locking headband
Ross RMH-310TV	10	open back • 51g • 8 Ohm • For video and TV
Ross RIH-550	10	in-ear model • 5g • 16 Ohm • Inner ear, with volume control
Sennheiser HD26	10	open back • 45g • 32 Ohm • Mini, 1.2m lead, dual plug
Sony MDR-009	10	open back • 40g • 2m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
Audio Technica ATH-S22	11	open back • 5g • 16 Ohm • Inner ear
Sony MDR-W07L	11	in-ear model • 13g • 1m mini plug
Ross RIH-460CD	12	in-ear model • 16g • 16 Ohm • Vertical inner ear, volume pot
Sony MDR-A009	12	open back
Sony MDR-E515V	12	in-ear model • 5g • 1m lead, mini plug
Aiwa HP-X201	13	sealed • 230g • Dual plug
Aiwa HP-A360	13	open back • 65g • 40 Ohm • Banded, bass resonator ducts
Maxell HP-500	13	45g • 32 Ohm • 2.7m lead, 6.3/3.5mm fit
Ross RDH-200CD	13	sealed • 150g • 8 Ohm • Closed back
Sennheiser HD36	13	open back • 62g • 32 Ohm • Mini, 1.2m lead, dual plug
Sony MDR-V50	13	sealed
Audio Technica ATH-P3	15	open back • 90g • 22 Ohm • 'Omniphones'
Beyer DT111 Alpha	15	open back • 30g • 32 Ohm • Miniature
JVC HA-D410	15	sealed • 90g • 32 Ohm • 2m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
Kenwood KH-535	15	in-ear model • 32 Ohm • 3.5mm plug
Maxell HP-1000	15	open back • 95g • 32 Ohm • 2.7m lead, digital ready
Ross RDH-100CD	15	sealed • 144g • 8 Ohm • CD headphone
Sennheiser HD56	15	open back • 72g • 32 Ohm • Mini, 1.2m lead, dual plug
Sony MDR-E525	15	in-ear model • 5g • 1m lead, mini plug
Sony MDR-24	15	open back • 7m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
Vivanco SR120	15	sealed • 32g • 32 Ohm • Large earcups
Audio Technica ATH-S44	16	open back • 5g • 16 Ohm • Inner ear
Pioneer SE-5	16	open back • 60g • 30 Ohm • 2m OFC cable
Sony MDR-25	16	open back
Sony MDR-W12L	16	in-ear model • 1.2m mini plug
Ross RDH-300CD	17	133 sealed • 155g • 8 Ohm • <i>In-lead controls are the highlights of this shoddy, sometimes aggressive sounding design.</i>
Sony MDR-008TV	17	open back • 5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
JVC HA-CD88	18	open back • 38g • 32 Ohm
Sony MDR-E535	18	in-ear model • 5g • 1.2m lead, mini plug
Sony MDR-44	18	open back • 7m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
Sony MDR-009TV	19	open back • 5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
Vivanco SR250	19	sealed • Xtra bass feature
Aiwa HP-X301	20	sealed • 230g • 3m lead, dual plug
Audio Technica ATH-P1/TV	20	open back • 55g • 25 Ohm • 'Omniphones', vol control
Audio Technica ATH-P5	20	open back • 70g • 40 Ohm • 'Omniphones'
Beyer DT111 Beta	20	open back • 30g • 16 Ohm • Neodymium magnet
JVC HA-D525	20	sealed
JVC HA-F65	20	in-ear model • 32 Ohm • In-ear
Kenwood KH-757	20	in-ear model • 32 Ohm • 3.5mm plug
Kenwood KH-1000	20	121 open back • 30g • 32 Ohm • <i>First step up from a true mini: a near miniature which is cheap, comfortable and inoffensive</i>
Maxell HP-2000	20	open back • 140g • 32 Ohm • Volume control digital ready
Pioneer SE-15	20	open back • 65g • 30 Ohm • 2m OFC cable
Sony MDR-35	20	open back
Sony MDR-CD30	20	sealed • 2m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
Sony MDR-E747MP	20	in-ear model • 6g • 1.2m lead, mini plug
Sony MDR-CD50	20	sealed • 180g • 24 Ohm • 2m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
Sony MDR-5747	20	in-ear model • 6g • 1.2m lead, mini plug
Vivanco SR150	20	sealed • 32g • 32 Ohm • In-line volume control
Ross RDH-400CD	22	sealed • 186g • 8 Ohm • Digital headphone
Sony MDR-P1TV	22	sealed • 5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug
Sony MDR-A22L	22	in-ear model • 1.2m mini plug
AKG K2	23	open back • 70g • 200 Ohm • Mini
Pioneer SE-32	23	open back • 94g • 40 Ohm • 2.5 metre OFC cable
Aiwa HP-VX303	25	sealed • 230g • In-line controls, dual plugs
AKG K33	25	open back • 90g • 50 Ohm
Beyer DT111 Gamma	25	open back • 32g • 16 Ohm • With volume control
JVC HA-D625	25	sealed
JVC HA-D610	25	sealed • 120g • 32 Ohm • 3m, 6.3/3.5m jacks
Kenwood KH-959	25	in-ear model • 32 Ohm • 3.5mm plug
Pioneer SE-52	25	open back • 104g • 40 Ohm • 2.5 metre OFC cable
Vivanco SR200	25	sealed • 32g • 32 Ohm • Titanium finish
Audio Technica ATH-M2A	28	sealed • 115g • 22 Ohm • Mid size
Sennheiser Vegas	28	open back • 118g • 32 Ohm • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm
Sennheiser Manhattan	28	open back • 118g • 32 Ohm • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm
Sony MDR-CD250EX	28	sealed • 3m, 3.5/6.3mm lead
Maxell HP-3000	30	133 120g • 32 Ohm • <i>Solid, smooth sounding supra-aural headphone but congested and undynamic. Includes in-lead controls.</i>
Pioneer SE-15V	30	open back • 65g • 30 Ohm • 5m OFC cable
Technics RP-HT77	30	sealed • 160g • 32 Ohm • 3m lead, OFC wire
Vivanco SR300	30	sealed • 32g • 32 Ohm • Single cable design
Beyer DT211	33	open back • 120g • 40 Ohm • Supra-aural
Pioneer SE-330D	35	sealed • 165g • 35 Ohm • 3m cable, bass boost duct
Pioneer SE-400D	37	133 sealed • 185g • 35 Ohm • <i>Acceptable, if unexciting all-rounder, this supra-aural phone has good long-term comfort levels.</i>

REC'D

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
Sennheiser HD60TV	38		open back • 118g • 32 Ohm • 6.8m lead (inc vol control)	
Aiwa HP-X705	40		sealed • 130g • Dual plug, 2m ext cable	
Kenwood KH-2020	40		sealed • 210g • 32 Ohm • 2.5m OFC lead	
Sennheiser HD445 II	40	121	open back • 125g • 52 Ohm • <i>Still the one by which others at the price are measured, though now slightly leaden sounding, with a cold treble</i>	B'BUY
Technics RP-HT300	40		sealed • Single sided cord	
Technics RP-HT86	40		sealed • 165g • 35 Ohm • 3m lead, XBS acoustic lead	
Vivanco SR606	40	133	open back • 225g • 32 Ohm • <i>Although slightly overblown at times, this model is easy on the ears and essentially enjoyable</i>	REC'D
AKG K44	42	99	open back • 90g • 50 Ohm • <i>Good quality personal oriented phone, could have a better sense of space but is musically quite communicative.</i>	
Audio Technica ATH-M4A	42		sealed • 139g • 28 Ohm • Mid size	
JVC HA-D727	43		sealed	
Sony MDR-CD450	45	133	sealed • 260g • 24 Ohm • <i>Fair acoustic isolation and comfortable construction, moderate sound.</i>	REC'D
AKG K135	46	63	open back • 160g • 150 Ohm • <i>The K135 doesn't live up to the usual AKG standards, though it does have the ability to convey rhythm well.</i>	
Pioneer SE-500D	48		sealed • 175g • 35 Ohm • 3m cable, dual bass horn	
Beyer DT311	49	133	open back • 124g • 40 Ohm • <i>Uncharacteristically tight, unrefined sound quality from this otherwise well engineered 'phone.</i>	
Sennheiser HD414 Classic	50		open back • 80g • 52 Ohm • <i>The original lives on!</i>	
Sennheiser HD455	50		open back • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
Sony MDR-IF210	50		infra-red cordless • 170g • Extra h/phone w/o transmitter	
Technics RP-HT400	50		sealed • Single sided cord	
Vivanco IR5700	50		Infra-red cordless	
Vivanco IR5000	50		Mono, infra red cordless	
Vivanco SR850	50		open back • Double bow design for comfort	
JVC HA-D710	55		sealed • 210g • 32 Ohm • 3m, 6.3/3.5m jacks	
Beyer DT331	59		open back • 210g • 40 Ohm • Circum-aural	
Pioneer SE-700D	60		sealed • 180g • 35 Ohm • 3m cable, dual bass horn	
Sony MDR-CD550	60	99	sealed • 270g • 45 Ohm • <i>Competent headphone creates remarkable space from a closed back design and sounds natural to boot.</i>	B'BUY
Technics RP-HT600	60		sealed • 3m lead, double headband	
JVC HA-D910	65	121	sealed • 220g • 32 Ohm • <i>Broadly acceptable if unexciting design with low level losses and some colourations.</i>	
Sennheiser HD465	65		open back • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
Beyer DT411	69	111	open back • 120g • 250 Ohm • <i>A reasonable but not very thrilling headphone that doesn't really offer enough at the price.</i>	
Kenwood KH-5000	70		sealed • 280g • 32 Ohm • 2.5m OFC lead	
Nakamichi SP7	70		open back • 150g • 45 Ohm	
Sennheiser 15.360/UK	70		sealed • 240g • Budget infra-red model	
Sony MDR-D33	70		sealed • 120g • 45 Ohm • 1.5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
Technics RP-HT700	70		sealed • 5m lead, double headband	
Vivanco IR6000	70		Stereo infra-red cordless	
Vivanco SR909	70		open back • 285g • 600 Ohm • Remote control lead, all plugs	
AKG K141	74		open back • 225g • 600 Ohm	
Jecklin Float Model 1	75	55	open back • 400g • 200 Ohm • <i>Whilst very unusual in appearance, the Floats give remarkable sound quality and openness at a reasonable price.</i>	B'BUY
Sennheiser HD475	75		open back • Selected drivers/diaphragm	
Audio Technica ATH-M7A	78		sealed • 210g • 40 Ohm • Mid size	
Sony MDR-IF210K	80		infra-red cordless • 170g • Seven metre range infra red	
AKG K240 Monitor	82	63	open back • 240g • 600 Ohm • <i>Something of a classic, these AKGs are very user-friendly in all respects; sonically on the warm side of normal.</i>	REC'D
Sennheiser HD25 SP	85		sealed • 115g • 85 Ohm • Monitoring headphone	
Beyer DT431	89		open back • 210g • 40 Ohm • Circum-aural	
Audio Technica ATH911	90		open back • 280g • 600 Ohm • Dynamic, full size	
Audio Tech ATH910PRO	90	55	sealed • 280g • 40 Ohm • <i>The closed back 910s are an improvement on the 909s, with a nice rhythmic quality rarely found with headphones.</i>	REC'D
Sony MDR-D55	90		sealed • 120g • 45 Ohm • 1.5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
Sony MDR-CD750	90	111	sealed • 290g • 45 Ohm • <i>Reasonably comfortable and eminently listenable, these Sonys have characteristically good bass power and relaxed HF.</i>	REC'D
Vivanco IR6500	90		Stereo infra-red with charger	
Beyer DT511	99		open back • 200g • 250 Ohm • Circum-aural	
Jecklin Float Model 2	99	63	open back • 400g • 200 Ohm • <i>Helmet shaped, but open sounding and comfortable in long term, despite lack of adjustment.</i>	REC'D
Sennheiser HD535	100		open back • 255g • 150 Ohm • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
Technics RP-F10	100	121	sealed • 300g • 32 Ohm • <i>Another very comfortable sealed circum-aural model, has modest sound isolation and uneven sound favouring bass.</i>	
Vivanco SR1000IFL	110		open back • 265g • 100 Ohm • In-front localisation	
AKG K270	112		sealed • 250g • 75 Ohm	
AKG K280 Parabolic	117	63	open back • 250g • 75 Ohm • <i>Revealing twin-driver design uses the same design principles as a satellite dish to beam sound into ear.</i>	REC'D
AKG K400	118	121	open back • 250g • 120 Ohm • <i>Comfortable over long sessions. Sound is exquisitely detailed, dynamic and uncoloured.</i>	REC'D
Sennheiser HD545 Ref	120		open back • 255g • 150 Ohm • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
Sony MDR-D77	120		sealed • 140g • 45 Ohm • 1.5m, 3.5/6.3mm plug	
Vivanco IR7100	120		Stereo infra-red cordless	
AKG K270 Studio	121		sealed • 250g • 75 Ohm	
Beyer DT531	129	144	open back • 245g • 250 Ohm • Circum-aural	REC'D
Beyer IRS790	129		open back • 270g • Cordless infra-red	
AKG K500	138	111	open back • 250g • 120 Ohm • <i>K500 offers impressive definition. Balance is on the light side but transparency is high.</i>	REC'D
Beyer DT770 Pro	139		sealed • 250g • 600 Ohm • Circum-aural	
Beyer DT100	139		sealed • 350g • 600 Ohm • Choice of impedances	
Sennheiser HD565 Ovat'n	140		open back • 255g • 150 Ohm • 3m lead, 3.5/6.3mm	
Sennheiser HD265 Linear	140		sealed • 260g • 150 Ohm • Closed back	
Vivanco IR7600	140		Stereo infra-red cordless	
Vivanco SR200IFL	140		open back • In-front localisation	
Sennheiser IS450	150		160g • Infra-red cordless - hi-fi	
Beyer DT801	159		sealed • 250g • 250 Ohm • Circum-aural	
Sennheiser HD25	160		sealed • 140g • 70 Ohm • Professional, closed back	
Beyer DT990 Pro	163		open back • 230g • 600 Ohm • Circum-aural	
Stax SR34	169		open back • 170g • Electrostatic	
Beyer DT811	179		open back • 245g • 250 Ohm • Circum-aural	
Sennheiser IS550	180		170g • Infra-red cordless	
Technics RP-F30	180		sealed • 340g • 32 Ohm • 3m lead, XBS double drive	
Sony MDR-610k	190		infra-red cordless • 470g • Seven meter range infra-red	
AKG K340	191	75	open back • 380g • 400 Ohm • <i>Heavyweight cans in most respects, the K340 with its electrostatic tweeter is a very revealing headphone.</i>	REC'D
Beyer IRS890	199		open back • 270g • Cordless infra-red	
Beyer DT901	199		sealed • 280g • 250 Ohm • Circum-aural	
Sennheiser HD 580 Prec'n	200		open back • 260g • 300 Ohm • Flagship model	
Sony MDR-CD1000	200	111	sealed • 330g • 45 Ohm • <i>A fine sounding and comfortable headphone that's likely to work well with most sources.</i>	REC'D
Beyer DT911	219	111	open back • 275g • 250 Ohm • <i>Probably too revealing for many headphone amps, these are very subtle, fine, if expensive cans.</i>	REC'D
Stax SR Gamma	239	55	open back • 300g • <i>One down from the Lambda, the Gamma is an excellent headphone with little to criticise bar the price.</i>	REC'D
JVC HA-D1000	250		sealed • 340g • 32 Ohm • 5m, 6.3/3.5m jacks	
Stax SR84	259		open back • 160g • Electrostatic	
Audio Technica ATH9000	273	111	open back • 240g • 32 Ohm • <i>Electrets which connect to the amp's speaker outputs, they sound a little too smooth, but would suit aggressive amps.</i>	
Stax SR Lambda	349		open back • 325g • Electrostatic	
Jecklin Float ELS	399	55	open back • 600g • 8 Ohm • <i>These electrostatics have an openness of sound that is rarely found in the breed, with good dynamic range to boot.</i>	REC'D
Stax Gamma Pro	399	63	open back • 300g • With SRD-X Pro, the Gamma Pro is like a stethoscope for your hi-fi, revealing subtleties that many loudspeakers fail to resolve.	REC'D
Stax Lambda Pro	449	55	open back • 325g • With SRD-7B PSU, frighteningly revealing, bringing across more information than loudspeakers costing twice as much.	REC'D



Loudspeakers

As the last item in the hi-fi chain, the loudspeaker is merely the slave of what has gone before; it is capable only of reproducing a signal as good as it is fed. Nevertheless, the distortions (colorations and stereo effects) introduced by loudspeakers (and rooms) tend to be greater than those anywhere else in the hi-fi chain, so careful selection of models is very important.

■ The average loudspeaker consists of an enclosure (much of which may have begun life as part of a tree) plus a couple of drive units hidden 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. After that, such subtleties as coloration (or lack of it) and dispersion come into the equation.

■ Careful placement of the loudspeakers within the room is as important as the initial choice of model. For good stereo the enclosures need to be more or less the same distance from nearby walls.

■ There are two subsections within the overall heading of loudspeakers: these are satellites and subwoofers, and active subwoofers. The former is a combination of small mid/treble units and a single subwoofer which provides the bass. They are primarily designed for situations where the sight of loudspeakers would harm domestic harmony. Active subwoofers have built in power amplifiers and offer 'real' bass extension.

Key to loudspeakers

horn, ported, sealed etc cabinet type
 2 driver number of drive units
 108dB sensitivity @ 1metre for 2.83 volts
 8 Ohms nominal impedance
 100W manufacturer's power rating

Key to satellites & subwoofers

89dB sensitivity @ 1metre for 2.83 volts
 70 W power rating in Watts

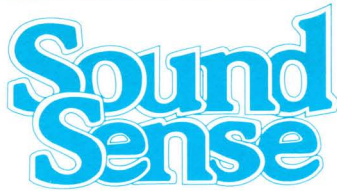
Key to active subwoofers

stereo subwoofer type
 50W amplifier power
 THX THX-approved (where appropriate)

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

LOUDSPEAKERS									
Realistic Minimus 3.5	30	2 driver • 8 Ohms • 15W • 9.15,5cm							
Realistic Minimus 21	30	2 driver • 8 Ohms • 10W • 15.24,13cm							
Grundig MBX220	40	ported • 2 driver • 4 Ohms • 30W • Stand/shelf use							
Wharfedale Centre Cube	49	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 14,13,12cm • Shielded centre speaker							
JPW Minim SGL SHD	50	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,28,20cm • Shielded, single speaker							
JPW Satellite SGL SHD	50	ported • 2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 13,24,11cm • Shielded, single speaker							
Sony SS-E300	50	sealed • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 160W • 73,41,20cm • Magnetically shielded							
Sony SS-V77	50	2 driver • 90dB • 16 Ohms • 19,9,14cm • Full range surround speakers							
Realistic M'mus 26	56	2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 40W • 18,28,11cm							
JVC SX-SC1VBK	60	ported • 2 driver • 14,21,14cm • Magnetically shielded							
Mordaunt-Short CS-1 D	60	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 16,23,13cm • Shielded, Positec protected							
Realistic Minimus Pro-7	60	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 11,18,11cm • Revised design							
Goodmans Active 75	65	active • 80W							
Jamo Studio 80	70	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 45W • 35,22,17cm • High sensitivity							
Denon SC-M2	80	sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,28,20cm							
Denon SCM2	80	sealed • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,28,20cm • UK designed & built							
Genexa GX330	80	6 Ohms • 50W • 35,21,24cm							
Goodmans M100	80	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 17,26,20cm • Bookshelf, close to wall							
Grundig MBX310	80	ported • 3 driver • 4 Ohms • 70W • 18,42,29cm • 3 drivers, 2 way							
JPW Satellite	80	ported • 2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 13,24,11cm • Shielded, single speaker							
JPW Minim	80	82 ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,28,20cm • Civilised but undynamically, the Minim is great in small rooms and at limited volume.							REC'D
JVC SP-V50	80	ported • 2 driver • 23,41,21cm • Magnetically shielded							
Sony SS-E500	80	sealed • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 35,47,20cm • Magnetically shielded							
Teac LS-X8	80	ported • 2 driver • 8 Ohms • 30W • 11,18,11cm • In black or white							
Technics SB-CS55	80	ported • 2 driver • 8 Ohms • 60W • 25,43,25cm • Shelf/stand, shielded							
GLL Arena	89	87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 26,23,14cm							
JPW Minim Pair Solid	89	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,28,20cm • Shielded							
Wharfedale Valdius 100	89	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 180W • 27,17,18cm • 2-way bookshelf							
Jamo Cornet 20.4	90	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 21,16,13cm • Black/mahogany							
Advent Mini	99	2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 16,28,14cm • Bookshelf/stand mount							
Celestion Little 1	99	sealed • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 9,20,15cm							
Celestion 1	99	114 ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 16,27,21cm • Sounds a bit scrappy and untidy, but its heart is in the right place.							B'BUY
Wharfedale Diamond 6R	99	ported • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 16,27,22cm • Stand/bookshelf mount							
Yamaha NS-C80	99	2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 80W • 14,45,17cm							
Allison AL100	100	94 ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 33,24,19cm • Loud and lively budget wall-mount is big and beefy, but lacks sparkle and refinement							B'BUY
Gale Ref Monitors	100	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • Bookshelf, black finish							
Goodmans HT100	100	2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 25,53,20cm							
Interaudio XL1000	100	2 driver • 8 Ohms • 50W • 19,29,17cm							
Jamo Studio 110	100	ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 50W • 24,42,22cm							
JPW Sonata Vinyl	100	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 23,32,22cm							
JVC SP-X220TBK	100	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 24,66,24cm							
Mission 73S	100	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 15,26,15cm • Stand mount, shelf, w/brackets							
Realistic Minimus Pro-77	100	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 55W • 14,22,11cm • Revised design							
Revolver Beretta	100	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 80W • 30,19,22cm • Bookshelf/stand mount							
Sony SS-190AV	100	2 driver • 167 Ohms • 19,12,15cm • Shielded centre speaker							
Sony SS85E	100	sealed • 2 driver • 85dB • 4 Ohms • 70W • 9,32,24cm • UK optimised sound							
TDL NFM2-S	100	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 18,45,17cm • Priced for single speaker							
TDL Near Field Monitor	100	130 ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 18,30,17cm • A disappointing underperformer in our tests, at a price that's not too good.							
Technics SB-CS75	100	ported • 3 driver • 8 Ohms • 60W • 27,49,25cm • Composite mica cone mid							
Wharfedale Valdius 200	109	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 180W • 38,21,22cm • Stand/bookshelf							
Wharfedale Modus Micro	109	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 14,23,12cm • Shielded							
Canon SV-15	110	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 24,17cm • Utility - wide dispersion							
Jamo Sat 160	110	sealed • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 14,20,88cm • With wall brackets							
Jamo D115	110	2 driver • 91dB • 75W • 24,42,22cm							
Jamo Cornet 30.4	110	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 55W • 20,32,23cm • Black ash - Mahogany £20 extra							
Mordaunt-Short MS05i	110	141 ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 26,17,18cm • Tiny, bass light, but fine voicing at a competitive price. (redesignated 'i' but unchanged).							REC'D
Bose XL1000	115	ported • 2 driver • 8 Ohms • 50W • 29,19,17cm							
JBL Control One	115	90 ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,156,14cm • Sub-miniature with forward midrange and real bass; price justified by build							
Mordaunt-Short CS1 St	115	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 16,23,13cm • Shielded, Positec protected							
GLL Maxim	119	122 86dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 10,26,17cm • Budget miniature offers well balanced strengths and few weaknesses at a bargain price; a bit feeble.							REC'D
Wharfedale Modus Centre	119	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 46,14,12cm • Shielded centre speaker							
AMC WM50	120	2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 19,28,7cm • Ceiling mount							
Jamo Artina	120	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 29,25,8cm • Small, flat wall speaker							
JPW Sonata	120	71 ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 23,32,22cm • Well balanced, fine sound if limited bass and dynamic range, plus real tree wood.							B'BUY
Pioneer CS-3030	120	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 27,54,24cm • Bookshelf							
Sony SS125E	120	sealed • 2 driver • 86dB • 4 Ohms • 90W • 22,38,38cm • UK optimised sound							
Teac S-W1	120	subwoofer • 6 Ohms • 100W • 17,44,30cm • Coaxial, shielded							
Yamaha NS-E80	120	2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 50W • 27,20,7cm							

