

Audio-Consumer Buying Guide



Select Your Speakers

Speakers have the most influence on how any audio system will sound. With so many speakers available in various shapes, styles and sizes, you may feel overwhelmed when trying to choose. Use this Buying Guide to help you find the perfect speakers.

TOPIC	DETAILS			
Why Do I Need All of Those Speakers?	Speaker Type		Function	
	Front Left and Right		Recreate the front left and right soundtrack with surround sound content and all two-channel (stereo) content.	
	Center		Reproduces primarily voices and dialogue, which accounts for most of a movie's or TV show's soundtrack.	
	Surround Left and Right		Create a sense of space and depth and are typically to the sides or rear of the listening position. A system may have two or more surround speakers, depending on the audio system's capabilities	
	Subwoofer		Delivers low bass and low frequency effects often found in movie soundtracks.	
Speaker Types	Your favorite consumer electronics retailer likely sells many different types of speakers. Use this guide to understand each type and its role in a home audio system.			
	Design		Description	Considerations
	Satellite Speakers		Small speakers with either a single, full-range driver or a tweeter and mid-bass driver only. They rely on a subwoofer or bass module to reproduce low frequencies. These are typically bundled with home theater "package" systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small and easy to mount • Limited power handling
	Bookshelf Speakers		Better suited to handle higher power output and bass than satellite speakers, these speakers come in small to medium sized cabinets and usually feature two or more drivers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require a bookshelf or stands to position them at the proper listening level • Smaller cabinets usually yield less bass response than larger cabinets
	Floor Standing ("Tower") Speakers		Larger, full-range speakers that typically use multiple drivers to reproduce a wider range of frequencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically have highest power handling capability of all speaker designs
	Built-in Speakers		In- and on-wall and in- and on-ceiling designs mount flush on drywall or other surfaces to create a custom-installed look.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great choice for a variety of home theater applications where a custom look is desired or where space is at a premium
	Center Channel Speaker		Some speakers are designed specifically for the center channel of a surround audio system. Commonly these speakers are designed to sit on top or below a TV set or mount under a projector screen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideally the center channel speaker should match (i.e., use drivers with same tonal qualities and specs) the front left and right speakers
	Subwoofer		Delivers low bass and low frequency effects often found in movie soundtracks. Typical design is a floor-standing cabinet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A must-have for any home theater or media room