

Choosing the right speakers is fundamental to your enjoyment of recorded music. Here we highlight some of the best at prices from budget to almost beyond belief

UltimateGuide

SPEAKERS

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Spendor **D7** £3500

They may not look it on the page, but the Spendor D7s are rather compact by floorstander standards. Yet, properly setup, these speakers deliver a full-bodied sound that's a match for anything we've heard at this sort of price.

It shouldn't come as a surprise that Spendor has produced an accomplished speaker - the A9, A6 and updated SP2 are all class-leaders after all - but what is surprising is just how dynamic and punchy these relatively small towers are.

Play something particularly complex - we've chosen Trent Reznor's soundtrack to *The Social Network* - and the Spendor's marshal it all with effortless control, massively deep bass and the kind of wide dynamic range that makes a real event of every crescendo. Pump the volume up and it only gets better - these speakers will happily take on far bigger, far more expensive rivals for punch and dynamic.

Balance, pace and agility

It's not all bluster, though. The Spendor's also dig up every subtle detail and reproduce low-level dynamics to moving effect.

Overall this is a delivery that's just on the lean side of neutral, but with even a modicum of attention paid to system matching you'll enjoy a very pleasing balance, and one that's underpinned by thrilling pace and agility.

This isn't simple to achieve - there's a hefty dose of technology behind the sonic success. The linear flow port at the rear of the cabinet helps to create that superb bass performance, and also makes the Spendor's pretty relaxed over positioning in the room, while the distinctive tweeter has an unusual grille that evens out the unit's output over a wide frequency range. We must admit that the treble's very insightful and not short of bite.

However it's been achieved, we can't help but marvel at the sound from the Spendor D7s - these are speakers of very rare ability.

TECH SPECS

Type Floorstander • **Sensitivity** 90dB/W/m • **Impedance** 8 ohms • **Max power** 200W • **Biwireable** No • **Finishes** 6 • **Dimensions (hwd)** 95 x 20 x 32cm

Rating ★★★★★

FOR Exceptional detail and dynamics; huge, deep sound for the size; unfussy over positioning; lovely build

AGAINST Not much, other than perhaps they don't look as special as they could

VERDICT Small but perfectly formed, the Spendor D7s set the standard for speakers at this price