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
B&W Solid HCM15	125		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 17,24,17cm • White & black finishes	
Celestion Impact 10	129		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 31,19,21cm • Inverted drivers	
Celestion CSC	129		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 33,13,15cm • Centre channel	
KEF Coda 7	129	145	ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 18,30,24cm • 2-way stand/shelf	REC'D
B&W Solid HCM2	130		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 14,20,14cm • White or black finishes	
Canon S-C10	130		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 95W • 34,15,15cm • Dolby P-L centre speaker	
Jamo Sat 200 II	130		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 15,22,88cm • Stereo passive sub	
JPW Subwoofer	130		ported • 1 driver • 95dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 26,51,27cm	
JVC SP-X550BK	130		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 24,66,24cm	
Mission 731	130	141	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 31,17,20cm • <i>Good looking and cleverly conceived high-tech miniature could have more brio.</i>	
Visonik David 5001	132		50W • 10,17,10cm	
Boston Acoustics HD5	139	110	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 25,16,18cm • <i>Pretty miniature lacks boxiness, but is short of drama and dynamic drive.</i>	
Boston Acoustics 325	139		2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 50W • 17,17,5cm • Wall/ceiling white flush mount	
Celestion CS135	139	128	subwoofer • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 90W • 52,19,34cm • <i>Compact passive subwoofer lacks serious bass extension: for high sensitivity speakers only.</i>	
Celestion 3 MKII	139	130	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 21,31,18cm • <i>Smooth and polished by budget speaker standards, if a bit laid back for some tastes.</i>	B'BUY
Heybrook Prima	139	110	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 60W • 20,29,18cm • <i>Fine pace and timing, but balance is forward and bass is tight.</i>	REC'D
Wharfedale Modus Mini	139		ABR • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 14,39,12cm • Shielded two-way	
Genexxa GX650	140		90dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 23,76,26cm	
Interaudio XL2000	140		2 driver • 8 Ohms • 70W • 23,36,18cm	
Jamo Studio 140	140		ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 50W • 22,50,26cm	
Jamo Sat 300 II	140		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 15,21,8cm • Use with SW500	
Jamo Cornet 40.4	140	130	ported • 20 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 20,32,23cm • <i>Pretty presentation and a strong box, but poor driver fixing. Decent if bright sound.</i>	
Mordaunt-Short MS10i	140	130	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 19,31,22cm • <i>High tech baby has fine bass/mid integrity but the top end is less appealing</i>	REC'D
Advent Baby 2	149		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 26,39,15cm • Bookshelf/stand mount	
Boston Acoustics CR6	149		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 26,15,20cm • Magnetically shielded	
Celestion MP1	149	140	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22,30,15cm	REC'D
Celestion CS2	149		ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 16,29,22cm	
Harman-Kardon LS0200	149	130	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 21,35,30cm • <i>Laid back to a fault but entertaining nevertheless, and a big box for the price.</i>	REC'D
NAD 800	149		ported • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 60W • 20,32,24cm • 10 litre enclosure	
Revolver Colt	149		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 30,19,22cm • Bookshelf/stand mount	
Rogers LSI	149	143	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 6 Ohms • 86W • 20,20,30cm • <i>High grade miniature</i>	REC'D
Tannoy 631	149	141	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 19,34,15cm • <i>Beautifully balanced, open, unboxy and quite lively, but short of real muscle.</i>	B'BUY
Wharfedale Valdis 300	149		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 180W • 47,25,23cm • Stand/bookshelf	
Yamaha NS-C110	149		2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 120W • 15,47,18cm	
B&W CWM5	150		2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 16,22,7cm • In wall	
Gale Model 2	150		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • Bookshelf, black finish	
Goodmans HT170	150		2 driver • 92dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 25,70,22cm	
Infinity SM65	150		ported • 94dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 34,20,19cm • Auto reset protection circuit	
Infinity Reference Ii	150		sealed • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 50W • 34,20,20cm • Pedestal	
JPW P1 Vinyl	150	102	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 26,44,25cm • <i>Competent loudspeaker for the price, with a safe sound that won't disappoint.</i>	B'BUY
JVC SP-X770BX	150		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 28,75,25cm	
Mission 73C	150		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 16,20,43cm • TV top, shielded	
Mordaunt-Short CS-1 DM	150		sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 23,16,13cm • 2 compact paintable speakers	
Mordaunt-Short HT30	150		ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 25,43,29cm • Shielded, Positac protected	
Mordaunt-Short SW1	150	128	subwoofer • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 24,58,26cm • <i>Prettily finished and inexpensive passive subwoofer is only really useful with sub-miniature speakers</i>	
Teac S-300	150		ported • 2 driver • 6 Ohms • 100W • 17,24,17cm	
Technics SB-CS95	150		ported • 3 driver • 8 Ohms • 100W • 29,54,25cm • Composite mica cone mid	
Visonik Sub 4	154		100W • 36,49,31cm	
Wharfedale Modus One	159		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22,41,29cm • Stand/bookshelf mount	
AMC WM75	160		2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 22,30,9cm • Ceiling mount	
Bose XL2000	160		ported • 2 driver • 8 Ohms • 70W • 36,23,18cm	
Denon SC-E313	160		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,36,23cm • Shielded, red mahogany veneer	
Denon SC-E313	160		ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22,75,23cm • UK designed & built	
Grundig BX1	160		ported • 2 driver • 4 Ohms • 60W • 23,40,30cm • 16 litre	
Interaudio XL3000	160		2 driver • 8 Ohms • 70W • 29,46,23cm	
Jamo D135	160		2 driver • 94dB • 90W • 28,52,25cm	
Visonik David 6001	163	74	2 driver • 87dB • 60W • 13,20,12cm • <i>Sharp styling, but the complex grillwork worsens a sound which starts off with too much top and not enough bottom.</i>	
Boston Acoustics Runab't	169		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 22,15,16cm • White indoor/outdoor system	
Celestion CS4	169		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 18,33,23cm	
GLL Mezzo	169	141	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 21,36,25cm • <i>Good value compact has splended midband but dull treble. Could suit budget systems.</i>	REC'D
Allison AL105	170	78	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,37,21cm • <i>Pretty enough in appearance; sonically the AL105 doesn't really make the grade at the price.</i>	
GLL Imagio IC100	170		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 35,23,24cm • ICT coaxial driver	
Jamo Studio 180	170		ported • 3 driver • 92dB • 80W • 22,50,26cm	
Jamo Sat 500	170		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 16,21,14cm • Satellites for SW500	
JPW P1	170	141	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 26,44,25cm • <i>Longstanding design is remarkable material value (real wood etc) and sounds pretty too.</i>	B'BUY
Pioneer CS-5030	170		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 140W • 31,53,25cm • Bookshelf	
Boston Acoustics 350	179		2 driver • 4 Ohms • 50W • 24,17,6cm • Wall/ceiling white flush mount	
Boston Acoustics 335	179		2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 18,9cm • Wall mount, white flush	
Boston Acoustics Satellites	179		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • Also A/V spkrs, black/white	
Wharfedale Modus Sub	179		ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 57,23,38cm • Two channel double-tuned sub-woofer	
Bose XL3000	180		ported • 2 driver • 8 Ohms • 90W • 47,29,23cm	
Canon S-30	180	114	ported • 1 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 23,27,24cm • <i>Moulded design has lively coherence, with 'wide imaging stereo'.</i>	REC'D
Jamo Converta	180		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 235,235cm • Lamp-like appearance	
TDL NFM2	180		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 18,45,17cm	
Celestion Centre 2	189		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 17,16,42cm • Centre channel	
Celestion 5 MKII	189		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 90W • 25,35,21cm • Larger version of Celestion 3	
KEF Coda 8	189		ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 20,32,29cm • Developed from Coda 7	
Tannoy 632	189	135	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 90W • 51,43,27cm • <i>Cabinet shaping avoids boxiness and promotes focus/imaging; fine bass extension too.</i>	B'BUY
B&W DM600i	190	135	sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 21,36,25cm • <i>Even balance, but dynamically bland; and current demands are rather high.</i>	REC'D
Bose 101 M'ble Monitor	190		1 driver • 4 Ohms • 60W • 13,23,15cm • Black finish	
Polk RT3	190		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 19,32,22cm • Shielded stand/shelf	
Rega Kyte	198	114	ported • 2 driver • 87dBdB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 19,31,19cm • <i>Has splendid timing and coherence, sounds very explicit and informative.</i>	B'BUY
Royd The Herald	198		ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 31,20,18cm • Stand mount	
B&W DM601	199		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 26,21,25cm • Kevlar bass, metal dome	
Boston Acoustics CR7	199		2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 30,22,24cm • Magnetically shielded	
Celestion Impact 15	199		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 90W • 39,24,25cm • Inverted drivers	
GLL Magnum	199		86dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 25,42,29cm	
Harman-Kardon LS0300	199		88dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 21,38,80cm	
Heybrook Solo	199	90	sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 23,36,23cm • <i>Untidy bass and treble, but handles complex rhythmic material well.</i>	REC'D
KEF 60S	199		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 60W • 15,25,17cm	
Wharfedale Modus Three	199		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22,57,29cm • Stand/bookshelf mount	
Wharfedale Valdis 400	199		ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 80,25,26cm • Floor standing	
ZYP AI	199	110	sealed • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 14,22,12cm • <i>Cute metal cased micro-miniature is quite coloured but great fun.</i>	REC'D
B&W DM601	200		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 20,35,24cm	
B&W Solid Monitor	200		ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 17,24,15cm • Various colours	



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RT950BX	£249.90

SONY

STS211 LB*	£99.90
STS261	£139.90
STS361	£199.90

TECHNICS

STG350	£139.90
STG550	£189.90
STG650	£229.90
STG90L*	£199.90

YAMAHA

TX480	£139.90
TX580RDS	£199.90

YAMAHA

KX380	£169.90
KX480	£199.90
KX580	£249.90
KXW282	£199.90
KXW482	£249.90

TURNTABLES

TECHNICS

SLBD20	£129.70
SLBD22	£149.90
SL1210MII*	£429.90

THORENS

TD180*	£159.90
TD166 VI*	£239.90
TD166 VI REGA*	£269.90
TD280*	£179.90

CLEARANCE BARGAINS

normal CLEARANCE price

HARMON KARDON

HK6550	£429.90	£289.90
HK1200	£279.90	£199.90
HD7450	£299.90	£199.90
TD4200	£279.90	£199.90
HK3300	£379.90	£199.90
AVI200	£499.90	£429.90
AVR20	£499.90	£399.90

ARCAM

Alpha 3 Amp	£200.00	£140.00
Alpha 5 Amp	£230.00	£190.00

SONY

SCALA2	£899.90	£769.90
SCALA1	£1399.90	£1199.90
SENR5520	£999.90	£829.90
TCWR635S*	£299.90	£229.90
TCK415	£179.90	£139.90

normal CLEARANCE price

KENWOOD

KRV6060	£349.90	£264.90
DP7050	£349.90	£259.90
KX3050	£169.90	£129.90
KRA5040	£199.90	£154.90
DP5060	£249.90	£194.90
CS6	£149.90	£119.90
KA5040R	£269.90	£154.90
KRV6070	£349.90	£289.90
KAV7700	£599.90	£499.90
KRV5570	£299.90	£239.90
KXW6060	£199.90	£154.90
SS3300	£249.50	£199.90

NAKAMICHI

REC3	£369.90	£199.90
IA3	£349.90	£199.90
IA4	£299.90	£199.90

CASSETTE DECKS

DENON

DRM540	£159.90
DRS640	£199.90
DRM740	£259.90
DRS810	£299.90
DRW580	£199.90

NAKAMICHI

DR2	£599.90
DR3	£399.90

SONY

TCK511*	£199.90
TCK215*	£99.90
TCWR545*	£159.90
TCK515*	£209.90
TCK561	£239.90

TECHNICS

RSTR373*	£164.90
RSTR474*	£179.90
RSTR575*	£219.90
RSTR979*	£349.90
RSBX501	£179.90

CD PLAYERS

AURA

CD50C*	£299.90
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DENON

DCD315	£149.90
DCD625	£199.90
DCD1015	£349.90
DCD825	£239.90

HARMON KARDON

FL8450	£299.90
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MARANTZ

CD63II	£269.90
CD63SE	£349.90
CD46*	£159.90

PIONEER

PD203	£159.90
PDS503*	£164.90
PDS703	£249.90

ROTEL

RCD930AX	£199.90
RCD940BX	£249.90
RCD970BX	£349.90

SONY

CDP561	£189.90
CDP761	£249.90
CDPX303ES*	£459.90

TECHNICS

SLPG570*	£149.90
SLPD867	£179.90
SLPD687*	£164.90
SLPS670	£179.90
SLPS740	£229.90
SLPS840*	£349.90

LOUDSPEAKERS

B&W

601	£199.90
602	£279.90
603	£499.90
CDM1	£599.90
CDM2	£399.90
2002	£109.90
DM600*	£139.90
P4	£599.90
P5	£799.90

BOSTON

404V*	£79.90
525V*	£129.90
VR12*	£279.90
VR40*	£699.90

CELESTION

1*	£89.90
3II*	£99.90
5II*	£129.90
7II*	£179.90

JBL

MR5	£84.90
MR25	£109.90
MR26	£154.90
MR28	£169.90
MR38	£239.90

KEF

Q50* (EX DEM)	£399.90
M90	£249.90
M100	£349.90
CODA7	£129.90
CODA8	£189.90
CODA9	£299.90

MONITOR AUDIO

MA14-II	£499.90
MA201	£299.90
MA202	£389.90

REL

STRATA	£494.90
STORM	£694.90
STADIUM	£994.90
STENTOR	£1494.90
STUDIO	£2994.90

REVOLVER

PURDEY*	£179.90
COLT*	£109.90
BERETTA*	£69.90
SURROUND PACKAGE*	£249.90

ROGERS

LS1 A/2*	£149.90
LS33	£249.90
LS55	£429.90
LS3/5A	£699.90

TANNOY

PROFILE 631	£149.90
PROFILE 632	£189.90
PROFILE 633*	£279.90
PROFILE 636*	£369.90
PROFILE 637*	£429.90
PROFILE 638*	£519.90
625 ALF	£595.00
SUBSAT3*	£299.90

TDL

NFM	£119.99
RTL1	£199.95
RTL2	£299.95
RTL3	£399.90
RTL4	£649.90

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 MERIDIAN &
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 SYSTEMS**

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
Canon S-B20	200		subwoofer • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 48,39,37cm • Free standing, passive	
Castle Trent II	200	122	ported • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 20,34,18cm • <i>Sound passes muster without setting anything much alight.</i>	REC'D
Gale Model 4	200		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • Bookshelf, black finish	
Infinity Reference 11i	200		sealed • 6 Ohms • 75W • 39,22,34cm • Pedestal	
Interaudio XL4000	200		2 driver • 8 Ohms • 75W • 32,56,29cm	
Jamo Conventa Light	200		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 235cm • Utility speaker, inc light	
Jamo D165	200		2 driver • 94dB • 100W • 28,52,25cm	
Jamo Cornet 60.4	200		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 23,42,27cm • Black ash - Mahogany £20 extra	
JPW AP2	200	106	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 26,44,25cm • <i>Real wood finish, and performance is cleaner but similar to P1 Vinyl overall.</i>	REC'D
Kenwood LS-200G	200		ported • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 60W • 21,35,30cm • European design	
Mission 732	200	141	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 41,21,31cm • <i>Attractive presentation but a rather dull and thick sounding speaker, and a tad pricey too.</i>	
Monitor Audio MA301	200		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 27,17,20cm • Gold dome tweeter	
Monitor Audio Monitor 1G	200		sealed • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 16,24,16cm • Miniature stand/shelf mount	
Mordaunt-Short CS-1 Triple	200		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 16,23,13cm • Shielded, Positec protected	
Mordaunt-Short MS20i	200	135	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 22,37,22cm • Alloy tweeter, MCS woofer	B'BUY
Philips Legend FB720	200	122	ported • 80dB • 7 Ohms • 75W • 21,37,31cm • <i>Liveliness, coherence and fine information retrieval justifies the odd looking baffle.</i>	B'BUY
Technics SB-M20	200		ported • 2 driver • 60W	
Boston Acoustics 360 SII	209		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 22,15,7cm • Wall/Ceiling, white, flush mount	
AMC WM100	210		2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 26,36,10cm • Ceiling mount	
Canon V-100	210		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 75W • 25,33,17cm • Corner mount, wide dispersion	
Advent Graduate	219		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 210W • 28,44,17cm • Bookshelf/stand mount	
ZYP A1T	219		sealed • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 14,22,12cm • Magnetically shielded	
Allison MS200	220		2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 75W • 13,25,14cm • Boundary, stand mount	
Allison AL110	220	102	2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,40,23cm • <i>Compact bookshelf model is a little dry and mid-forward, but bass is extended and solid.</i>	REC'D
Bose XL4000	220		ported • 2 driver • 8 Ohms • 100W • 57,32,30cm	
Polk M3 II	220		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 17,29,21cm • Multi-app, including wall bracket	
Visonic David 8001	228		80W • 16,25,17cm	
KEF Q10	229		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 19,32,26cm • Uni Q, shielded	
Grundig BX2	230		ported • 3 driver • 4 Ohms • 80W • 24,49,33cm • 22 litre	
JPW AP3	230	46	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 26,52,29cm • <i>Good stereo and well balanced overall; character is well suited to vinyl replay.</i>	REC'D
JVC SP-X990BK	230		ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 31,86,27cm	
Pioneer CS-7030	230		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 190W • 35,70,28cm • Bookshelf	
Boston Acoustics CR8	239		ABR • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 39,22,27cm • Magnetically shielded	
Celestion 7 MkII	239		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 31,45,24cm	
B&W CWM6i	240		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 23,32,8cm • In wall	
Monitor Audio Monitor 7GI245	245		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 17,35,17cm • Stand/shelf mount	
B&W Solid HCM1	249		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 17,24,17cm • White or black finishes	
Boston Acoustics 380	249		2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 31,24,8cm • Wall/ceiling white flush mount	
Chord Sys Audio 905	249		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 27,15,19cm • Black Ash + Kumarka (brown)	
NAD 802	249		ported • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 80W • 20,40,26cm • 11.5 litre enclosure	
Revolver Purdey	249		sealed • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 120W • 75,19,22cm • Floor stand, with plinth	
B&W DM610i	250	141	sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,49,31cm • <i>Fine bass extension and a smooth, well-balanced but slightly heavy and laid back sound.</i>	
Bose VS100	250		2 driver • 8 Ohms • 23,15,15cm	
Canon S-35	250		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 23,27,24cm • Wide Imaging Stereo	
Cerwin Vega VS8	250		ported • 2 driver • 94dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 28,51,29cm • Bookshelf	
Infinity SM85	250		ported • 98dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 46,29,27cm • Auto reset protection circuit	
Jamo Classic 4	250		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 20,47,25cm	
Jamo Art	250		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 35,40,9cm • Shape and size of shallow 20 i	
Pioneer S-4UK	250	139	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 80W • 21,37,28cm • <i>Latest version now balances pretty well, with a coherent lightweight bass.</i>	REC'D
Polk RT5	250		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 22,39,25cm • Shielded stand/shelf	
System Audio 905	250	142	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 15,27,21cm	
Yamaha NS10M	250		2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 21,38,20cm	
Royd Minstrel	259	135	ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 69,18,12cm • <i>Not much wellie or loudness but fine coherence and timing a bit bright.</i>	B'BUY
Wharfedale Modus Five	259		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 22,65,29cm • Stand/bookshelf mount	
Dali 102B	260		88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 21,32,26cm	
Celestion 9	269	102	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 21,50,25cm • <i>Nicely presented and fair material value, with impressively flat mid to bass balance.</i>	
Heybrook HB1	269		sealed • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 29,47,23cm • Boundary, shielded option	
Bose 151 Environmental	270		2 driver • 6 Ohms • 60W • 24,14,16cm • Waterproof	
Mission 780SE	270		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 18,30,26cm • Stand mount, boundary siting	
Pioneer S-60	270		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 80W • 22,47,28cm • Bookshelf	
Bose 161 Freestyle	275		2 driver • 6 Ohms • 60W • 25,14,16cm	
Mordaunt-Short MS30i	275		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 25,43,28cm • Alloy tweeter, MCS woofer	
Mordaunt-Short HT50	275		ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 25,87,33cm • Positec, integrated subwoofer	
Boston Acoustics CR9	279		ABR • 2 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 50,25,29cm • Stand/shelf, shielded	
Celestion Impact 20	279		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 47,28,29cm • Twin vented, shielded	
Allison AL115	280		2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 28,51,26cm • Boundary, stand mount	
B&W DM602	280		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 49,24,31cm • Gold anodised dome	
Monitor Audio MA100G	280		sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 16,24,16cm • Shielded for AV use	
Pioneer CS-9030	280		ported • 3 driver • 92dB • 8 Ohms • 220W • 39,75,29cm • Bookshelf	
Origin Live OL-1B	289	135	2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 20,30,19cm • <i>Pretty miniature has a punchy, dynamic midband, but costs a lot for the engineering on offer.</i>	
Bose 201 Ser III	290		3 driver • 8 Ohms • 60W • 38,20,25cm • Direct/reflecting technology	
Linn Sekrit On Passive	298		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 60W • 26,13,48cm • Bi-wire or bi-amp ready	
Linn Sekrit In Passive	298		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 30W • 20,28,90cm • IB or bass reflex	
Rega EL8	298	122	ported • 2 driver • 8 Ohms • 17,72,20cm • <i>Kyle drivers in compact floorstander gives more bass but less coherence.</i>	REC'D
Royd Merlin	298		ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 31,20,18cm • Veneered	
Advent Prodigy	299		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 24,68,20cm • Floor standing, free space	
Boston Acoustics Voyager	299		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 26,16,17cm • White indoor/outdoor, metal	
Celestion 11	299		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 31,57,24cm	
KEF Coda 9	299		coupled cavity • 3 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 20,84,30cm	
KEF 70S	299		sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 17,25,12cm • Uni-Q, shielded, AV surround	
Wharfedale Valdsus 500	299		ported • 4 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 350W • 108,25,29cm • Floor standing	
ZYP A2S	299		sealed • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 22,14,12cm • Studio nearfield monitor	
Allison CD6	300		2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 29,29,29cm • Cuboid, wall mount	
B&O Beovox CX50	300		sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 12,21,21cm	
B&W Solid Powerbass	300		subwoofer • 75W • 33,39,34cm • Active sub to match Solids	
B&W CWM8i	300		2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 28,38,9cm • In wall	
Bose C'puter RoomMate	300		active • 2 driver • 60W • 24,14,16cm • Self powered AC/shielded, volume control	
Bose Video RoomMate	300		active • 2 driver • 60W • 24,14,16cm • Self powered AC/shielded, volume control	
Bose Roomate II	300		active • 2 driver • 60W • 24,14,16cm • Self powered AC/12V DC	
Castle Durham 900	300	135	ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 85W • 22,40,23cm • <i>Lovely veneer and lots of engineering create a very upfront, coherent and exciting sound.</i>	REC'D
Cerwin Vega SAT-6	300		subwoofer • 95dB • 4 Ohms • 125W • 22,25,32cm • 3 box satellite/subwoofer	
GLL Imagio IC110	300		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 73,23,29cm • ICT coaxial driver, shielded	
Infinity Inf IV Sat	300		sealed • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 80W • 16,24,18cm • Wall mount, shielded	
Jamo D265D	300		ported • 3 driver • 95dB • 150W • 44,68,32cm	
Jamo 307A	300		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 70W • 18,31,27cm • Stand mount	

