

WHAT HI★FI?

SOUND AND VISION

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NEW-TECH TV > WHICH FEATURES MATTER MOST? p34

STYLE SPEAKER PACKAGE



5.1 SPEAKER PACKAGE
MONITOR AUDIO
APEX

★★★★★
£ 2425

↑ FOR

Excellent sound, fine styling, clever design, luxurious build

↓ AGAINST

Nothing of note

→ VERDICT

An expensive style system, to be sure, but also a fabulous one

Monitor Audio raises the style bar

IF YOU'RE AFTER a compact, stylish speaker system to complete your home cinema you'll find plenty of choice at less than £2000, but not much above. It could be argued that, such is the ability of B&W's £1575 MT-30, why spend more?

Viewed in those terms, Monitor Audio's new Apex system has its work cut out. At £2425 (before you invest in its optional floor-stands – £125 each) it's nearly £1000 more expensive than the acclaimed B&Ws.

Look good, sound even better Yet the Apex system delivers. It's gorgeously styled and expertly assembled, as you'd expect. It's also clever. We love the magnetic grille fixings, the neat table-top stands, the integral cabling runs in each floor-stand and the brushed-metal inserts that adorn the flanks of each speaker.

Of course, many systems are similarly sultry. What sets the Apex apart is its sonic prowess – which is considerable. Key to that is the quality of both the cabinets, inert all-metal enclosures, and the drive units.

Both the A10 satellites and the A40 centre feature a new 14cm metal mid/bass driver, complete with the golf-ball dimple design found in Monitor Audio's more conventional GS and RX ranges. This sophisticated design helps the Apex deliver an articulate and reassuringly powerful sound even when listened to in isolation.

When the ensemble is underpinned by the stentorian efforts of the AW-12 subwoofer, a compact yet muscular bass-maker,

“Out of the box, it's gorgeously styled and expertly assembled”

the result is sound that more than matches Monitor Audio's lofty aspirations. It's muscular when called upon, but articulate and beautifully integrated too, with little audible sign of the crossover from speakers to subwoofer.

As a result, it plays music almost as well as it relays film sound, capturing both vocal intonation and instrumental

The stands will increase your expenditure by £250 a pair – but they're very neat

detail with relish. Bass integration does unravel a little in the face of the very fastest rhythmic shifts, but seldom does the effect jar.

The Monitor Audio Apex is a remarkable newcomer. Why spend more than £2000? Easy: you could have all this...



SPEAKERS:
SENSITIVITY (dB/W/m) (F/R) 87; (Centre) 90
IMPEDANCE (OHMS) 8
POWER (F/R) 100W; (C) 200W
DIMENSIONS (HWD) (F/R) 25 x 14 x 14cm; (Centre): 14 x 61 x 10cm

SUBWOOFER:
POWER 500W
DIMENSIONS (HWD) 34 x 34 x 41cm
DRIVER 30cm
CABINET Sealed



B&W MT-30
★★★★★
£1575
Still the system to beat under £2000, with its outstanding PV1 subwoofer lending it an agility and style that's hard to beat

DALI FAZON 1
★★★★★
£1500
Refined-sounding system with a decent blend of insight and speed lacks the weight of some, though

Monitor Audio Apex w „What Hi-Fi?”

W sierpniowym numerze magazynu „What Hi-Fi?” ukazał się test systemu 5.1 Apex firmy Monitor Audio. Kolumny otrzymały najwyższe oceny – pięć gwiazdek.

„**wiecznie wyglądają, brzmi jeszcze lepiej**

[...] [Apexy] są cudownie wystylizowane i wiecznie złocone – dokładnie tak, jak tego można oczekiwać. Kochamy te magnetyczne zaczepy maskownic, fajne podstawki np. na biurko, kable biegnące w stopie podstawek i metalowe elementy, które wiecznie flankują cianki każdej kolumny. [...]

Brzmienie jest muskularne, kiedy to jest potrzebne, ale też wyraziste i przepięknie zintegrowane, z minimalnym wskazaniem, gdzie znajduje się podział między kolumnami i subwooferem.

W rezultacie system gra muzykę niemal równie dobrze, jak cię kłódką filmów, znakomicie oddając zarówno intonację wokali, jak i detale instrumentów. [...]

Monitor Audio Apex to wyjątkowa nowość. Po co wydawać więcej niż 2000 funtów? To proste – po to, aby mieć to wszystko...”

Za:

Fantastyczny design, ładna stylistyka, dobra funkcjonalność, luksusowa budowa.

Przeciw:

Nic, o czym można by wspominać.

„What Hi-Fi?”, August 2010