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
JVC SX-SW10	300		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 29,39,45cm • Satellite subwoofer system	
Kenwood LS-300G	300		ported • 82dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 21,35,30cm • European design	
Mission 733	300	139	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 84,21,31cm • <i>Stylish and a lot of speaker for the money, and sounds pretty good too.</i>	B'BUY
Mission 751	300	125	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 19,32,27cm • <i>Great sonic potential, but our review samples have been marred by sample variations.</i>	
Monitor Audio Sub.200/92	300		8 Ohms • 100W • 48,25,36cm	
Monitor Audio MA201	300	135	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22,41,40cm • <i>Lively and coherent with good power handling, but also a bit shut in and coloured.</i>	REC'D
Mordaunt-Short MS25i	300		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 73,21,21cm • 2xMCS bass drivers, biwireable	
Polk RT7	300		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 24,48,29cm • Shielded stand/shelf	
Polk M5	300		ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 21,33,23cm • Multi-app, inc brackets	
TDL RTL2	300		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 20,73,22cm • Reflex transmission line	
Tannoy 633	319	139	sealed • 3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 29,75,28cm • <i>Real extension and coherence without booming, though midband is dubious.</i>	B'BUY
Triangle Titus TZe	325		2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 20,25,32cm • New tweeter, lifetime warranty	
Audio Innova Alto	329		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 38,20,26cm • Biwire	
Keswick Audio Aria	329		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 21,42,27cm • Bookshelf	
Ruark Swordsman Plus II	329		sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 20,38,27cm • Near wall/stand mount	
Jamo Classic 6	330		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 20,84,29cm • Inc spiked feet	
Wharfedale Modus Seven	339		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 22,81,20cm • Floor standing	
Faraday SG	345		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 75W • 27,26,25cm • Matt black or granite effect	
Advent Legacy 2	349		2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 500W • 38,67,22cm • Floor standing, free space	
Origin Live OL-2B	349		2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 19,80,19cm • Floor standing	
Royd The Squire	349		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 80,18,10cm • Sand filled, shielded	
Cerwin Vega VS10	350		ported • 3 driver • 95dB • 6 Ohms • 125W • 33,70,29cm • Floor standing	
Grundig BX3 II	350		ported • 2 driver • 4 Ohms • 120W • 24,107,34cm • 53 litre, 3 drivers, 2 way	
Infinity SM105	350		ported • 100dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 53,30,30cm • Auto reset protection circuit	
Jamo BX100A	350		ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 32,55,28cm • Floor or stand mount	
Jamo 407A	350		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 80W • 22,41,29cm • Stand mount	
Monitor Audio Monitor 9GL1350	350		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 20,37,21cm • Stand/shelf mount	
Sony SA-W90	350		2 driver • 70W • 22,49,51cm • Active subwoofer	
Technics SB-M300	350		ported • 3 driver • 70W	
Ruark Icon	359		ported • 2 driver • 6dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 35,19,26cm • Inverted drivers, handed L/R	
Castle York	370	110	ported • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 26,43,22cm • <i>Real wood compact has an engaging transparency: fine balance and timing, but could use some authority.</i>	
Dali 104B	370		93dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 86,22,27cm	
Pioneer S-80	370		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 80W • 23,56,28cm • Bookshelf	
Heybrook Trio	373	118	sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 24,47,25cm • <i>HBS1 drivers in real wood enclosure gives sweeter and more forgiving sound.</i>	REC'D
Lumley Reference LM4	375	126	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 6 Ohms • 120W • 18,36,22cm • <i>Metal diaphragm and wood veneer; balance uneven — upper and forward; has suspect timing.</i>	
KEF Q30	379	126	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 125W • 19,73,30cm • <i>Fine focus from Uni-Q driver, but lacks drive and time coherence.</i>	
Allison CD7	380		3 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,70,24cm • Floor standing, free space	
Bose 301 VM	380		3 driver • 8 Ohms • 75W • 24,43,27cm • Direct/reflecting technology	
Jamo Graphic	380		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 39,44,8cm • Decorative speaker	
Polk RT8	380		ported • 2 driver • 80dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 19,80,26cm • Shielded floorstander	
Celestion 15	389	114	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 21,100,25cm • <i>Big bang for your buck; short on subtlety and control but long on both enthusiasm.</i>	REC'D
Clements 300si	395		89dB • 90W • 24,36,36cm • Compression line	
KAL Mini-Ref MKII	395		2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 23,27,17cm	
Celestion Impact 25	399		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 82,28,29cm • Magnetically shielded	
Fullers Sultan	399		ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 24,51,30cm • 3 finishes	
Origin Live OL-1AS	399		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 199W • 20,30,190cm • Floor standing	
Origin Live OL-1A	399		2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 20,30,19cm	
SD Acoustics SD3R	399	106	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 20,38,30cm • <i>New SD3 has the agility and charm of a quality miniature, good bass and low sensitivity.</i>	REC'D
Tannoy Subsat3	399		ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 11,16,9cm • Subsat system with ICT tech	
B&O Beovox CX100	400		sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 12,32,21cm	
B&W CDM2	400		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 32,22,25cm • Kevlar bass, metal dome treble	
B&W Solid Verticale	400		subwoofer • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • Lifestyle, 3 boxes	
Infinity Inf Micro II	400		ported • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 21,x,127dcm • Two satellites and passive sub	
Jamo Classic 8	400		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 23,90,29cm • Inc spiked feet	
Jamo D365D	400		3 driver • 96dB • 200W • 46,78,35cm	
Monitor Audio MA302	400		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 50,17,20cm • 2 bass units, front port	
TDL RTL3	400	126	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20,90,37cm • <i>Bargain price floorstander has rich, heavy and bright sound with a good scale.</i>	REC'D
Tannoy 636	419		sealed • 3 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 120W • 29,75,28cm	
Allison AL120	420	98	2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 28,61,29cm • <i>Pretty well balanced if slightly mid-forward, but sound quality is disappointing at the price.</i>	
GLL Imagio IC120	420		ported • 3 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 130W • 91,23,29cm • ICT coaxial, shielded	
Jordan Watts JHFLG	420		Flagon po tery colour	
Celestion Impact 30	429		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 82,24,25cm • Magnetically shielded	
Celestion SL6Si	429	94	sealed • 2 driver • 84dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20,38,27cm • <i>This stereotype luxury compact can sound a bit dull and congested; favours CD.</i>	
B&W DM620i	430	126	ABR • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 24,75,31cm • <i>Compact floorstander has a beautifully voiced midband, but less happy bass tuning.</i>	REC'D
Bose 305	430	78	ported • 3 driver • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,45,28cm • <i>Fine dynamic liveliness and a good room match counter strange imaging and treble.</i>	REC'D
Mission 734	430		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 84,21,33cm • Floor standing, boundary	
Fullers Sultan H.E.	439		ported • 2 driver • 98dB • 8 Ohms • 90W • 24,51,30cm • High sensitivity, 3 finishes	
Wharfedale Modus 1-3	439		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22,109,29cm • Floor standing	
Polk RT10	440		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22,86,26cm • Shielded floorstander	
Epos ES11	445	94	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 20,38,25cm • <i>Integral baffle/driver gives remarkable colouration, transparency and speed.</i>	B'BUY
Faraday Siren	445	94	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 80W • 27,25,46cm • <i>High mass concrete cabinet is let down by imbalance of ageing driver combination.</i>	
Boston Acoustics SW10	449	128	subwoofer • 2 driver • 100W • 34,17,42cm • <i>Clever powered subwoofer system integrates well and improves system loudness and power handling.</i>	REC'D
Boston Acoustics SubSat6	449		subwoofer • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • Passive subs and two satellite	
Celestion CS6i	449		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 19,85,31cm	
Linn Tukan	449		sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 30W • 19,30,18cm • Multipurpose	
Polk LS f/x Surround	449		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 22,28,16cm • A/V surround & utility speaker	
Royd Doublet	449		ported • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 91,18,17cm • Double ported	
Ruark Sabre II	449		sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,37,27cm • Wall/free, on stands	
B&O Beovox RL6000	450		3 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 41,54,18cm • Simplified RL7000	
Infinity SM115	450		ported • 3 driver • 100dB • 8 Ohms • 175W • 76,34,32cm • Auto reset protection circuitry	
Jamo Silhouette	450		3 driver • 90dB • 5 Ohms • 80W • 25,122,17cm	
Jamo Atmosphere	450		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 27,37,16cm • Doubles as lamp	
Jamo BX150A	450		ported • 3 driver • 92dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 38,63,31cm • Floor mount	
Manticore Minaret	450		sealed • 94dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,15,11cm • Nearfield monitor	
Monitor Audio MA202	450	139	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22,89,27cm • <i>Uneven, informative and easy-listening floorstander delivers decent scale.</i>	REC'D
Mordaunt-Short MS40i	450		ribbon • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 23,82,28cm • Alloy tweeter, MCS woofer	
Sony SSA1L	450		sealed • 2 driver • 85dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 19,30,32cm • Bio-cellulose tweeters	
UKD-Opera Prima	450		ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 20,33,25cm • Solid oak, stand mount	
Acoustic Energy Aegis 1	452	118	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 21,39,26cm • <i>Rich and slightly heavy balance doesn't mask fine mid/treble and transparency.</i>	REC'D
Origin Live OL-2AS	469	122	2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 19,80,19cm • <i>Compact floorstander sounds open, transparent and evenly balanced; needs a big amp.</i>	REC'D
Origin Live OL-2A	469		2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 19,80,19cm • Floor standing	
Pentachord A	469	139	sealed • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 21,28,20cm • <i>Direct coupled</i>	REC'D
B&O Beovox 4500	475		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 90W • 45,38,8cm	
Triangle Comete TZe	475		2 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 22,28,40cm • High sensitivity	
Prof Monitor Co TB1	481		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 20,40,25cm • Shielded version available	

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
Dawn Audio Chorus BS	482		sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 26,38,21cm • Bookshelf	
Roksan Roksan 1	495		ported • 2 driver • 21,44,33cm • Rosewood £50 extra	
Rega ELA Mk II	498	139	ported • 2 driver • 8 Ohms • 30,80,20cm • Floor stand	B'BUY
Advent Laureate	499		3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 500W • 21,80,29cm • Floor standing, free space	
Audio Note AN-KB	499		2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 28,46,23cm • Free space, stand mount	
Celestion CS8i	499		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 19,100,31cm	
Heybrook Heystak	499	141	ABR • 3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 98,22,28cm • Inc stands	
Lumley Reference LM5	499		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 25,46,21cm • Stand mount	
Origin Live OL-1	499	106	2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 20,30,19cm • <i>Luxury miniature has very good overall balance, sacrificing sensitivity for bass.</i>	
Rogers AB1 Subwoofer	499	143	ported • 1 driver • 83dB • 8 Ohms • 50W • 57,19,16cm • <i>Designed as partner for LS3/5a or similar miniatures</i>	REC'D
Rogers Studio 3	499	118	ported • 2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 45W • 19,30,16cm • <i>Pricy LS3/5A derived miniature, excitingly coherent if lightweight, can't go loud.</i>	REC'D
Ruark Templar	499	122	sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 19,70,27cm • <i>Striking baffle gives decent bass/mid but dull treble; could tame over-bright system.</i>	
Tannoy 637	499		sealed • 3 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 33,86,32cm	
TDL Studio 0.5	499	94	ported • 2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 75W • 20,62,30cm • <i>Tiny floorstanding transmission line lacks coherence or the balane of Studio 1.</i>	
B&W AS6	500		subwoofer • 1 driver • 100W • 51,45,46cm • Active, self powered	
B&W DM603	500		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 85,24,31cm • 2-way, ABR, port foam plugs	
B&W Signature 7	500		2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 28,37,10cm • In-wall monitor, Kevlar cone	
Bose A mass AM3 II	500		2 driver • 50W • 36,20,20cm • Acoustimass technology	
Bose 401	500	110	3 driver • 4 Ohms • 100W • 30,30,76cm • <i>Cheaply built but distinctively styled, the 401 suffers from heavy midband.</i>	
Castle Severn	500		ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 110W • 23,77,20cm • Free standing, 9 finishes	
Infinity SSW-10 Sub	500		active • 34,34,33cm	
Jamo BX200A	500		ported • 3 driver • 93dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 29,17,13cm • Floor mount	
Jamo 477A	500	138	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 19,77,29cm • <i>Very prettily styled, but build and sound quality are disappointing at the price.</i>	
JPW Ruby 1	500	139	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 120W • 32,19,21cm • <i>Very pretty but pricey luxury metal-cone miniature has good, if slightly edgy balance.</i>	
Kenwood LS-500G	500	118	ported • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 22,44,28cm • <i>Japanese designed and built luxury compact delivers an invigorating ad exciting sound.</i>	REC'D
Mission 752	500	138	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 20,84,26cm • <i>Brilliant style, engineering and sound</i>	REC'D
Monitor Audio MA303	500		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 92,17,20cm	
Monitor Audio Mon 14GLI	500		ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20,76,24cm • Floor/shelf standing	
Jordan Watts JH200	510		sealed • 1 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 19,33,17cm • Bookshelf or stand mount	
Pentachord B	519	139	sealed • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 52,35,52cm • <i>Active crossover</i>	REC'D
Celestion Impact 35	529		ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 90,28,29cm • Magnetically shielded	
KEF Q50	529	139	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 19,83,30cm • <i>Compact twin-driver floorstander with Uni-Q treble and a rather midbass, heavy overall balance.</i>	
GLL Imagio IC300	530		ported • 4 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 111,23,29cm • ICT coaxial, shielded	
Celestion 100	539		sealed • 2 driver • 84dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 21,42, 26cm	
Boston Acoustics SubSat 7	549		3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • Passive sub & 2 satellites	
Allison CD8	550		3 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 27,73,27cm • Floor standing, free space	
Cerwin Vega VS12	550		ported • 3 driver • 97dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 42,81,38cm • Floor standing	
Cerwin Vega DC10	550		ported • 3 driver • 96dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 29,94,35cm • Floor standing	
Infinity SM125	550		ported • 3 driver • 100dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 89,37,32cm • Auto reset protection circuit	
Mordaunt-Short MS50i	550	138	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 25,87,33cm • <i>Big value big box with fine engineering content and a big, laid back sound; lacks charisma.</i>	
UKD-Opera Seconda	550		ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,35,34cm • Solid oak, stand mount	
Heybrook Quartet	575	122	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 24,41,22cm • <i>Solidly large bookshelf model with good sensitivity and a lively, forward sound.</i>	REC'D
Advent Heritage	579		3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 600W • 25,89,31cm • Floor standing, free space	
Polk RT12	580		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 19,93,32cm • Shielded floorstander	
Clements 600si	595		88dB • 100W • 24,81,36cm • Compression line	
Neat Petite	595	102	ribbon • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 20,30,18cm • <i>One of the most entertaining speakers around, colourations notwithstanding.</i>	REC'D
Royd The Sorcerer	595	139	ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 31,20,18cm • <i>Front port, near field monitor</i>	REC'D
Tannoy 625	595		active • 90W • 58,49,45cm • Servo, current drive subwoofer	
Proac Tablette 50	599		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 28,17,23cm	
Tannoy 638	599	138	ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 175W • 33,96,32cm • <i>Big value vinyl big box has good balance and lots of loudness, but needs a good amp.</i>	
B&W CDM1	600		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 37,22,28cm • Angled tweeter sub-baffle	
B&W P4	600		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20,81,24cm • 3 real wood veneers	
Keswick Audio Volante	600		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 85W • 21,85,27cm • High sensitivity	
Mission 735	600		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 106,21,33cm • Floor stand, boundary	
Monitor Audio Studio 2	600		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 27,17,20cm • Shielded for AV use	
Pioneer S-200	600		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 26,90,34cm • Biwire, floor standing	
KAL Mini-Tower	619		2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 17,90,22cm	
Celestion Impact 40	629		ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 225W • 100,33,29cm • Magnetically shielded	
Spendor LS3/5A	630		ported • 2 driver • 82dB • 8 Ohms • 40W • 19,30,16cm • BBC inspired location monitor	
Fullers Pharaoh 1	649		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 60W • 20,30,20cm • Curved sides, various finishes	
KEF LS3/5a	649		sealed • 2 driver • 82dB • 11 Ohms • 30W • 19,30,16cm • Raymond Cooke Special Edition	
Linaeum LFX Wood	649		hybrid • 90dB • 16,22,18cm • Modified ribbon/dynamic	
Linn Kelidh Passive	649	114	sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 60W • 20,83,28cm • <i>Stunning timing and coherence, and awesome bass drive.</i>	REC'D
Origin Live OL-2	649		2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 19,80,19cm • Floor standing	
Tannoy D100	649		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 25,36,22cm • 6.5 inch Dual Concentric	
Allison AL125	650		2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 28,78,29cm • Open space, free standing	
Cerwin Vega DC12	650		ported • 3 driver • 98dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 36,98,35cm • Floor standing	
Infinity SM155	650		ported • 4 driver • 102dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 102,45,32cm • Auto reset protection circuit	
KAL Compact Ref	650		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 140W • 23,36,27cm	
Lumley Reference LM6	650		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 25,81,21cm • Floor standing	
JVC SX-911WD	660		ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 38,63,35cm • Walnut finish	
UKD-Opera Operetta	660		ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 22,30,26cm • Solid walnut, stand mount	
Royd Abbot	665	118	ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 81,20,30cm • <i>Dynamic and fine transient qualities are hampered by a rather coloured mid-forward balance.</i>	
Epos ES14	675	98	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,49,29cm • <i>Substantial stand mount delivers delightful midrange focus and delicacy with good bass control.</i>	REC'D
Harbeth BBC LS3/5A	675	66	sealed • 2 driver • 82dB • 10 Ohms • 30W • 30,19,18cm • <i>Still a classic miniature, though not to every taste, and none the better for the recent update.</i>	
Polk RT16	680		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 22,102,39cm • Shielded floorstander	
Polk RT16	680		ported • 3 driver • 8dB • 90 Ohms • 250W • 22,102,39cm • Shielded floorstander	
Meridian A500	695		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 100W • 83,20,28cm • Shelf/stand, shielded	
Dawn Audio Chorus FS	698	114	sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 26,88,21cm • <i>Compact floorstander with superb coherence but rather forward midband. Would suit smaller rooms best.</i>	
Audio Note AN-K/SP	699		2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 28,46,23cm • Free space, stand mount	
Harbeth HL-P3	699	118	sealed • 2 driver • 83dB • 8 Ohms • 45W • 31,19,18cm • <i>Limited loudness but impressive full-range scale from uncoloured, well balanced box.</i>	REC'D
Naim S-NAXO 3-6	699		21,76,30cm • Active crossover	
Naim S-NAXO 2-4	699		21,76,30cm • Active crossover	
Orelle Orator II	699		ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 27,40,30cm • Time aligned, biwire	
Proac Studio 100	699		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 41,20,25cm • Stand mount	
Rogers LS3/5A	699	143	sealed • 2 driver • 83dB • 11 Ohms • 30W • 31,19,16cm • <i>Clever AB1 stand/subwoofer helps the classic 3/5A monitor give its best shot.</i>	REC'D
Rogers Studio 5	699	138	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 25,25,48cm • <i>Luxury finish bookshelf size model has genuine monitoring capabilities.</i>	REC'D
TDL Studio 1	699	78	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 23,77,33cm • <i>Genuinely extended bass from a compact enclosure, very detailed but a shade clinical.</i>	REC'D
Castle Chester	700	98	horn • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,91,25cm • <i>A brilliant throwback, using a horn type approach to provide startling dynamics and coherence.</i>	B'BUY
Cerwin Vega VS15	700		ported • 3 driver • 102dB • 4 Ohms • 400W • 46,90,47cm • Floor standing	
Jamo 507A	700		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 22,91,37cm	
JPW Ruby 2	700		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 43,22,25cm • Alloy cones	
JVC SX-500	700		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 180W • 27,45,28cm • Super Digifine	
Mission 753	700	114	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 21,88,32cm • <i>Georgous presentation and potential for open transparency.</i>	
KEF Q70	729		ported • 4 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 175W • 19,105,30cm • Uni-Q, shielded, floor stand	

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
Pentachord Pentode	729		sealed • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 80W • 20,74,20cm • Active crossover	
Ruark Talisman II	749	118	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,84,32cm • <i>Less ideologically committed than some, strength lies in fine all-round coherence.</i>	REC'D
Manticores Minaret F1	750		sealed • 94dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 23,15,11cm • Nearfield monitor	
Bose SE-5 Ser II System	760		2 driver • 100W • 90,100,18cm	
Bose A'mass AM511	760		2 driver • 200W • 49,35,19cm • Acoustimass direct/reflecting	
Spendor S20	760	102	ported • 2 driver • 84dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 22,38,26cm • <i>Maintains Spendor's tradition for peerless mid-to-treble coherence and perspectives.</i>	REC'D
Naim IBL Active	776		65W • 25,80,28cm • Boundary, floor standing	
Shahinian Super Elf	790		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 100W • 21,26,37cm • Finnish birch cabinet	
Roksan Ojan Sub	793		subwoofer • 1 driver • 28,54,55cm • Passive/pr. Rosewood + £200	
Faraday FS10	795		ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 27,25,93cm • Matt black or granite effect	
KAL Tunejal	795		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 23,100,27cm	
Roksan Ojan 3 Black	795	132	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 28,76,46cm • <i>Squat, stylish and black, great bass extension and somewhat uneven balance.</i>	REC'D
Spendor SP3/1	795		ported • 2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 40,22,28cm • Stand mount, free space	
Acoustic Energy Aegis 2	795		ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 33,106,26cm • Floor, reflex, metal cone	
Audio Note AN-J/B	799	110	2 driver • 93dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 38,58,25cm • <i>Light damping and local unevenness adds some colouration, but doesn't spoil the speaker.</i>	REC'D
Allison AL130	800		2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 32,95,34cm • Open space, free standing	
B&W P5	800	144	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 20,90,28cm • 3 real wood veneers	
Monitor Audio MAG901	800		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 27,17,20cm • Metal bass cone, wood veneer	
Polk LS50	800	138	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 27,83,29cm • <i>No enthusiast tweaks here, but powerful and beautiful balance</i>	REC'D
Celestion SL600si	820	68	ported • 2 driver • 82 dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20,37,24cm • <i>Some will find this speaker irresistible, but it needs careful system and room matching.</i>	
Jordan Watts JH400	820	106	sealed • 1 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 28,32,17cm • <i>Piano finish hexagon has controversial sound, with uneven balance but delightful mid.</i>	REC'D
Bose A'mass AM7	830		2 driver • 100W • 35,49,19cm • Acoustimass direct/reflecting	
Fullers Sphinx	839		ported • 3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 25,91,30cm • various finishes	
Audiovector 2X	850		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 17,90,22cm • Black ash	
Cerwin Vega DC15	850		ported • 3 driver • 100dB • 4 Ohms • 500W • 44,103,46cm • Floor standing	
Chord SysAudio Sig	850		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 27,15,25cm • Cherry, rosewood, black ash	
Meridian DSP6000	850	140	133,28,43cm • Digital active DSP based	REC'D
Acoustic Energy AE1	870	102	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 26,30,18cm • <i>Exceptional mid focus and coherence, but it is pricey and could be more agile.</i>	
UKD-Opera Super Pavarotti	875		ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 23,55,23cm • Solid mahogany, stand mount	
Bose 601 MKIII	880		3 driver • 8 Ohms • 200W • 32,31,76cm • Direct/reflecting technology	
Lumley Reference LM3	895	106	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 27,87,28cm • <i>Despite indifferent bass alignment, LM3 is fast, coherent, solid and informative</i>	REC'D
UKD-Opera Callas II	895		ported • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 34,22,32cm • Solid mahogany/ash,	
Pink Triangle Ventricle	896	142	hybrid • 86dB • 11 Ohms • 100W • 15,80,32cm • Ribbon hybrid	
Sonus-Faber Minuetto	898		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 23,35,28cm • Compact, stand mount	
Canon S-75	899		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 25,78,25cm • Wide imaging stereo	
Keswick Audio Figaro	899		subwoofer • 1 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 19,28,27cm • Piano lacquer finishes	
Rogers 'rio 7	899	122	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 30,63,30cm • <i>Latest variation on classic BBC-monitor theme has beautifully voiced, laid back sound.</i>	REC'D
Ruark 'isword II	899		sealed • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 29,43,38cm • Free space, stand mount	
TDL Studio 1m	899	118	ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 23,77,34cm • <i>Transmission line helps bring the best from metal cone driver.</i>	REC'D
Jamo 707A	900	132	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 24,104,39cm • <i>Superb styling and cosmetics and decent balance apart from detached bass.</i>	
Monitor Audio Studio 6	900	118	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 22,35,25cm • <i>Metal diaphragm compact has transparent midband but lacks vigour and drive.</i>	REC'D
Naim IBL Passive	905	94	86dB • 6 Ohms • 65W • 25,80,28cm • <i>Outstanding dynamics; speed and detail is marred by pronounced upper mid forwardness.</i>	
Spendor SP2/3	930		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 28,55,33cm • On stands, free space	
Pioneer S-400	950		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 160W • 27,96,38cm • Biwire, floor stand, shielded	
Jordan Watts JH400M	970		ported • 1 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 82,28,21cm	
Origin Live OL-3	975		ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 19,83,23cm • Floor standing	
Triangle Antal	975		2 driver • 92dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22,102,30cm	
Royd The Prior	978		ported • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 96,37,26cm • Floor standing, free space	
Magnepan SMG-C SE	990		electrostatic • 2 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 43,122,-cm • 2x Quasi-ribbon	
Linnaem LSH	991		hybrid • 90dB • 30,150,38cm • Modified ribbon/dynamic	
ATC SCM10	995		sealed • 2 driver • 80dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 18,38,26cm • Minimum 100wpc, wall/tree use	
B&W Matrix 805 V	995	98	ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 33,33,21cm • <i>Stylish, remarkable imaging, good balance and low colouration.</i>	REC'D
Clements Reference 1	995		86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 20,43,29cm • Ribbon tweeter	
Infinity Kappa 6.1i	995	132	ported • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 31,95,25cm • <i>Good extension, but bass is fat and slow, and dynamics are unconvincing.</i>	
Roksan Ojan 3 Rosewood	995		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 28,74,46cm	
Totem Model One	995	122	ported • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 17,31,23cm • <i>Utterly delightful but exasperatingly expensive luxury miniature sets the benchmark for its size.</i>	REC'D
Prof Monitor Co LB1	998	110	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 18,53,25cm • <i>Delightful smoothness and transparency, though bass and treble are both limited.</i>	REC'D
Audio Note AN-J/SP	999		2 driver • 93dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 38,58,25cm • Free space, stand mount	
Proac Response 1S	999		ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 30,18,23cm	
B&W DM604	1,000		ported • 4 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 100,24,41cm • 3-way, twin bass drivers	
B&W P6	1,000		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 20,100,30cm • Time aligned tweeter	
JPW Ruby 3	1,000		sealed • 3 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 75,19,22cm • Alloy cones	
Monitor Audio MAG902	1,000		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 50,17,20cm • Dual metal cone, wood veneer	
Monitor Audio Studio 12	1,000	143	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 92,17,20cm • <i>A real looker, but sound and content are a bit on the small side for the price.</i>	
Morel 704/2	1,000	143	sealed • 4 driver • 88dB • 150W • 80,23,21cm	
Rega XEL	1,040	132	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 40W • 20,82,30cm • <i>Looks and sounds great: balance bright but even, with delightful coherence and timing.</i>	B'BUY
Impulse Kora	1,095		horn • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 70W • 1,86,31cm • Floor standing	
Celestion 300	1,099	118	2 driver • 84dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 21,97,33cm • <i>Splendid bass extension and fine panel-like openness, but dynamics and timing are suspect.</i>	
KEF Model One	1,099		coupled cavity • 3 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 23,86,30cm • Uni-Q, floor stand, shielded	
Ruark Paladin	1,099		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 88,29,38cm • Floor standing	
Castle Howard S2	1,100	132	horn • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 26,104,41cm • <i>Able fills the gap between Chester and Winchester; has a rich, laid back balance.</i>	REC'D
Heybrook Sextet	1,129	102	ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 27,90,20cm • <i>Coherent and highly analytical, partly due to distinct upper-mid forwardness.</i>	REC'D
Linn Keilidh Aktiv	1,144		sealed • 2 driver • 20,83,28cm • Floor standing, boundary	
Acoustic Energy AE2	1,175		ported • 2 driver • 91 dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 24,40,32cm • Twin bass, metal cone	
Epos ES22	1,185		ported • 3 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 175W • 88,21,25cm • Light cherrywood veneer	
Harbeth BBC LSS/12A	1,195		ported • 2 driver • 81dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 30,18,23cm • Free standing, biwire	
Infinity Kappa 7.1i	1,195		ported • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 225W • 36,108,26cm • Floor standing	
Roksan Ojan 3X Black	1,195		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 28,76,48cm • As Ojan 3, improved drivers	
B&O Beolab 4500	1,200		active • 45W • 45,38,8cm • Attaches to wall, display	
Fullers Pharaoh 2	1,200		ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 80W • 39,100,31cm • Pharaoh 1 with added bass enclosure	
Kenwood LS-700G	1,200		ported • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 120W • 30,90,30cm • European design	
Polk LS70	1,200	132	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 31,94,37cm • <i>High sensitivity, but balance has too much midbass boom; mid-top is laid back.</i>	
Proac Response 4	1,200		ported • 3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 160,36,43cm	
Proac Response 3.5	1,200		ported • 3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 127,29,32cm	
SD Acoustics SD5	1,235	132	ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 20,110,30cm • <i>Bass suspect but forward midband is delightfully smooth. Has ribbon tweeter.</i>	REC'D
Electrocomp The Qube	1,265		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 16,40,28cm • D'Appolito nearfield monitor	
Harbeth HL Compact 7	1,295		ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 52,27,32cm • Free-space, shielded, biwire	
Spica Angelus	1,295	60	sealed • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 53,117,26cm • <i>Light and soft in the bass/mid; but tidy, lively and fluid, if uneven overall.</i>	
Audio Note AN-E/B	1,299	106	2 driver • 94dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 36,84,28cm • <i>Coherent, dynamic and transparent, with extended bass and high sensitivity - but ugly!</i>	REC'D
Audio Physic STEP	1,299		ported • 2 driver • 84dB • 4 Ohms • 60W • 14,33,23cm • Time aligned, space frame stand	
Keswick Audio Alto	1,299		subwoofer • 1 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 19,70,27cm • Subwoofer to match Figaro	
Cerwin Vega 1515	1,300		ported • 6 driver • 103dB • 4 Ohms • 600W • 44,135,46cm • Floor standing, high sensitivity	
JBL L90	1,300	143	sealed • 3 driver • 91dB • 200W • 94,24,35cm	B'BUY
JPW Ruby 4	1,300		ported • 3 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 90,22,26cm • Alloy cones	
Manticores Matisse	1,300		sealed • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 100,28,22cm • Fibrelam honeycomb cabinets	

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
Monitor Audio MAG903	1,300		ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 92,17,20cm • Dual metal cone, wood veneer	
Philips DSS930	1,300		active • 75 Ohms • 22,58,33cm • Active digital loudspeaker	
Spendor SP1/2	1,330		ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 90W • 30,63,30cm • Stand mount, free space	
Apogee Centaur Minor	1,345		hybrid • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 30,88,20cm • Ribbon/dynamic	
Keswick Audio Amber	1,349		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 21,100,30cm • Features magnesium cones	
Magnepan MG-0.6 SE	1,370		electrostatic • 2 driver • 85dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 48,127,-cm • 2x quasi-ribbon	
Thiel SCS	1,379	114	active • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 2,23,41cm • <i>Class leading coherence and communication, but can sound shut-in and dark</i>	REC'D
Linn Kaber Passive	1,389	118	sealed • 3 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 60W • 20,90,28cm • <i>Dry, bright balance emphasises dynamics and transients, but can sound unforgiving.</i>	REC'D
UKD-Opera Divina	1,390		ported • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 24,39,40cm • Solid ash, stand mount	
Roksan Ojan 3X Rosewood	1,395		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 28,74,46cm • As Ojan 3, improved drivers	
Vandersteen 2Ce	1,395	86	ported • 4 driver • 88dB • 7 Ohms • 160W • 41,101,27cm • <i>Elegant staggered baffle contributes to a refreshing freedom from boxiness.</i>	
Linaeum LFX Corian	1,399		hybrid • 90dB • 16,22,18cm • Modified ribbon/dynamic	
Proac Studio 150	1,399		ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 98,19,25cm	
Triangle Zays	1,399		3 driver • 92dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 99,22,28cm	
Yamaha NS-1000	1,399		2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 38,68,36cm	
Celestion 700SE	1,435		sealed • 2 driver • 82dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 20,37,24cm • Aerolam lightweight enclosure	
B&O Beolab 6000	1,450		active • 80W • 20,110,21cm • Column, two amps, shielded	
Mordaunt-Short Perf 860	1,450		90dB • 6 Ohms • 225W • 86,26,35cm • Time-aligned, ResinRock enclosure	
Lowther Fidelio	1,465		horn • 96dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 29,100,43cm	
Tannoy D500	1,470	143	ported • 3 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 175W • 31,93,34cm • <i>Plenty of muscle and stereo, but short of poise and delicacy. Hard work for amps.</i>	
B&W 800ASW	1,495		subwoofer • 1 driver • 43,50,58cm • Active, self-powered subwoofer	
Harbeth HL-5	1,495		ported • 3 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 64,32,31cm • Free standing, biwire	
Sonus-Faber Minima Am.	1,498		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 20,34,31cm • Compact, stand mount	
KEF Model Two	1,499		coupled cavity • 4 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 23,101,30cm • Uni-Q, floor stand, shielded	
Thiel 2	1,499		active • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 22,28,63cm • 15 wood veneers + black	
Thiel CS-5	1,499		active • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 20,28,80cm • 15 wood veneers + black	
Audiovector 3X	1,500	143	ported • 3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 19,32,98cm • <i>Superior time coherence, a wide dynamic range and exception bass/mid balance.</i>	REC'D
B&W Solid 800ASW	1,500		subwoofer • 200W • 43,50,58cm • Active, Matrix enclosure	
JBL Ti 1000	1,500	118	sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 20,30,13cm • <i>Performance compromised by over enthusiastic midbass output from port.</i>	
KAL Trans-double	1,500		2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 23,112,36cm	
ATC SCM20	1,505	86	sealed • 2 driver • 83dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 24,44,31cm • <i>Massively built, invariably informative but the rather forward presentation can be uncomfortable.</i>	
Rogers LS5/9	1,531		ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 28,46,27cm • BBC monitor	
Rehdeko RK115	1,550		ported • 104dB • 8 Ohms • 34,42,28cm	
Genelec 1019A	1,572		active • 28W • 23,31,25cm	
B&W Matrix 804	1,595		ported • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 26,92,26cm • Matrix enclosure	
Impulse Lali	1,595		horn • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 25,99,36cm • Floor standing	
Prof Monitor Co AB1	1,598	114	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 400W • 26,79,43cm • <i>Lovely panel-like transparency, slightly shut-in balance, needs a big room.</i>	
Audio Note AN-E/SP	1,599		3 driver • 94dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 26,84,28cm • Free space, stand mount	
Audio Physic SPARK	1,599		ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 4 Ohms • 70W • 17,40,25cm • Time align, space-frame stand	
Ruark Crusader II	1,599		ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 24,92,32cm • Free space, floor standing	
KAL Warlock	1,600		2 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 250W • 25,113,36cm	
Origin Live Conqueror	1,600		ported • 3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 23,87,23cm • Floor standing	
Pentachord P'column	1,649		sealed • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 80W • 21,108,20cm • Including active crossover	
Acoustic Energy AE3	1,650	86	ported • 3 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 37,27,63cm • <i>Solid, authoritative and impressively accurate - if a shade ponderous and slow.</i>	REC'D
Bose 901 V1	1,650		9 driver • 8 Ohms • 33,53,32cm • Direct/reflecting technology	
Castle Winchester	1,650	90	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 42,108,23cm • <i>Large for its bass extension but engagingly agile, open and airy.</i>	REC'D
Magnepan MG-10 SE	1,650		electrostatic • 2 driver • 85dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 26,173,-cm • 2x quasi-ribbon	
Epos ES25	1,655	143	ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 90,24,35cm • <i>Handsome floorstander with a rather uneven and bass heavy balance.</i>	
Shahinian Arc	1,675	110	sealed • 3 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 35,69,25cm • <i>Occasionally wonderful small floorstanding omni, bright but coherent and revealing.</i>	
Naim SBL Active	1,692		75W • 27,89,27cm • Boundary, floor standing	
Kenwood LS-1000G	1,700		ported • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 160W • 34,110,38cm • European design	
Polk LS90	1,700		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 31,94,37cm • Floorstanding, biampable	
Jordan Watts JH1 + 1 Asp	1,730		ported • 2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 92,40,22cm	
Apogee Ribbon Wall	1,750		hybrid • 89dB • 27,120,7cm • Ribbon/dynamic	
Tannoy Sterling TW	1,750		ported • 2 driver • 93dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 48,70,31cm	
Magnepan MG-1.5 SE	1,780		electrostatic • 2 driver • 85dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 48,163,-cm • 2x quasi-ribbon	
Sonus-Faber Electa	1,790		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 38,27,24cm • Compact, stand mount	
KEF 104/2 REC	1,799	60	coupled cavity • 5 driver • 92dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 28,90,41cm • <i>A reference point for dynamics, best without KUBE, suited to many rooms.</i>	REC'D
Lowther Academy	1,805		horn • 98dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 29,100,43cm • 16 Ohm option	
Naim SBL Passive	1,821	143	88dB • 6 Ohms • 75W • 27,89,27cm • <i>Lively and punchy — smoother but more upfront than before.</i>	REC'D
Ruark Equinox	1,849	140	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 6 Ohms • 150W • 25,88,34cm • <i>Free space, stands in its own right.</i>	REC'D
Proac Studio 200	1,850		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 117,23,28cm • Floor standing	
Triangle Aitinis	1,950		3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 104,22,22cm	
Spendor SP100	1,965		ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 37,70,43cm • Classic monitor, free space	
Spendor SP7/1	1,990		ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 85,30,35cm • Floor standing	
B&W Matrix 803s2	1,995		ported • 4 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 26,101,34cm • Matrix enclosure	
Clements Reference 7	1,995		88dB • 4.5 Ohms • 200W • 25,114,4cm • Ribbon tweeter	
Dawn Audio Symphony	1,995		sealed • 3 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 34,113,32cm • Floor standing	
ATC SCM20 Tower	1,999		sealed • 2 driver • 83dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 24,103,34cm • Floor standing SCM20	
Audio Physic TEMPO	1,999	143	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22,107,47cm • <i>Tall and unusually styled floorstander has stunning stereo but suspect bass tuning.</i>	
B&O Beolab 8000	1,999		active • 100W • 15,132,15cm • Shielded column, int amps	
Gamma Epoch Five	1,999		2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 28,26,90cm • Time aligned, piano black	
KEF Model Three	1,999		coupled cavity • 5 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 27,114,34cm • Uni-Q, magnetically shielded	
Boston Acoustics L300L	2,000		2 driver • 83dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 23,34,28cm • Inc stands, black	
JBL Ti 2000	2,000		sealed • 3 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 33,82,30cm • Asymmetric, double wall	
Proac Response 2S	2,000		ported • 2 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 46,23,28cm	
Lowther Bel Canto	2,035		horn • 97dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 28,132,44cm • Including adjustable stand	
Genelec Blamp 1031A	2,068		active • 104W • 25,39,29cm	
Tannoy D700	2,100		ported • 3 driver • 93dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 37,99,36cm • Ten inch Dual Concentric	
Linn Kaber Aktiv	2,135		sealed • 3 driver • 20,90,28cm • Integral stands	
Monitor Audio Studio 20SE	2,200		ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 20,92,26cm • Floor stand, metal cone bass	
Posselt Albatros	2,200		ported • 93dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 31,186,32cm • Ultra sensitive	
UKD-Opera Caruso II	2,250		ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 22,97,28cm • Solid walnut, floor standing	
Martin-Logan Aeries	2,286		hybrid • 89dB • 23,122,30cm • Two-way	
Apogee Centaur	2,300		hybrid • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 33,102,25cm • Ribbon/dynamic	
Jordan Watts JH1 + 1 As K	2,310		ported • 2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 92,40,22cm	
Helios Sirius II	2,395		ported • 95dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 36,107,16cm	
Apogee Centarus Slant 6	2,400		hybrid • 88dB • Ribbon tweeter, dynamic bass	
TDL Studio Monitor M	2,449		ported • 3 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 27,112,43cm • TLS, metal drivers, int stands	
ECA SERVO A.2	2,450		ported • 2 driver • 80dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 22,102,30cm • True ribbon tweeter	
Shahinian Obelisk	2,490		ported • 3 driver • 89dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 37,74,32cm • Omni-directional	
Fullers Pharaoh 3	2,499		ported • 4 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 46,118,45cm • Pharaoh + bass & subbass encls	
JBL Ti 3000	2,499		sealed • 3 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 46,105,35cm • Asymmetric, double wall	
Allison I.C. 10	2,500		3 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 200W • 48,102,27cm • Floor standing, free space	
Audiovector 5	2,500		4 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 24,110,34cm • Black ash	

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0116 2557518
The Stereo Shack
0116 253 0330
LINCOLN
Superfi
01552 520265
LIVERPOOL
Beaver Hi-Fi
0151 709 9898
Better Hi-Fi
0151 227 5007
Richer Sounds
0151 708 7484
LLANDUDNO
Peter's Hi-Fi
01492 876788
LONDON
A&M Electronics
0171 580 1577
Audio Concept
0181 567 8703
Auditorium
0171 247 5000
Azat
0171 580 4632
Bartletts Hi-Fi
0171 607 2296
Billy Vee Sound
Systems
0181 318 5755
Citysounds
0161 832 1600
Central Radio
0161 834 6700
Practical Hi-Fi
0161 839 8869
Superfi
0161 835 1156
The Hi-Fi Room
0161 832 0888
MARGATE
V.J. Hi-Fi
01843 226977
MIDDLESBOROUGH
Middlesborough
Sound & Vision
01642 223366
MILTON KEYNES
Technosound
01908 604949
NEW MALDEN
Grandix
0181 336 0012</p> | <p>LONDON
M. O'Brien Hi-Fi
0181 946 1528
Musical Images
0171 497 1346
Myers Audio
0181 520 7277
Oranges & Lemons
0171 924 2040
PRC Hi-Fi & Video
0181 470 3499
Richer Sounds
0171 352 8496
Richer Sounds
0171 403 1201
Richer Sounds
0171 722 3359
Richer Sounds
0171 831 2888
Sevenoaks Hi-Fi
0171 352 9466
Sevenoaks Hi-Fi
0181 855 8016
Shasonic
0171 323 0333
Son et Lumiere
0171 580 9059
Sound Sense
0171 402 2100
Spatial Audio &
Video
0171 637 8702
Superfi
0171 388 1300
The Cornflake Shop
0171 631 0472
The Sound
Organisation
0171 403 2255
Thomas Heinz
0171 229 2077
Uxbridge Audio
0181 742 3444
LOSSIEMOUTH
John Munro
01343 812340
LUTON
B&B Hi-Fi
01582 459915
MAIDENHEAD
B&B Hi-Fi
01628 73420
MAIDSTONE
Halksworth
Wheeler
01622 756756
MANCHESTER
Bill Hutchinson
0161 832 1600
Central Radio
0161 834 6700
Practical Hi-Fi
0161 839 8869
Superfi
0161 835 1156
The Hi-Fi Room
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MARGATE
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NEW MALDEN
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0181 336 0012</p> | <p>NEWBURY
B&B Hi-Fi
01635 32474
NEWCASTLE
Bill Hutchinson
0191 230 3600
Richer Sounds
0191 2301392
Linton Audio
0191 232 3994
NEWPORT
Hi-Fi Western
01633 262790
NEWQUAY
Quarterdeck Music
01637 851441
NORTHAMPTON
Listen Inn
01604 37871
NORWICH
Basically Sound
01508 570829
NOTTINGHAM
Forum Hi-Fi & Video
Centre
0115 962 2657
Richer Sounds
0115 9241551
Superfi
0115 9412137
OBAN
Frank Walton Hi-Fi
01631 62917
OLDHAM
Audio Counsel
0161 633 2602
OTLEY
Aston Audio
01943 467689
OXFORD
Oxford Audio
Consultants
01865 790879
Sevenoaks Hi-Fi
01727 855577
Square Deal
Electrical
01727 852501
ST. AUGUSTINE
E.T.S.
01726 75400
ST. NEOTS
A.N. Audio
01480 472071
STAMFORD
Stamford Hi-Fi
Centre
0178062128
STOCKPORT
Richer Sounds
0161 480 1700
Ward & Williams
0161 440 0201
Ward & Williams
0161 430 2934
STOK
Living Designs
01782 260047
Superfi
01782 265010
STOURBRIDGE
Music Matters
01384 444184
STRATFORD UPON AVON
Stratford Hi-Fi
01789 414533
SWANSEA
Quinn's Audio
Visual Systems
01792 773644
SWINDON
Moorgate Acoustics
01709 370666</p> | <p>RUGBY
Sounds Expensive
01788 540772
SAFFRON WALDEN
Chew & Osborne
01799 523728
SCARBOROUGH
Audio One
01723 355654
SEVENOAKS
Performance Hi-Fi
Systems
01124 740425
Sevenoaks Hi-Fi
01732 459555
SHEFFIELD
Moorgate Acoustics
0114 2756048
Richer Sounds
0114 2661616
Superfi
0114 2723768
SHREWSBURY
Creative Audio
01743 241924
Shropshire Hi-Fi
01743 232317
SLOUGH
Frasers Hi-Fi
Video
01753 520244
SOUTHAMPTON
Richer Sounds
01703 231311
Southampton Hi-Fi
Centre
01703 228434
SOUTHPORT
Goodrights
01704 543615
ST. ALBANS
Radlett Audio
01727 855577
Square Deal
Electrical
01727 852501
ST. AUGUSTINE
E.T.S.
01726 75400
ST. NEOTS
A.N. Audio
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STAMFORD
Stamford Hi-Fi
Centre
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Ward & Williams
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STOURBRIDGE
Music Matters
01384 444184
STRATFORD UPON AVON
Stratford Hi-Fi
01789 414533
SWANSEA
Quinn's Audio
Visual Systems
01792 773644
SWINDON
Moorgate Acoustics
01709 370666</p> | <p>THAME
Thame Audio
01844 215431
TORQUAY
Chelston Hi-Fi
01803 606883
TRURO
E.T.S.
01872 79809
TUNBRIDGE WELLS
Sevenoaks Hi-Fi
01892 531543
TUXFORD, nr Newark
Chanry Audio
01777 870372
UXBRIDGE
Uxbridge Audio
01895 230404
WALLINGFORD
Astley Audio
01491 839305
WARRINGTON
Doug Brady Hi-Fi
01925 828009
Practical Hi-Fi
01925 32179
WATFORD
Hi-Fi City
01923 226169
Richer Sounds
01923 218888
Sevenoaks Hi-Fi
01923 213533
WEST WICKHAM
Stirling Sounds
0181 777 9321
WEYBRIDGE
Cosmic
01932 854522
WEYMOUTH
Weymouth Hi-Fi
01305 785729
WHITAM
Practical Hi-Fi
Sevenoaks Hi-Fi
01376 501733
WILMSLOW
Swift Hi-Fi of
Wilmslow
01625 526213
WOKING
Bartletts Hi-Fi
01483 771175
WOLVERHAMPTON
Superfi
01902 772901
WORCESTER
Sevenoaks Hi-Fi
01905 612929
West Midlands
Audio
01905 458046
WORTHING
Bowers & Wilkins
01903 264141
Phase 3 Hi-Fi
01903 245577
Worthing Audio
01903 212133
WREXHAM
Acton Gate Audio
01978 364500
YEovil
Mike Manning
Audio
01935 79361
YORK
Vickers Hi-Fi
01904 629659</p> |
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For further information please write to:
Cable Talk, Unit 12, Farnborough Business Centre, Eelmoor Road, Farnborough, Hants GU14 7XA
 Tel: 01252 373434. Fax: 01252 371818
 Please quote HFC 01/96

PRODUCT

£ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

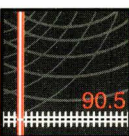
B&O Beolab Penta 3	2,500	active • 150W • 22,165,34cm • Line array column, display	
Celestion Kingston	2,500	ported • 2 driver • 84dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 99,21,35cm • Polymer box, inc stand	
Lumley Reference LM2	2,500	ported • 4 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 33,110,29cm • Open baffle, floor standing	
Lowther Delphic	2,525	horn • 98dB • 4 Ohms • 100W • 28,137,44cm • With adjustable stand	
Magnepan MG-2.7 SE	2,650	electrostatic • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 56,180,-cm • 3x quasi-ribbon	
Impulse Ta'us	2,695	horn • 94dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 31,121,49cm • Floor standing	
SD Acoustics SD1E	2,695	80 ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 30,125,30cm • <i>Large scale, airy and unusually detailed, with excellent dynamics.</i>	REC'D
Ruark Accolade	2,699	ported • 3 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 29,100,38cm • Free space, floor standing	
Proac Response 2.5	2,700	ported • 3 driver • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 107,22,25cm	
Tannoy Edinburgh TW	2,700	ported • 2 driver • 95dB • 8 Ohms • 180W • 66,102,42cm	
Jordan Watts JH1 + 1 As M	2,745	ported • 2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 92,40,22cm	
Jordan Watts Asp JH1 + 1	2,745	sealed • 2 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 40,93,23cm • Matt - alternative finishes extra	
Thiel CS2.2	2,749	active • 3 driver • 86dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 30,33,106cm • 15 wood veneers + black	
Rehdeko RK125	2,750	ported • 102dB • 8 Ohms • 34,61,28cm	
B&W Matrix 802s3	2,795	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 500W • 30,104,37cm • Matrix enclosure	
Helius Syrius I	2,850	ported • 93dB • 4 Ohms • 500W • 36,107,16cm • Floor standing, biwire	
Triangle Altair	2,850	3 driver • 92dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 35,120,30cm • Proprietary tweeter	
Quad ESL-63	2,860	60 electrostatic • 86dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 66,93,27cm • <i>Classic electrostatic lacks punch, but has strengths some can't live without.</i>	REC'D
Sonus-Faber Amator	2,992	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 37,22,35cm • Compact, stand mount	
Martin-Logan Stylos	2,993	hybrid • 2x dB • 88 Ohms • 23,35,28cm • In wall	
Meridian DSP5000	2,995	140 225W • 90,21,30cm • Digital active DSP floor stand	REC'D
Gamma Epoch Ref Five	2,999	2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 95,26,26cm • Time aligned, floor stand	
KEF Model Four	2,999	coupled cavity • 3 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 350W • 30,127,48cm	
Genelec Triamp S30	3,055	active • 108W • 32,50,32cm	
Jordan Watts JH2K	3,230		
Martin-Logan Sequel II	3,277	hybrid • 89dB • 31,160,29cm • Dynamic bass/electrostatic	
Spendor SP9/1	3,300	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 125W • 106,37,44cm • Floor standing monitor	
Audio Physic VIRGO	3,399	ported • 4 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 150W • 16,100,42cm • Floor stand, decoupled tweeter	
ATC SCM50	3,480	ported • 3 driver • 85dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 31,72,43cm • Passive/to special order only	
Apogee CDD Subwoofer	3,490	hybrid • 87dB • 63,38,55cm • Active moving coil sub	
Audio Physic TERRA	3,499	subwoofer • Active sub, adjustable	
JBL Ti 5000	3,499	sealed • 3 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 300W • 48,114,38cm • Asymmetric, double wall	
Tannoy GRFM TW	3,500	ported • 2 driver • 95dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 80,100,48cm	
Horning Agathon	3,570	horn • 2 driver • 96dB • 8 Ohms • 38,48,115cm • Lowther drivers	
MAG Audio A90	3,600	ribbon • 80dB • 3.7 Ohms • 300W • 52,150,8cm • Two-way full range ribbon	
Apogee Stage Sub	3,645	moving coil • 86dB • 58,25,42cm • Active moving coil sub	
Apogee Centarus Slant 8	3,700	hybrid • 88dB • Ribbon treble, dynamic mass	
Electrocomp't Ellipse	3,760	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 43,120,23cm • D'Appolito monitor	
Sound-Lab Dynastat	3,790	hybrid • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 350W • 44,183,41cm • Oak or walnut finish £3990	
B&W Matrix 801s3	3,795	81 ported • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 600W • 44,100,56cm • <i>Lacks transparency and the drama of the best dynamics, but acoustically a tour de force.</i>	REC'D
Magnepan MG-3.5 SE	3,800	electrostatic • 2 driver • 85dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 61,180,-cm • 3x planar, ribbon tweeter	
Thiel CS3.6	3,899	active • 3 driver • 86dB • 4 Ohms • 400W • 32,43,123cm • 15 wood veneers + black	
Triangle Octant Tx	3,950	3 driver • 94dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 42,150,19cm • Ultra high sensitivity	
Apogee Caliper Sig	3,998	81 ribbon • 87dB • 58,127cm • <i>Remarkable transparency and delicacy, loudness and 'grunt' are a bit lacking.</i>	REC'D
KEF 107/2 REC	3,999	coupled cavity • 4 driver • 90dB • 4 Ohms • 300W • 33,116,45cm • Raymond Cooke Special Edition	
Monitor Audio Studio50	4,000	ported • 2 driver • 90dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 20,104,30cm • Floor stand, metal bass & mid	
ATC SCM100	4,033	ported • 3 driver • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 40,84,53cm • Passive/to special order only	
Apogee Stage 1 GS	4,100	ribbon • 86dB • 55,82,5cm • Two way	
Jordan Watts Class JH2KM	4,250	ported • 2 driver • 87dB • 8 Ohms • 150W • 47,82,34cm • Line tweeter array	
Rehdeko RK145	4,250	ported • 102dB • 8 Ohms • 39,66,29cm	
Martin-Logan CLS IIz	4,333	electrostatic • 86dB • 62,127,32cm • Full range panel	
Linn Keltik Aktiv	4,400	sealed • 3 driver • 26,104,37cm • Integral stands/ sobarik bass	
Boston Acoustics L500L	4,449	3 driver • 85dB • 5 Ohms • 350W • 122,23,47cm • Free stand, separate bass/top	
Audiovector 6	4,600	ported • 3 driver • 92dB • 6 Ohms • 250W • 38,115,42cm • Black piano lacquer	
Prof Monitor Co MB1P	4,681	ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 8 Ohms • 500W • 38,87,53cm • Transmission line	
Bravura Brio	4,750	horn • 1 driver • 101dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 129,39,81cm • Coaxial Lowther driver	
ATC SCM50A	4,864	active • 8 Ohms • 350W • 31,72,48cm • With int x'over and amps	
Jordan Watts Classic JH5K	4,875	sealed • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 47,126,40cm • Floor stand, line array	
Shahinian Hawk	4,950	ported • 3 driver • 90dB • 6 Ohms • 250W • 43,95,32cm • Modular, omni-directional	
Apogee Centaur Major	4,980	hybrid • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 40,141,27cm • Ribbon/dynamic	
Genelec Triamp 1037A	4,982	active • 191W • 40,68,30cm	
Martin-Logan Quest Z	4,998	hybrid • 90dB • 42,160,29cm • Dynamic bass/electrostatic tweeter	
TDL Ref Standard-M	4,999	ported • 7 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 800W • 56,121,50cm • Dual TLS, metal drivers	
B&W Silver Signature	5,000	ported • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 120W • 25,45,24cm • External crossover	
Allison I.C. 20	5,000	2 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 400W • 53,122,31cm • Floor standing, free space	
Bravura Accelerando	5,000	horn • 1 driver • 103dB • 8 Ohms • 100W • 129,39,81cm • Coaxial Lowther driver	
Sonus-Faber Guarneri	5,000	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 19,38,38cm • Compact, limited edition	
Tannoy Canterbury 12 ^	5,000	ported • 2 driver • 94dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • 58,90,43cm	
Audio Physic AVANTI	5,599	ported • 4 driver • 86dB • 4 Ohms • 200W • 19,107,40cm • Decoupled mid/tweeter	
Wilson WAP Puppy II	5,600	subwoofer • 91dB • 25,53,35cm • Passive subwoofer for WATT	
ATC SCM100A	5,660	active • 8 Ohms • 350W • 40,84,59cm • With int x'over and amps	
Jordan Watts Class JH5KM	5,860	ported • 2 driver • 89dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 47,125,40cm • Line driver array	
Sonus-Faber Extrema	5,991	ported • 2 driver • 88dB • 55,27,46cm • 'Reference Standard'	
Tannoy Westminster TW	6,000	Col ported • 2 driver • 99dB • 8 Ohms • 200W • <i>These awesome horn loaded speakers are remarkably controlled and impressive.</i>	REC'D
Jamo Oriel	6,500	ported • 3 driver • 87dB • 6 Ohms • 300W • 40,178,30cm • Coupled cavity, flagship model	
Prof Monitor Co BB5P	6,754	ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 600W • 43,104,79cm • Transmission line	
Sound-Lab Pristine II	6,990	electrostatic • 88dB • 8 Ohms • 300W • 72,153,69cm • Steel frame, curved panel	
Naim DBL Active	6,991	200W • 65,120,40cm • Boundary, floor standing	
Tannoy Canterbury 15 ^	7,000	ported • 2 driver • 96dB • 8 Ohms • 250W • 68,110,48cm	
Wilson WAP Puppy 5	7,375	subwoofer • 91dB • Passive sub for WATTs	
Rehdeko RK175	7,750	ported • 106dB • 8 Ohms • 50,96,37cm	
Shahinian Diapason	8,350	ported • 5 driver • 91dB • 6 Ohms • 300W • 58,100,38cm • Omni-directional	
Lumley Reference LM1	8,500	ported • 5 driver • 89dB • 4 Ohms • 500W • 71,122,40cm • 2 box, floor standing	
Martin-Logan Monolith IIP	8,730	hybrid • 89dB • 59,163,28cm • ESL/dynamic, two-way	
Wilson WATT 5	8,800	ported • 2 driver • 91dB • 27,31,36cm	
Jordan Watts Class JH10K	9,340	sealed • 2 driver • 92dB • 8 Ohms • 500W • 47,156,40cm • Floor stand, line array	
Martin-Logan Monolith IIX	9,354	hybrid • 89dB • 59,163,26cm • ESL/dynamic, active crossover	
Infinity ARS Epsilon	9,995	sealed • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 500W • 152,47,41cm • Includes own servo control amp	
Audio Physic CALDERA	9,999	5 driver • 91dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 25,111,50cm • Pneumatic baffle, 3 cabinet	
Magnepan MG-20 SE Pass	10,300	electrostatic • 2 driver • 87dB • 4 Ohms • 250W • 74,201,-cm • 3x planar, ribbon tweeter	
Thiel CS7	10,476	active • 4 driver • 88dB • 4 Ohms • 500W • 35,48,140cm • 15 wood veneers + black	
Jordan Watts JH10KM	10,495	sealed • 2 driver • 92dB • 8 Ohms • 500W • 47,156,40cm • Line driver array	

SATELLITES & SUBWOOFERS

JPW Av2	300	sub & 5 sats • 8ohms • 87dB • 51,26,27cm • Minim/Subwoofer
JPW AV1	300	sub & 5 sats • 8ohms • 85dB • 51,26,27cm • Satellites/Subwoofer

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS
B&W Solid Verticale	400	Sub, 2 x sat • 89 • 19,34,45cm
JPW AV4	400	2 sub & 5 sats • 8ohms • 87dB • 51,26,27cm • Minim/Subwoofer
JPW AV3	400	2 sub & 5 sats • 8ohms • 85dB • 51,26,27cm • Satellite/Subwoofer
Polk M Solution	999	sub, 4 sats • 8ohms • 89dB • 28,50,36cm
Polk RM7000	999	8ohms • 89dB • 28,50,36cm • su, 2 x sat, 1 x centre

ACTIVE SUBWOOFERS		
Aiwa TS-W5	150	Stereo • 50W
Aiwa TS-W7	200	stereo • 100W
Kenwood SW-500	250	stereo • 50W • 29,50,48cm
Kenwood SW-900	260	Stereo • 70W • 21,40,56cm
B&W Solid Powerbass	300	stereo • 75W • 33,34,39cm
Polk PSW100	499	1-box sterep • 65 W • 28,50,36cm
Triangle SAT III	650	stereo • 140W
B&W 800ASW	1,500	stereo • 200W • THX • 43,58,50cm



Tuners & Receivers

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 Prom concerts rival all other sources from a hi-fi perspective.

■ Only the FM (VHF) bands give stereo hi-fi sound, though AM (MW & LW) are useful for certain transmissions in the UK.

■ Something of a hi-fi afterthought, tuners are often selected merely to match the cosmetics of a chosen amplifier. However, 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 local reception conditions, but money invested in a high-quality outside aerial system is well spent.

■ Tuners come in two basic types. Analogue models tune gradually (and usually manually) across the bands, and can have analogue or digital displays; they are often preferred for sound quality, and are certainly best for AM bands.

Digital tuners offer convenient automatic tune facilities and pre-set memories.

■ RDS (radio data system) is a feature 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.

■ Receivers are amplifiers with tuners built in. They are often equipped with surround-sound processing.

Key

FM, M	.....wavebands received	A/V
surround sound capability	.....	.75W
power output/channel in Watts RMS	.....
30 presets	.....number of presets offered	
MM,3L,3T	.....number of inputs offered (see Amplifier category)	
RDShas Radio Data System compatibility	

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS
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TUNERS		
Goodmans GST650	90	FM,M,L • 36 presets
Sherwood TD1120	90	FM,M • 24 presets
Goodmans Delta 700	100	FM,M,L • 36 presets • 36,11,30cm
Sherwood TX1010C	100	FM,M • 30 presets
Denon TU-260L	120	93 FM,M,L • 20 presets • 44,8,24cm • <i>Careful minimalist design promises a surprisingly open and vivacious sound.</i>
Grundig T210	120	FM,M,L • 59 presets • Manual station name
Kenwood KT-1060L	120	FM,M,L • 30 presets • 44,8,26cm • Preset scan
Sherwood TX3010C	120	120 FM,M • 30 presets • <i>Lots of features and fine FM discrimination for price. Sound is communicative but inconsistently tacky.</i>
Teac T-4030	120	142 FM,M • 20 presets • 44,9,28cm • <i>Not much special, but still a well balanced, tolerable and capable all-rounder at a very reasonable price.</i>
Grundig Fine Arts T1	130	FM,M,L • 59 presets • 44,9,30cm • User station name, gain switch
JVC FX362BX	130	129 FM,M,L • 40 presets • 44,8,30cm • <i>Disappointing all-round performance — watch out for aerial overload in strong signal areas. Tuning knob unspecial</i>
Pioneer F-203RDS	130	FM,M,L • 30 presets • RDS • 42,8,29cm • RDS at very budget price
Sony STS211LB	130	FM,M,L • 30 presets • 43,9,30cm • Station naming
Yamaha TX-480L	139	FM,M,L • 40 presets • 44,9,30cm
Grundig T310	140	FM,M,L • 59 presets • RDS • 36,8,30cm • RDS (PS, CT, RT, PTY)
Kenwood KT-2060L	140	FM,M,L • 30 presets • 44,8,26cm • Built-in timer, RDS
Denon TU-215RD	150	FM,M • 20 presets • RDS • 44,8,24cm • RDS Radiotext
Marantz ST-55	150	FM,M,L • 59 presets • 42,10,34cm • D-bus
Technics ST-GT350L	150	142 FM,M,L • 30 presets • 43,7,30cm • Remote control capable
Onkyo T-401	160	FM,MW • 40 presets • 46,8,31cm
Philips FT930	160	FM,M,L • 40 presets • RDS • 44,11,30cm
Grundig Fine Arts T2	170	FM,M,L • 59 presets • RDS • 44,9,30cm • RDS (PS, RT)
Kenwood KT-3050L	170	120 FM,M,L • 39 presets • RDS • 44,10,28cm • <i>Excellent RF performance and plenty of features including RDS, but ordinary sound.</i>
Pioneer F-303RDS	180	FM,M • 40 presets • RDS • 42,8,29cm • RDS with FON
Onkyo T-430RDS	190	142 FM/MW • 30 presets • RDS • 46,9,30cm
Yamaha TX-580RDS	199	FM,M • 40 presets • RDS • 44,9,30cm
Denon TU-380RD	200	FM,M • 40 presets • RDS • 44,8,24cm • RDS Radiotext/EON
Luxman T-353	200	FM,M • 30 presets • 9,44,36cm • System bus remote control
Sony STS311LB	200	FM,M,L • 30 presets • RDS • 43,9,30cm • RDS EON, 'Autobetical' select
Technics ST-GT550L	200	FM,M,L • 39 presets • RDS • 43,7,31cm • Remote control capable, RDS
Grundig Fine Arts T4	210	FM,M • 59 presets • RDS • 44,9,30cm • RDS (PS, CT, RT, PTY)
Arcam Alpha 5 Plus	220	142 FM,M • 24 presets • 43,8,27cm • Signal strength meter
Rotel RT-950BX	220	142 FM,M,L • 20 presets • 44,8,24cm
Onkyo T-409	230	FM,MW • 30 presets • 28,8,30cm • Mini component
Pioneer F-502RDS	250	FM,M • 40 presets • RDS • 42,9,34cm • 2 aerial inputs
Sony STS505ES	250	FM,M,L • 30 presets • RDS • 43,9,35cm • UK optimised sound
Technics ST-GT650L	250	FM,M,L • 39 presets • RDS • 43,10,31cm • Class AA, remote control ready
Onkyo T-450RDS	260	FM,MW • 30 presets • RDS • 46,9,31cm
Onkyo T-411RDS	280	FM,MW • 30 presets • RDS • 28,8,30cm • Mini component
Harman-Kardon TU9400	299	142 FM,M • 24 presets • 45,8,33cm • <i>This striking tuner exceeded our expectations. On stereo FM, it's HK's best yet</i>
Kenwood KT-6050	300	FM,M • 39 presets • RDS • 44,10,33cm • IF switch, two antennae, RDS
Marantz ST-72	300	FM,M,L • 59 presets • RDS • 42,10,34cm • D-bus, IF switch, local switch
Musical Fidelity E50	300	FM • 20 presets • 44,10,34cm
Aura TU80	350	FM,M,L • 30 presets • 43,6,27cm • Chrome finish add £50
Nakamichi ST3s	350	FM • 30 presets • 43,7,32cm
Arcam Delta 280	399	120 FM • 20 presets • 43,7,28cm • <i>Fine sound quality marred by mild synthesiser whine; RF performance only average. remote £60 extra</i>
Mission Cyrus FM7	400	142 FM • 29 presets • 22,8,36cm • Remote control bus
Onix BWD1	420	FM • 75,23,37cm • In-house front end
Onkyo R-811RDS	420	FM,MW • 30 presets • RDS • 28,12,33cm • Mini component, incl timer
Harman-Kardon TU9600	499	109 FM,M • 24 presets • 45,8,33cm • <i>Good bass, detail — and slightly enhanced dynamics</i>
Musical Fidelity E500	499	FM • 20 presets • 44,12,35cm • AGC/IF switch, remote control
Rotel RT-990BX	500	FM • 16 presets • 44,8,29cm • Remote control
Naim NAT03	549	FM • 43,56,30cm
Magnum Dynalab FT11	550	FM • Analogue, black finish
Quad FM66	554	142 FM • 19 presets • 33,8,26cm • <i>Very pretty and compact but technically unadventurous. Sound is smooth, but only makes sense in Quad system context.</i>
AVI S2000MT	599	FM • 16 presets • 31,25,9cm • R/C via system handset
Meridian 504	625	FM • 30 presets • 33,9,34cm • System handset

PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

Audiolab 8000T	750	142	FM, M, L • 39 presets • 45,8,36cm • <i>Unusually combination of fine sound quality and RF performance (inc AM), and superb ergonomics</i>	B'BUY
Magnum Dynalab FT101	825	72	FM • <i>Although fairly expensive given its minimum set of facilities, its excellent sound provided ample compensation.</i>	REC'D
Michi RHT-10	895		FM • 16 presets • 47,8,34cm • Remote control	
Musical Fidelity FT	899		FM • 20 presets • 49,12,33cm • Remote control, AGC/IF switch	
Naim NAT02	998		FM • 43,56,30cm	
Magnum FT101 Etude	1,250		FM • Analogue, black finish	
Meridian 604	1,350	120	FM • 30 presets • <i>Unique digital converter makes most sense in Meridian system context: smooth, sweet sound with fine front end.</i>	REC'D
McIntosh MR7084	1,550		FM, M • 50 presets • 45,14,45cm • Interface to McIntosh remote control	
Naim NAT01	1,599	142	FM • 43,56,30cm • <i>There may be better sounding tuners in the world, but we have yet to hear one.</i>	REC'D
Linn Kremlin	1,995	142	FM • 80 presets • 32,8,33cm • <i>Controversially good sound at a very high price. The reviewer's saving up but you should check it out for yourself.</i>	REC'D
Day Sequerra FM Ref	5,937		FM	
Day Sequerra S B'dcast M	14,640		FM	

RECEIVERS

Sherwood RX1010	120		FM, M • 30W • MM,2L,1T	
Grundig R210	150		FM, M, L • 50W • 59 presets • MM,5L • rem • 36,12,30cm • Gain switch, remote	
Denon DRA-265R	200		FM, M • 35W • 40 presets • MM,2L,1T • rem • 44,12,31cm	
Dual CR9000RS	200		FM, M, L • 55W • 30 presets • MM,4L,2T • rem • 44,14,30cm • System component	
JVC RX-212BK	200		FM, M, L • 50W • 40 presets • MM,3L,1T • rem • 44,13,34cm • 4ch surround	
Pioneer SX-203RDS	200		FM, M • 35W • 30 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem • 42,14,29cm • RDS tuner	
Technics SA-GX190L	200		FM, M, L • 60W • 30 presets • MM,2L,2 • rem • 43,13,31cm	
Kenwood KR-A4070	230		FM, M • 60W • 20 presets • MM,3L,2T • rem • 44,13,33cm • RDS	
Sony STRD311	230		FM, M, L • A/V • 60W • 30 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem • 43,14,30cm • System remote	
Denon DRA-365RD	250		FM, M • 45W • 40 presets • MM,3L,1T • rem • 44,12,32cm • System remote	
Grundig Fine Arts R2	250		FM, M, L • 50W • 59 presets • MM,5L • rem • 44,14,30cm • RDS, Radio text, remote	
Pioneer SX-303RDS	250		FM, M • 50W • 30 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem • 42,14,34cm • RDS tuner	
Yamaha RX-385RDS	269		FM, M • 40W • 40 presets • MM,3L,1T • rem • 44,13,30cm • System remote	
JVC RX-416VBK	270		FM, M, L • A/V • 50W • 40 presets • MM,1L,3T • rem • 44,13,35cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
NAD 701	279		FM, M • 25W • 24 presets • MM,2L,1T • rem	
Sony STRD511	280		FM, M, L • A/V • 50W • 30 presets • MM,3L,2T • rem • 43,14,30cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
Yamaha RX-V390RDS	299		FM, M • A/V • 60W • 40 presets • MM,3L,2T,2V • rem • 44,14,30cm • AV amp, 'stereo' surround	
Kenwood KR-V5570	300		FM, M • A/V • 50W • 20 presets • MM,4L,2T • rem • 44,14,34cm • Dolby Pro Logic, RDS	
Technics SA-GX390L	300		FM, M, L • A/V • 50W • 30 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem • 43,13,36cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
Denon DRA-565RD	320		FM, M • 55W • 40 presets • MM,3L,2T • rem • 44,12,32cm • RDS	
Sherwood RV5030R	330		FM, M, L • A/V • 80W • MM,4L,4T • rem • Dolby Pro Logic	
Sony STRD611	330		FM, M, L • A/V • 60W • 30 presets • MM,3L,2T • rem • 43,14,30cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
NAD 705	349		FM, M • 40W • 39 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem	
JVC RX-616RBK	350		FM, M, L • A/V • 50W • 40 presets • MM,1L,3T • rem • 44,16,41cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
JVC RX-508VBK	350		FM, M, L • A/V • 50W • 40 presets • MM,1L,3T • rem • 44,13,34cm • 5ch Dolby Pro Logic	
Kenwood KR-V6070	350		FM, M • A/V • 70W • 20 presets • MM,4L,2T • rem • 44,17,34cm • RDS, Dolby Pro Logic	
Technics SA-GX470L	350		FM, M, L • A/V • 80W • 30 presets • MM,4L,1T • rem • 43,14,36cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
Kenwood KR-V7070	400		FM, M • A/V • 100W • 20 presets • MM,3L,2T • rem • 44,15,40cm • Dolby Pro Logic, RDS	
Pioneer VSX-452	400		FM, M • A/V • 50W • 30 presets • MM,2L,2T,2V • rem • 42,14,35cm • Dolby Pro-Logic	
Sherwood RV6030R	400		FM, M, L • A/V • 100W • MM,4L,4T • rem	
Yamaha RX-V590RDS	449		FM, M • A/V • 70W • 40 presets • MM,3L,3T,4V • rem • 44,15,39cm • True DSP	
Philips FR940	450		FM, M, L • A/V • 100W • 30 presets • MM,4L,4T • rem • 44,14,30cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
Teac AG-V3020	450		FM, M • A/V • 95W • 30 presets • MM,4L,3T • rem • 44,16,38cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
Technics SA-GX690L	450		FM, M, L • A/V • 100W • 30 presets • MM,4L,1T • rem • 43,16,36cm • Dolby Pro-Logic, help function	
Denon AV-1000	530		FM, M • A/V • 70W • 16 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem • 44,15,33cm • Auto input balance	
JVC RX-808VBK	570		FM, M, L • A/V • 70W • 40 presets • MM,1L,3T • rem • 44,16,40cm • 5ch Dolby Pro Logic	
Marantz SR-73	599		FM, M • A/V • 75W • 30 presets • MM,3L,3T • rem • 43,15,38cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
Marantz SR-82	899		FM, M • A/V • 75W • 30 presets • MM,3L,2T • rem • 43,17,43cm • Dolby Pro Logic, multi-room	
B&O Beomaster 7000	920		FM, M, L • 75W • 20 presets • MM,2L,2T • rem	
Harman-Kardon AVR-30	999		FM, M • A/V • 50W • 16 presets • MM,3L,3T,6V • rem • 45,13,35cm • Dolby Pro Logic	
Kenwood KR-X1000	1,300		FM, M • A/V • 110W • 20 presets • MM,8L,2T • rem • 44,17,40cm • THX, Dolby PL, RDS	
McIntosh MX118	3,075		FM, M • A/V • 12 presets • 5L • rem • 45,14,45cm • AV tuner control centre	
McIntosh MX130	4,285		FM/M • A/V • 12 presets • 4L,6V • rem • 45,18,46cm • AV tuner controller, opt THX	

Turntables & Arms

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.

Key to turntables
 manual, automatic type of operation
 33/45 rpm speeds offered

Key to tonearms
 SME fit type of cut-out into which arm mounts
 233mm effective length of arm

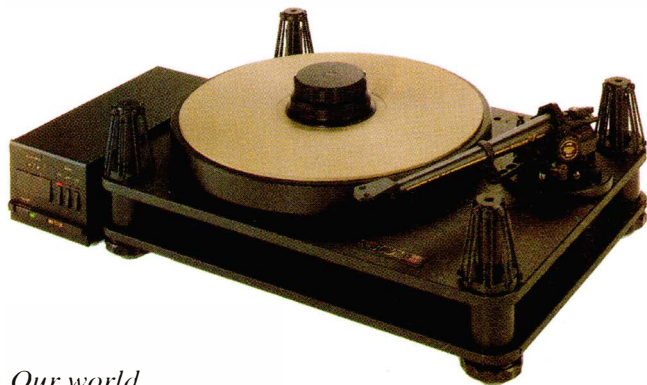
PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

TURNTABLES

Goodmans Delta 700	55		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 36,90,37cm • Part of Delta system	
Genexxa Lab-710	60		manual • 33/45rpm • Includes MM cartridge	
Genexxa Lab-810	70		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • Includes MM cartridge	
Sherwood PS1870	70		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • Budget turntable with arm	
Dual CS3700/3701	85		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 36,10,36cm • Midi-sized turntable	
Sony PSLX150H	90		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 43,10,36cm • Player, with MM cartridge	
Kenwood KD-492F	100		auto • 33/45rpm • 44,10,39cm • Includes cartridge	
Pioneer PL-225	120		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 42,10, 36cm • Belt drive, fitted cartridge	
NAD 5120	129		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • Includes arm	
Dual CS435	130		33/45rpm • 44,12,36cm • Turntable includes cartridge	
Systemdek I/920	136		manual • 33/45rpm • Semi-suspended deck	
Pro-ject 0.5	145		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 42, 11, 3cm • With Ortofon OM5 cartridge	
Pioneer PL-335	150		auto • 33/45rpm • 42,10,36cm • Belt drive, fitted cartridge	
Sony PSLX431B	150		auto • 33/45rpm • 43,11,36cm • Player, auto rec size select	
Ariston Pro-1200	160		manual • 33/45rpm • Semi-pro disco deck	
Technics SL-BD20	160		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 43,10,38cm • Belt drive, includes T4P cartr	
Dual CS503-2	170	91	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 44,13,37cm • <i>Not wholly inspiring; generally coarse and woolly sound, easily bettered by the CS-505-3.</i>	REC'D
Moth Alamo	175		manual • 33/45rpm • Comes with RB250 arm	
Akai AP A950	179		manual • 33/45rpm • 44,12,35cm • Inc cartridge	
Grundig TT1	180		auto • 33/45rpm • Black finish	
Technics SL-BD22	180		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 43,10,38cm • Belt drive, includes T4P cartr	

SME

Analogue lovers ...

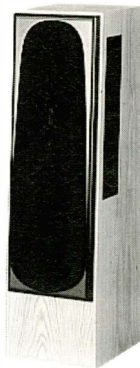


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PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
Thorens TD-180/AT91	180		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • Belt drive	
Pro-ject 1	185		manual • 33/45rpm • 42, 11, 3cm • With Ortofon 510 cartridge	
Rega Planar 78	198		manual • 78rpm • 45,13,37cm • As Rega Planar 2, 78 only	
Rega Planar 2	198	48	manual • 33/45rpm • 45,13,37cm • A remarkable product at the price, surprisingly articulate and confident.	B'BUY
Moth Turntable	199		manual • 33/45rpm • Split-plinth design	
Dual 505-4 UK	200	103	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • 44,15,37cm • Consistent sounding and well isolated turntable. Slightly lacking oomph, but an unmuddled presentation.	REC'D
Thorens TD180/S500	200		33/45/78rpm • Belt drive, plays 78s	
Thorens TD-280 IV/UK	200		semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • Electronic belt drive, AT95E	
Thorens TD-166 VI/UK/BC	200		manual • 33/45rpm • Blank armboard, cut to shape,	
Pro-ject 1 (E)	209		semi arm lift • 33,45rpm • 42,11,32cm • Semi-auto version of Pro-ject	
Systemdek IIX/900	230	103	manual • 33/45rpm • A high performance budget turntable that is particularly strong at fine detail resolution and imagery.	B'BUY
Systemdek I/920/Moth	235	115	manual • 33/45rpm • The motor is derivative of the Rega Planar 2 with a Moth arm. Uptempo, even bright at times but never lacks enthusiasm.	REC'D
Moth Kanoot Mk I Arm	249		manual • 33/45rpm • Inc Rega RB250 arm	
Pro-ject 2	249		manual • 33/45rpm • 46, 12, 3cm • Metal/glass platter, clamp	
Rega Planar 3	260	48	manual • 33/45rpm • 45,13,37cm • A long time leader in its category, the '3 sounds nicely musical in a balanced and coherent manner.	B'BUY
Thorens TD-166 VI/UK/95E	270		manual • 33/45rpm • Inc TP50 manual arm, AT95E	
Pro-ject 2/Ortofon	275		manual • 33/45rpm • 46, 12, 3cm • With Ortofon MC1 cartridge	
Moth Kanoot Mk III Arm	299		manual • 33/45rpm • Inc Rega RB300 arm	
Thorens TD-166 VI/UK250	300	103	manual • 33/45rpm • Refined and solid sound with well focussed imagery; suitable for use with good MM and budget MC cartridges.	B'BUY
Linn Basik	349	103	manual • 33/45rpm • 45,14,36cm • Strong midband analysis and imagery; clean if sharp treble is matched to a good if occasionally wooden bass.	REC'D
Dual CS750-1	350		semi arm lift • 33/45/78rpm • 44,14,38cm • Turntable includes cartridge	
Pro-ject 6	379		manual • 33/45rpm • 46, 17, 3cm • Suspended turntable	
Systemdek IIXE/900Ap	388	103	manual • 33/45rpm • The acrylic platter I XE is one of the most capable budget decks on the market: good resolution, dynamics and timing.	REC'D
MicHELL Mycro	397		manual • 33/45rpm • 46,14,34cm	
Pro-ject 6/Ortofon	435		manual • 33/45rpm • 46, 17, 3cm • As above, with Ortofon MC15	
Dual Golden II	500		semi arm lift • 33/45/78rpm • 44,14,38cm • Piano finish CS750-1	
Technics SL-1210MkII	500		manual • 33/45rpm • 46,17,36cm • Quartz DD, no cartridge	
Technics SL-1200MkII	500		manual • 33/45rpm • 43,10,38cm • Quartz DD, includes T4P cartri	
MicHELL Mycro/arm	539		manual • 33/45rpm • 46,14,34cm • Includes Rega RB300 arm	
Manticore Madrigal	570		manual • 33/45rpm • 46,36,12cm • Turntable, lifetime guarantee	
Roksan Radius	595		manual • 33/45rpm • 45,12,35cm • Motor unit	
Notts Analogue Spacedeck	600		manual • 33,45rpm	
Notts Analogue Illusion	600		manual • 33/45rpm	
Thorens TD-3001BC	630		manual • 33/45rpm • No arm, but various armboards are available	
Pro-ject 6/Sumiko	699	138	manual • 33/45rpm • 46,17,3cm • With Sumiko arm	REC'D
Thorens TD-2001	700	91	semi arm lift • 33/45rpm • Similar to TD320 but much dearer - why? Sound is comfortable but not very detailed.	
Linn LP12 Basik	745	103	manual • 33rpm • 45,14,36cm • With Akito, trails the full LP12 significantly, but pace, timing etc still in top class, and bass tauter than of old.	REC'D
MicHELL Gyrodec	765	55	manual • 33/45rpm • 53,19,41cm • Sweet and natural player, well matched to Rega RB300. Acres of clear acrylic are very distinctive.	REC'D
Thorens TD-3001/UK	770	103	manual • 33/45rpm • Excellent middle ranking esoterica, with strong all-round abilities rather than excellence in particular areas.	REC'D
Roksan Radius/Tabriz	795		manual • 33/45rpm • 45,12,36cm • As above, with Roksan arm	
Townshend MkIII Rock	799		manual • 33/45rpm • Headshell end arm damping	
Alphason Sonata	835		manual • 33rpm • Good sound in all areas - bass, clarity and neutrality all in top class and bettered by very few decks at price (with HR100S MCS).	REC'D
Manticore Mantra	890		manual • 33/45rpm • 46,36,12cm • Turntable, lifetime guarantee	
Linn LP12 Valhalla	894		manual • 33/45rpm • 45,14,36cm • Electronic PSU, upgradable	
Roksan Radius/Tabriz zi	895	103	manual • 33/45rpm • 45,12,35cm • Musically it offers exceptional performance with a minimum of fuss.	REC'D
Origin Live Oasis-S	899		manual • 33rpm • Suspended turntable	
Thorens TD-520	900		semi arm lift • 33/45/78rpm • Pitch control, no arm	
MicHELL Gyrodec/arm	907		manual • 33/45rpm • 53,19,41cm • Includes Rega RB300 arm	
Pink Triangle Export	948	91	manual • 33/45rpm • 46,15,37cm • The PT100 with built-in PS. Transparent and neutral, but review sample had high motor noise.	REC'D
Kuzma Stabi/PS	1,200	91	manual • 33/45rpm • 51, 18, 4cm • (Tested with Stogi Reference) Solid oak plinth; sound is very clear, detailed and extended.	REC'D
Notts Analogue H.Space dk	1,200		manual • 33/45rpm	
Notts Analogue Graphic	1,200		manual • 33/45rpm	
Alphason Sonata/Atlas	1,235		manual • 33/45rpm • Motor unit inc PSU	
Linn LP12 Lingo	1,345	91	manual • 33/45rpm • 45,14,36cm • The classic reference is improved by the Lingo, but charming character remains.	REC'D
Roksan Xerxes 10	1,495		manual • 33/45rpm • 45,12,35cm • Black/rosewood veneers	
Wilson Benesch	1,550		manual • 33/45rpm • High-tech turntable	
Riveline Audio Eclipse	1,595	144	manual • 33/45rpm • 45,13,38cm • Motor unit	
Audiomeca Romance	1,675		manual • 33/45rpm • With Romeo unipivot arm	
Pink Triangle Anniversary	1,797	91	manual • 33/45rpm • 45,15,37cm • Possibly the most detailed, clear and neutral sounding deck around. Likeness to master tape is uncanny.	REC'D
Well Temp'd Rec Player	1,800	67	manual • 33/45rpm • 45,18,36cm • Intriguing design. Muically it is not ideal, but has a limpid quality and a lack of artificiality that sets standards.	REC'D
Alphason Symphony	1,860		manual • 33/45rpm • Motor unit & PSU	
MicHELL Orbe	1,950		manual • 33/45rpm • 55,29,71cm • Inc QC power supply	
Pink Triangle Anni/DC PSU	2,173		manual • 33/45rpm • 45,15,37cm • Battery PSU version of above	
Notts Analogue Mentor	2,200		manual • 33/45rpm • 75lb alloy or graphite platter	
Audiomeca J1	2,500		manual • 33/45rpm • 50, 40, 2cm • Top of the range model	
Roksan TMS	2,750		manual • 33/45rpm • 45,12,35cm • Black lacquer	
Well Tempered Classic	2,800		manual • 33/45rpm • 48,19,39cm • The original Well Tempered	
Kuzma Stabi Ref/PS	3,000		manual • 33/45rpm • Two motor, belt driven	
SME Model 20	3,240		manual • 33/45/78rpm • 42,16,32cm • Precision turntable	
DNM Reson Rota 1	3,500		manual • 33/45rpm • 59,14,37cm • Inc arm & cartridge	
Well Tempered Super	3,500		manual • 33/45rpm • 49,19,39cm • Classic with carbon arm	
Manticore Magister	3,800		manual • 33/45rpm • 57,46,18cm • Special order only	
Voyd 0.5	3,940	144	manual • 33/45rpm • 51,16,42cm • Cross between standard and Reference Voyds. Superb finish, colourful and dynamic.	REC'D
Audiomeca J1/SL5	4,250		manual • 33/45rpm • 50, 40, 2cm • With parallel tracking arm	
SME Model 20A	4,535	118	manual • 33/45/78rpm • 42,15,32cm • Supplied with Series V arm. Engineered to last a lifetime, giving excellent stereo and detail retrieval.	
Basis Ovation II	4,800		manual • 33/45rpm • 58,42,14cm • Lead/brass, record clamped	
DNM Rota 2	4,800	144	manual • 33/45rpm • 59,14,37cm • Includes arm and cartridge	REC'D
Notts Analogue Mentor Ref	4,800		manual • 33/45rpm • 150lb platter, graphite top	
Well Tempered Reference	5,000		manual • 33/45rpm • 49,19,39cm • 'Fountainhead' base/carbon arm	
Voyd Reference	6,500	91	manual • 33/45rpm • 51,16,48cm • Voyd's flagship, equipped with three substantial motors, is a strong contender for world's best.	REC'D
Basis Debut Gold Std III	7,200		manual • 33/45rpm • 58,42,19cm • Belt drive high mass, four pole motor	
Basis Debut Gold Vacuum	9,250		manual • 33/45rpm • 58,42,19cm • Includes suction platter	
SME Model 30	10,166		manual • /78rpm • 45,22,35cm • Flagship turntable	
SME Model 30A	11,460		manual • 33/45/78rpm • 45,22,35cm • As above, with SME Series V arm	

TONEARMS				
Decca LI Arm	49		changeable armtube • proprietary fit • 212mm • Damped	
Moth Arm	95	60	fixed armtube • The ultimate budget arm? Refined, sweet, detailed and natural.	B'BUY
Rega RB250	95		fixed armtube • 237mm • Scaled down RB300	
Decca LIR Arm	99		changeable armtube • proprietary fit • 212mm • Rewired version of LI	
Rega RB300	139	60	fixed armtube • 237mm • Despite its modest price it sets exceptional standards and could be used on many high end turntables.	B'BUY
Moth Mk III	146		fixed armtube • Rebadged Rega RB300	
Linn Akito	209		fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • Statically balanced	
SME Series IHS	242		changeable armtube • SME fit • 233mm • Economy version of Series III	
SME 3009 Ser II Imp	268		fixed armtube • SME fit • 231mm • Fixed headshell, low mass	
Roksan Tabriz Basic	275	91	fixed armtube • proprietary fit • 240mm • Targetted at the Xerxes, this is a good alternative to the Rega arm in many cases - a touch bright though.	REC'D

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
Alphason Xenon	286		fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • 1-piece titanium armtube	
SME 3009 S2 Ser II Imp	292		removable headshell • SME fit • 231mm • Detachable headshell, medium mass	
SME Series III	335		changeable armtube • SME fit • 233mm • Ultra-low mass for hi-compliance	
Notts Analogue Space	350		changeable armtube • proprietary fit • Optional silver wiring, unipivot	
Alphason Xenon MCS	370		fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • vdH silver wiring	
Manticore Musician	395		fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 230mm • Handmade, lifetime guarantee	
Roksan Tabriz Zi	395		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • 240mm • 'Intelligent' counterweight	
SME Series II 3009-R	445		removable headshell • SME fit • 233mm • Heavier version of Ser II S2 I	
SME Series II 3010-R	455		removable headshell • SME fit • 239mm • Detachable headshell, 10 inch	
Zeta as	469		Pivoted	
SME Series II 3012-R	489		removable headshell • SME fit • 308mm • Detachable headshell, 12 inch	
Alphason HR100S	490	86	fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • S-shaped arm sounds smooth, but nevertheless reproduces transients with fine attack.	REC'D
Helius Orion 4 Copper	549		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • 254mm	
Alphason HR100S MCS	550		fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • vdH silver, top bearings	
SME Series 300-309	597	79	removable headshell • SME fit • 232mm • Beautifully made and finished: fully adjustable and a highly neutral performer.	REC'D
Kuzma Stogi	600		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • Effective mass 13gm	
SME Series 300-310	611		removable headshell • SME fit • 238mm • 10 inch (nom) version of 300-3	
SME Series 300-312	694		removable headshell • SME fit • 308mm • 12 inch (nom) version of 300-3	
Manticore Magician1	695		fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 230mm • Polished armtube finish	
DNM Yota	700	144	fixed armtube • proprietary fit • Solid core wired	REC'D
Helius Orion 4 Silver	725		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • 254mm	
Notts Analogue Mentor	750		changeable armtube • proprietary fit • Silver wiring, unipivot	
Manticore Magician2	795		fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 305mm • Polished armtube finish	
Townshend Excalibur	799		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • 220mm • Outrigger headshell damping	
SME Series IV	869	60	fixed armtube • SME fit • 233mm • Superb engineering and finish with a finely balanced sound, impressive stereo focus and low colouration.	REC'D
Roksan Artemiz	895		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • 240mm • Flagship arm, new style	
Naim ARO	963		changeable armtube • proprietary fit • Unipivot	
Wilson Benesch ACT1	975		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • Carbon-fibre armtube, unipivot	
Kuzma Stogi Ref	1,000	79	fixed armtube • proprietary fit • Large, solid and well made arm, gives exceptionally clear sound with just a hint of brightness.	REC'D
Notts Analogue Alien	1,200		changeable armtube • proprietary fit • Graphite tube, unipivot	
SME Series V	1,294	60	fixed armtube • SME fit • 233mm • Excellent in all respects, this arm arguably sets the standards for pivoted arms, regardless of price.	REC'D
Linn Ekos	1,297	67	fixed armtube • Linn/Alphason fit • 229mm • Superb, state of the art design which builds significantly on predecessor's strengths.	REC'D
Dynavector 507	1,400		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • Biaxial design	
Helius Cyalene 2	1,495		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • 254mm • Silver wired, pivoted	
Audiomeca SL5	1,999		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • Parallel tracking	
Graham 1.5T	2,550		changeable armtube • SME fit • SME base, unipivot	
Wheaton Tri-Planar 4	2,750		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • With terminal box	
Wheaton Tri-Planar 4C	3,000		fixed armtube • proprietary fit • As 4 with Cardas cable	
Air Tangent 10B	6,900		changeable armtube • proprietary fit • Air-bearing	
Air Tangent Ref. Sig.	11,000		changeable armtube • proprietary fit • Remote-controlled version of above	



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. Cantilever compliance (how springy it is) needs to be

considered in the light of the effective mass of the tonearm. High compliance (ie soft suspension) cartridges are best used with low mass tonearms and vice versa.

Key

fixed stylus, moving coil, moving magnetcartridge type
1.4 mVcartridge output in millivolts

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
CARTRIDGES				
Ortofon VMS2	10	141	moving magnet • 5 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Entry level elliptical cart	
Audio Technica AT-91	13		moving magnet • 2.8 mV • removable stylus • 5.8g	
Ortofon OM-5E	16		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Goldring Elan P	17		moving magnet • 5.0mV • removable stylus • T4P version of Elan	
Goldring Elan	17	67	moving magnet • 5.0mV • removable stylus • A lightweight and frisky-sounding MM apparently based on Nagaoka MM4 body	REC'D
Ortofon OMP-5E	17		moving coil • 4 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g	
Shure ME70B	18		moving magnet • 6mV • removable stylus • Conical stylus	
Audio Technica AT-95E	19	48	moving magnet • 2.8 mV • removable stylus • 5.7g • Clear and dynamic, though richly balanced.	B'BUY
Pickering TE-15	20		moving magnet • removable stylus • Tracks 1.5gm	
Ortofon OM Pro S	21		moving magnet • 5 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Budget disco cartridge	
Shure M92E	22		moving magnet • 5mV • removable stylus • Dual T4P & normal fit	
Audio Technica AT-110E	24		moving magnet • 3.8 mV • removable stylus • 7.2g	
Goldring Elektra	25		moving magnet • 5.0mV • removable stylus • Elliptical stylus	
Ortofon OM10 Super	25		moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Elliptical stylus	
Pickering VE-15	25		moving magnet • removable stylus • Tracks 1 - 3gms	
Pickering T-E	25		moving magnet • removable stylus • Elliptical	
Grado ZTE +1	27		moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux, high output	
Pickering V15-DJ	28		moving magnet • removable stylus • Disco model	
Shure SC35C	28		moving magnet • 5mV • removable stylus • For broadcast use	
Arcam C77	30	48	moving magnet • 4mV • removable stylus • 6g • A sensible moving magnet package with good bounce at a competitive price.	B'BUY
Sumiko Oyster	30		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Ortofon OM Night Club S	32		moving magnet • 6 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Spherical stylus	
Ortofon 510/P	32	85	moving magnet • 3 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • For the price, a good blend of virtues - weight, clarity and neutrality.	B'BUY
Shure M44C	33		moving magnet • 9mV • removable stylus • Professional, spherical stylus	
Rega Bias	34	67	moving magnet • removable stylus • 4.1g • Difficult to mount in some arms due to its shallow build, the Bias offers a gentle, refined sound.	
Rega RB78	34		moving magnet • 4.0g • for 78rpm records	
Stanton 500EL	34		moving magnet • removable stylus • Elliptical stylus	
Stanton 500AL II	34		moving magnet • removable stylus • Spherical stylus	
Pickering TL-E	35		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Grado ZCE +1	37		moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
Ortofon OM Night Club E	37		moving magnet • 6 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Elliptical stylus	
Shure ME95ED	38		moving magnet • 5mV • removable stylus • Elliptical stylus	
Arcam C77MG	40	67	moving magnet • 4mV • removable stylus • 6g • PUNCHY, with plenty of energy to liven things up. The solid body is well worth the extra £10.	B'BUY
Ortofon Concord Pro S	40		moving magnet • 5 mV • removable stylus • 19g • Pro use, inc headshell	
Pickering XV15-350C	40		moving magnet • removable stylus • Conical stylus	
Shure M55E	42		moving magnet • 6mV • removable stylus • Professional, spherical stylus	

PRODUCT	£	ISSUE	SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS	
Shure M104E	44		moving magnet • 5mV • removable stylus • DualT4P & normal fit	
Pickering TL-2E	45		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Grado Z3E+1	47		moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
Arcam E77	50		moving magnet • 4mV • removable stylus • 6g • Elliptical stylus	
Goldring 1006	50		moving magnet • 6.5mV • removable stylus • Elliptical stylus	
Pickering XV15-625E	50		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Pickering XV15-150-DJ	50		moving magnet • removable stylus • Professional cartridge	
Stanton 680ALX	50		moving magnet • removable stylus • Spherical stylus	
Sumiko Black Pearl	50		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Rega Super Bias	52		moving magnet • 4.1g	
Linn K5	54	67	moving magnet • 4.5mm mV • removable stylus • 6g • <i>Not as crisply focussed as the other Linn magnetics, but the K5 is smoother.</i>	REC'D
Ortofon Concord NC S	55		moving magnet • 6 mV • removable stylus • 19g • Pro use, inc headshell	
Ortofon 520/P	55	67	moving magnet • 3 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • <i>Sensitive to load capacitance, the 520/P has a lively, effervescent sound.</i>	REC'D
Pickering TL-2-S	55		moving magnet • removable stylus • Line contact stylus	
Stanton 680ELX	56		moving magnet • removable stylus • Elliptical stylus	
Arcam E77MG	60	48	moving magnet • 4mV • removable stylus • <i>Our sample had a disappointing stylus, but gave a coherent, rich and laid back sound.</i>	REC'D
Ortofon OM20 Super	60		moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g	
Ortofon MC1 Turbo	60		moving coil • 3.3 mV • removable stylus • 4.1g	
Ortofon Concord NC E	60		moving magnet • 6 mV • removable stylus • 19g • Spherical version of Concord	
Pickering XV15-757S	60		moving magnet • removable stylus • Line contact stylus	
Pickering XV15-625DJ	60		moving magnet • removable stylus • Broadcast cartridge	
Shure ME97HE	60	48	moving magnet • 4mV • removable stylus • 7g • <i>It won't turn a sow's ear into a silk purse, but it will produce an acceptable result.</i>	REC'D
Arcam P77	63		moving magnet • 4mV • removable stylus • 6g • 'Profiled' stylus	
Goldring 1012GX	65	85	moving magnet • 6.5mV • removable stylus • 4.1g • <i>Clearly superior to the Bias, the Elys is both more detailed, accurate and convincing.</i>	REC'D
Denon DL110	70	48	moving coil • fixed stylus • <i>A fine all-rounder, this high output MC model is likely to perform well</i>	B'BUY
Pickering XV15-1800S	70		moving magnet • removable stylus • Line contact stylus	
Sumiko Pearl	70		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Arcam P77MG	73	48	moving magnet • 4mV • removable stylus • 6g • <i>Preferred to its cheaper partner because of a better tip. Channel balance poor</i>	REC'D
Rega Elys	74	67	moving magnet • removable stylus • 4.7g • <i>Clearly superior to the Bias, the Elys is both more detailed, accurate and convincing.</i>	REC'D
Shure M110HE	74		moving magnet • 4mV • removable stylus • 7g • Dual T4P & normal fit	
Ortofon OM30 Super	80		moving magnet • 4 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g • Fine line stylus	
Pickering TL3S	80		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Grado ZF1+	82		moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
Stanton 890ALX	82		moving magnet • removable stylus • Professional cartridge	
Goldring 1022GX	85	85	moving magnet • 6.5mV • removable stylus • <i>As with 1012,a touch harsh; detail and transient purity improved</i>	REC'D
Ortofon MC10 Super	85	48	moving coil • 0.3 mV • fixed stylus • 7.0g • <i>What a delightfully sweet-sounding cartridge this is... we said.</i>	B'BUY
Ortofon 530/P	85		moving magnet • 3 mV • removable stylus • 6.0g • T4P fit	
Denon DL160	90	43	moving coil • fixed stylus • 6g • <i>Although listeners just preferred the 110, its brother here survived twin lab tests and is still 'thoroughly competent'.</i>	
Pickering XEV-3001E	95		moving magnet • removable stylus • Elliptical stylus	
Notts Analogue Tracer I	98		moving magnet	
Denon DL103	100	103	moving coil • fixed stylus • 9g • <i>Good performance in bass and good 'life' is seriously let down by its spherical stylus which kills subtle detail.</i>	
Goldring Eroica LX	100	84	moving coil • 0.5mV • fixed stylus • <i>Not the most subtle cartridge in the world: can sound edgy at times, but lively and informative.</i>	REC'D
Goldring Eroica	100		moving coil • 2.5 mV • fixed stylus • Gyger II stylus	
Pickering XLZ-3500	100		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Pickering TL-4-S	100		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Sumiko Blue Point	100		moving coil • fixed stylus • High output MC	
Goldring 1042	105	91m	oving magnet • 6.5mV • removable stylus • <i>Not terribly subtle, and not such good value alongside 1012 and 1022. Quite lively though.</i>	
Linn K9	109	Col	moving magnet • 4.5mm mV • removable stylus • 7g • <i>Linn improved this model by beefing up the Basik's bodywork and adding a super stylus.</i>	B'BUY
Ortofon MC3 Turbo	110	103	moving coil • 3.3 mV • fixed stylus • 4.1g • <i>The 3 Turbo is bright, cheerful and bouncy, but unsubtle - take it as it comes.</i>	REC'D
Ortofon MC15 Super II	110	103	moving coil • 0.35 mV • fixed stylus • 7.0g • <i>A good all-rounder, with outstanding resolution, if slightly bright and close up.</i>	B'BUY
Ortofon 540/P	110		moving magnet • 3 mV • removable stylus • 5.0g	
Roksan Corus Black	130	91	moving magnet • 6.5mV • removable stylus • <i>Recognisably related to the Corus Blue, but more civilised and smoother.</i>	REC'D
Pickering TL-3003	145		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Audio Technica AT-OC5	146	103	moving coil • 0.4 mV • fixed stylus • 8.0g • <i>Effortless and detailed, but rather relentless and tiring eventually.</i>	REC'D
Grado Signature Junior	149		moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
DNM Reson Mica	150		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Pickering XLZ-4500	150		moving magnet • removable stylus • Line contact	
Dynavector 50X	159		moving coil • 2 mV • removable stylus • 4.5g • High output, exchange scheme	
Ortofon MC25E	160	139	moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • 10.5g • High output, elliptical stylus	
Notts Analogue Tracer II	175		moving magnet	
Pickering TL-4004	175		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Dynavector 10X	189		moving coil • 2 mV • fixed stylus • 4.6g • High output, exchange scheme	
Linn K18/II	197		moving magnet • 4.5mV • removable stylus • 8g • Metal body	
DNM Reson Aciore	199		moving coil • fixed stylus	
London Decca Maroon	199	67	moving magnet • 5.0mV • fixed stylus • <i>Now manufactured under the London brand name, this Decca cartridge is as iconoclastic as ever.</i>	
Denon DL304	200		moving coil • fixed stylus • Elliptical stylus	
Goldring Elite	200	103	moving coil • 0.5mV • fixed stylus • <i>The basics are right, and it will cheerfully tackle any source material, but its sound has a certain dirtiness.</i>	
Pickering XSV-5000U	200		moving magnet • removable stylus • High output	
Pickering XLZ-7500	200		moving magnet • removable stylus • Hybrid, low impedance	
Pickering TLZ-7500-S	200		moving magnet • removable stylus	
Ortofon MC25FL	210	139	moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • 10.5g • High output, Fine Line stylus	
DNM Reson Recca	225		moving magnet • removable stylus	
London Decca Gold	239		moving magnet • 5.0mV • fixed stylus • Elliptical stylus	
Audio Technica AT-OC9	245		moving coil • 0.38 mV • fixed stylus • 8.8g	
Audioquest MC5	250		moving coil • 1.4mV • fixed stylus • High output MC, line contact	
Grado Signature 8MZ	250		moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
Ortofon MC10 Supreme	250		moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • 10.7g • High output MC	
Sumiko BPS	250		moving coil • fixed stylus • Nude stylus	
vdH MM-1	250	103	moving magnet • 5.5mV • removable stylus • <i>If woody midrange could be tamed, imaging and security would pull it through</i>	REC'D
London Decca Maroon Dp	259		moving magnet • 5.0mV • fixed stylus • Decca pod mounting	
Shure V15V-MR	265	38	moving magnet • 3mV • removable stylus • 6.6g • <i>Extended familiarity gave feeling of a lack of energy and a 'shut in' sound.</i>	
DNM Reson Etile	299		moving coil • fixed stylus	
London Decca Gold Dpd	299		moving magnet • 5.0mV • fixed stylus • Elliptical stylus, Decca pod	
Milltek Aurora	299		moving coil • 2.0mV • fixed stylus • <i>An overall feeling of relaxed ease characterised this clear and atmospheric Kiseki-built cartridge.</i>	REC'D
vdH MM-2	299		moving magnet • 5.5mV • removable stylus	
London Decca S Gold	339	84	moving magnet • 5.0mV • fixed stylus • <i>Immediate and detailed, but coloured, nonlinear with a questionable effect on records.</i>	
Notts Analogue Tracer III	350		moving magnet	
Ortofon MC20 Supreme	350		moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • 10.7g • High-output elliptical MC	
Dynavector 23RS	375		moving coil • 0.15 mV • fixed stylus • 5.3g • Jewel cantilever, exchange	
Grado Signature MCZ	375		moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
London Decca S Gold Dp	399		moving magnet • 5.0mV • fixed stylus • Decca pod mounting	
Milltek Olympia	399		moving coil • 2.0mV • fixed stylus • As Aurora, sapphire cantilever	
Linn Klyde	449		moving coil • 150uV mV • fixed stylus • 8g • Alloy body	
Dynavector 17D2	450	91	moving coil • 0.15 mV • fixed stylus • 5.3g • <i>Clear, detailed, neutral and generally informative — excellent.</i>	REC'D
Ortofon MC30 Supreme	450		moving coil • 0.5 mV • fixed stylus • 10.7g • High output	



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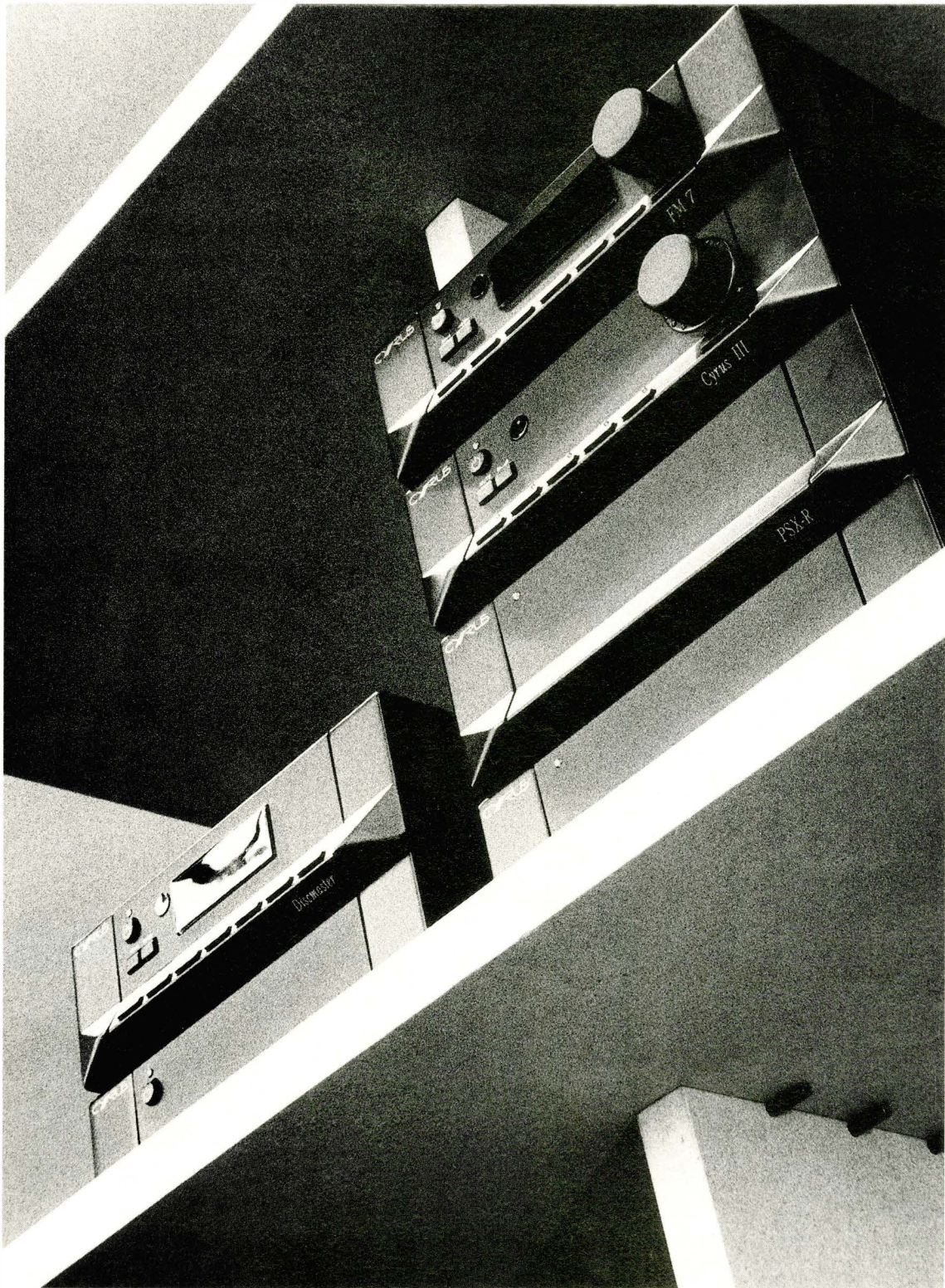
PRODUCT £ ISSUE SPECIFICATIONS & COMMENTS

Kiseki Blue GS	499	moving coil • 0.4mV • fixed stylus	
Notts Analogue Tracer IV	550	moving magnet •	
Audioquest 404L	599	84 moving coil • 0.5mV • fixed stylus • <i>Slight harshness detracted from the performance of this otherwise clear-sounding and detailed cartridge.</i>	
Benz-Micro The Glider	600	moving coil • 1mV • fixed stylus • Semi-nude design	
Audio Technica AT-OC30	619	moving coil • 0.4 mV • fixed stylus • 7.8g • Nude micro linear stylus	
Grado Signature TLZ	650	moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
Ortofon MC2000II	650	moving coil • 0.12 mV • fixed stylus • 9.6g	
Lyra Lydian	699	moving coil • removable stylus	
vdH DDT-II	699	moving coil • 0.4mV • fixed stylus • Silver coils	
Benz-Micro H200	700	moving coil • 2mV • fixed stylus	
Benz-Micro M090	700	moving coil • 0.9mV • fixed stylus	
Benz-Micro L040	700	moving coil • 0.4mV • fixed stylus	
Kiseki Purpleheart	749	moving coil • 0.4mV • fixed stylus	
vdH MC-10	799	60 moving coil • 0.4mV • fixed stylus • <i>A neutral, balanced performer gives, fine depth and focus and a firm, extended bass</i>	REC'D
Audioquest 404IMH	899	moving coil • 1.4 mV • fixed stylus • Boron cantilever	
DNM Reson Lexe	899	144 moving coil • fixed stylus	REC'D
Kiseki PHS	899	moving coil • 0.4mV • fixed stylus	
Audio Technica ART-1	944	72 moving coil • 0.4 mV • fixed stylus • 8.8g • <i>This is a delicate and very fluid-sounding MC that tracks well.</i>	REC'D
Ortofon MC3000II	950	84 moving coil • 0.12 mV • fixed stylus • 9.5g • <i>A real eye-opener. Nothing to criticise anywhere, one of the very best.</i>	REC'D
Grado Signature XTZ	975	moving magnet • removable stylus • Moving flux	
Roksan Shiraz	975	moving coil • 0.2mV • fixed stylus • 3-pt generator mount, no glues	
Dynavector XX-1L	998	84 moving coil • 0.25 mV • fixed stylus • 12g • <i>Very clear, very detailed; a response lift around 20kHz seems to do no harm.</i>	REC'D
Dynavector XX-1	998	84 moving coil • 2 mV • fixed stylus • 12g • <i>Good, but not immensely competitive at the price, and not helped by comparison with the low output version.</i>	
Linn Arkiv	998	moving coil • 150uV mV • fixed stylus • 7g • Three point mt, machined body	
London Decca Jubilee	999	moving magnet • 5.0mV • fixed stylus • Line contact, 0.5 inch mount	
vdH MC-One	999	60 moving coil • fixed stylus • <i>This extended all the positive qualities of the '10, but added greater authority and scale - worth all the extra money.</i>	REC'D
Lyra Clavis Da Capo	1,069	143 moving coil • fixed stylus	B'BUY
Benz-Micro Wood Ref	1,100	moving coil • 0.3mV • fixed stylus • Bruyere housing, boron	
vdH MC-One/Hi	1,149	84 moving coil • fixed stylus • <i>Slight softening on transients was the only real flaw, but it didn't quite seem to have that special touch one expects.</i>	
vdH MC-Two	1,349	72 moving coil • fixed stylus • <i>MC-Two rewards with a highly deailed yet fluid and musically convincing portrayal.</i>	REC'D
Audio Note Io IIV	1,395	100 moving coil • fixed stylus • <i>One of the best, giving an extraordinarily relaxing midrange clarity. Needs a transformer.</i>	REC'D
Benz-Micro Ruby Ref	1,400	moving coil • 0.3mV • fixed stylus • Bruyere housing boron	
Audioquest 7000NSX	1,495	91 moving coil • 0.4 mV • fixed stylus • <i>Stunning stereo imaging and detail spoiled by poor tracking and high sensitivity to arms.</i>	
Ortofon MC5000	1,500	91 moving coil • 0.12 mV • fixed stylus • 9.5g • <i>Limited tracking ability, bright and forward sound, but good stereo</i>	
Koetsu Red T	1,550	moving coil • fixed stylus • High-output MC	
Transfiguration AF-1 Mk II	1,595	moving coil • 230uV mV • fixed stylus • 7g • MC, transformer & preamp	
Kiseki Blackheart	1,995	moving coil • 0.3mV • fixed stylus	
Transfiguration Supreme	1,995	moving coil • 200uV mV • fixed stylus • 7g • Yokeless ring magnet system	
Koetsu Red K Sig	1,998	moving coil • fixed stylus • Selected, re-tuned Red T	
Ortofon MC7500	2,000	moving coil • 0.13 mV • fixed stylus • 11g • 75th Anniversary model	
vdH Grasshopper IIISLN	2,200	moving coil • fixed stylus • Silver coils, Neodymium magnet	
Lyra Parnassus	2,295	moving coil • removable stylus	
Koetsu Urushi	2,297	moving coil • fixed stylus • Metal alloy body	
vdH Grasshopper IIICMN	2,750	moving coil • fixed stylus • Copper coils, medium output	
Audio Note Io Ltd V	2,950	moving coil • fixed stylus • Needs PSU	
vdH Grasshopper IIISLA	2,999	moving coil • fixed stylus • Silver coils, Alnico magnet	
vdH Grasshopper IIIGLN	2,999	moving coil • fixed stylus • Gold coils, Neodymium magnet	
vdH Grasshopper IIIGLA	2,999	122 fixed stylus • <i>Undoubtedly one of the finest cartridges available, it has tremendous bandwidth, energy and finesse.</i>	
Koetsu Signature	3,218	moving coil • fixed stylus • Rosewood body	
vdH Grasshopper IIICHN	3,400	moving coil • fixed stylus • Copper coils, high output	
vdH Type IVGLA	3,450	moving coil • fixed stylus • Silver coils, Alnico magnet	
Kiseki Lapis Lazuli	5,000	moving coil • 0.4mV • fixed stylus • Gemstone body	

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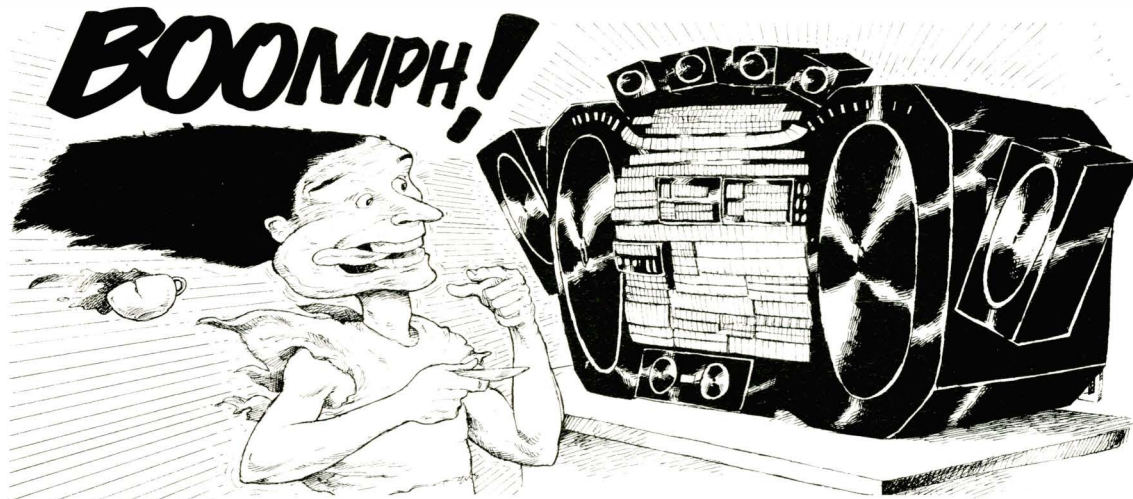
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WARWICKSHIRE

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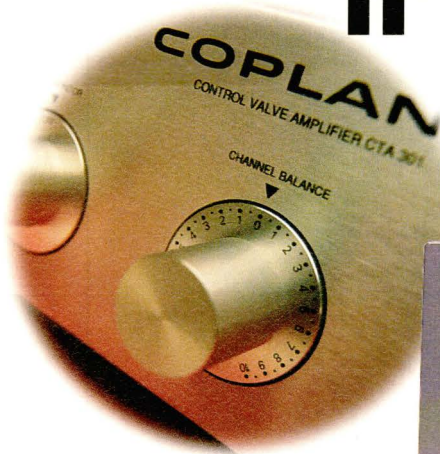


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NEXT MONTH IN

HI-FI CHOICE



WIZARD!

There will be plenty of jolly japes and lashings of ginger beer as 'Stinker' Sircom gets to grips with the latest Copland pre/power amplifier in Statements, postponed from last month. He says the review was stolen out of his satchel by a one-armed man on the bus and then a dog ate it, but he's promised to do it again for next month, or Sir will get jolly batey and give him the slipper.

CRIPES!



It'll be a spiffing wheeze as 'Masher' Miller looks at wagon loads of jolly fab CD players, all priced between £250 and £500. I bet that they're all jolly pukka, too, what with the spanking new CD-63II from Marantz, NAD's corking 514 and the new Alto CD player from Audio Innovations — **COR!**

CRIQUEY!

'Korky' Kennedy and his chums are off for a midnight hi-fi feast in Sessions. He's swotting up on all the latest scrummy goodies from Orelle, Celestion and stacks of more chipper stuff.

BLIMEY JINGS!

- 'Snorky' Steward has to jolly well stand in the corner with the latest crop of equipment tables.
- 'Fleagle' Fox gets to grips with all the latest technology.
- Be a girly swot about all things hi-fi with 'Bingo' Berriman.
- Find out what 'Drooper' got up to with Cookie and Nursie behind the bike sheds.



IT'S GOING TO BE PACKED WITH LOTS OF BUMPER TUCK AND JAMMY DODGERS. YUM!

Last one to read the February issue has to buy the tea and buns. It's on sale on Friday, January 5th, 1996.

Personal Messages

Paul Messenger finds a new angle to the old 'you only get out what you put in' chestnut.

We tend to think of a hi-fi system as a chain, whose task is to extract, process and pass on an audio signal as faithfully as possible from stage to stage and link to link. This model serves well in simplistic terms, but it ignores the role played by one of the most important components of all: the power supply.

In the mass-market mainstream, hi-fi power supplies are effectively non-existent, because they're invariably built into the overall design and therefore not 'visible'. Move up towards the more esoteric and specialist end of the hi-fi scene, and the electrical supplies immediately assume more significance.

Take the humble low-tech turntable. Years back, the stereotype belt-driver used a synchronous motor connected straight to the mains, the latter's 50Hz alternating frequency determining the rotation speed, with the odd capacitor, choke and resistor thrown in to drop the voltage and smooth out vibrations.

Over the last five or ten years, we've become increasingly accustomed to separate outboard supplies as part of the package. Roksan was certainly among the first companies to introduce this, while Linn has gone via the complex on-board *Valhalla* to the even more elaborate outboard *Lingo*. Now Rega's excellent new *Planar 9* (see Sessions p16) uses one of the largest power supplies yet.

Outboard power supplies are less common with other

components, although amplifier manufacturers like Naim, NVA and Exposure have used them for years. It was the experience of changing one of the former that shocked me into discussing the whole power supply issue in this column.

The guys from Naim had come over to install the AV1 surround processor (again in Sessions p16), and just happened to bring along a new power supply for my NAC52 preamp. The 52 has always come with a massive great power supply, as big as the company's largest power amps, and the new *Super Caps* supply looks exactly the same from the outside. Since it was a day for Laser Discs, surround sound and room projectors, I didn't take much notice at the time.

It was later that evening when things were back to normal that I realised that this wasn't the same system I'd listened to before. In fact, it didn't sound much like a Naim system at all — it was altogether too open and neutral.

I've been using Naim amps with great satisfaction for nigh on twenty years, but readily apologise to visiting audiophiles for a sound quality which has never been the most neutral, delicate or transparent around. 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.

Now I find there's not much need to make excuses, and the sound of Naim is significantly less coloured than before. As far as the sonic signature and character is concerned, it's probably the biggest change and improvement I've heard over two decades. But still I wouldn't say it's going to be the audiophile's automatic choice. There isn't that seductive-verging-on-the-cloying sweetness that many seem to seek with valve and transformer-coupled amps. Instead, there's a matter-of-fact, no-romance-or-nonsense, terseness, characteristic of fast transistor amps, which is less ingratiating but to these ears is no less satisfying.



Sleek 'n' deep: Naim's *Super Cap* power supply.

Although there's no denying *Super Cap* has taken my system a major step forward, it's not all gain. The more up-front presentation sits a trifle uneasily with my rather out-front *Rehdekos*, which may well force a cable quest to redress the balance a little. There's also a very small but detectable and rather persistent electrical hum which I haven't tracked down or eliminated yet.

The surprise is that such a dramatic improvement has all come about because of a change in preamp power supply. The complete-with-NAC52 new price now comes to a fraction over five grand, whereas an existing 52 power supply can be upgraded for £893.

Coincidentally, I get to hear Rob Dowse's triode-and-horn system quite regularly — it's wonderful, if excruciatingly extreme. That too has undergone a major recent improvement, and again the change has come through upgrading the amplifier power supplies.

Much as I love the midband of Mr Dowse's Air Partner *Replicas*, I'd always found the bottom end a little dynamically constrained — up until the latest change, that is. This glowing 3W of single-ended triode power now uses no less than five separate supplies to boost the 6mV peak-to-peak vinyl input up to a 90V peak-to-peak pre-transformer output. These extra boxes completely dwarf the amplifier proper, and explain why the whole caboodle leaves me frozen with technofear.

It all makes a certain amount of sense when you think it through. All the electrical energy which actually drives the loudspeakers has to originate in the power supplies, so these need to be at least as capable of tracking the signal as any components in the nominal signal path. Considering that the signal has a dynamic range of anything up to 100dB, and that this may have to be boosted by a hundred or more dB along the way, it's obvious that the power supplies have a very tough task indeed.

It becomes rather less surprising that multiple stage supply isolation, however executed, can bring some very real benefits. ▲



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