

Spendor A5



£1495

IT WAS JUST last month that we first saw these new Spendor A5s, and although we immediately knew they were accomplished speakers, it's taken the increased depth of comparison of this *Group Test* to fully appreciate the extent of their success – these are astoundingly good floorstanders.

“The sound fills the room, rendering their diminutive size a sonic irrelevance”

Even next to the other small speakers here, the A5s are exceptionally compact, measuring just 79cm in height. They're also very solidly put together, and the four real-wood finishes look very smart.

If you're concerned that the stumpy nature of the A5s might result in a short or small-scale presentation, you can banish the thought. Play *Time to Get Out* from the *Quantum of Solace* soundtrack and it becomes immediately apparent the Spendors can produce a sound that fills the room from floor to ceiling, rendering their diminutive size a sonic irrelevance. The width and space afforded the performance is also

↑ FOR

A punchy, exciting delivery; deep, powerful bass; great balance and organisation; compact dimensions and excellent build

↓ AGAINST

Only that such sensitivity means you'll need a powerful amp when playing music at high volumes

→ VERDICT

Believe us, size doesn't matter; these are the most accomplished speakers available at this money

impressive. This is a big soundstage that lends itself well to orchestral scores and big rock pieces.

Importantly, dimension-defying scale isn't their only impressive feature. Not for the first time in this test we spin-up Tori Amos' *Cornflake Girl*, and the Spendors provide the most faithful rendition of it yet. The treble is sparkly and sweet, midrange is multi-layered and textured, and when both the piano and bass guitar hit their lowest notes, the Spendors are able to reveal the key and string independently, where some speakers mix the two together.

All-round brilliance shines through

From the deepest bass to the highest treble there's an admirable tightness, punch and attack. Notes begin and end with superb precision, and that accuracy translates into excitement right through the frequency range. Throw awesome dynamics into the mix, both small-scale and large, and you have a delivery that's as well suited to the London Philharmonic Orchestra as it is to Adele's acoustic pop.

Unlike the other five-star speakers here, the Spendors have no fly in the ointment. They combine scale that's very close to the Dynaudios, with clarity and organisation that can match the PMCs. You get the best of both worlds with these floorstanders, and we're all for that.



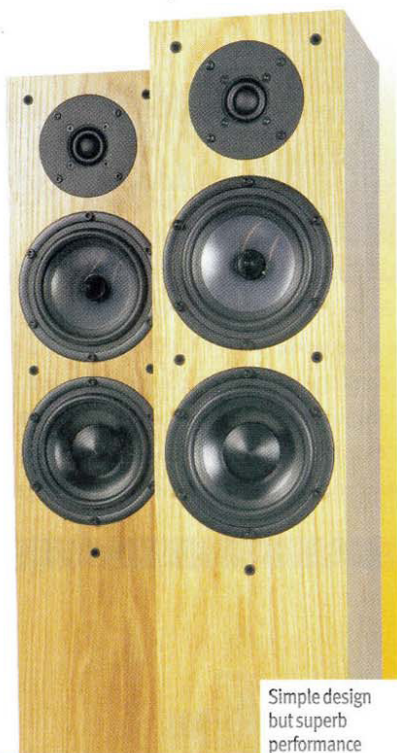
See super Spendor speakers

BRITISH SPEAKER company Spendor is looking to build on the acclaimed SA1 standmounter with two new floorstanding models, the A5 and A6. Their drive units are based on technology developed for the SA1, and the company says the speakers deliver

“The A5 speakers received a five-star verdict last month”

a “clear and natural mid-range and beautifully open treble”.

The A5 speakers, which sell for £1495 a pair, stand 79cm tall and use a pair of 15cm drivers, while the larger A6 design, at 88cm tall, uses a single 18cm driver and a 29mm tweeter. Both sets of speakers appear in this issue of the magazine, and with each on the receiving end of five-star reviews, we suggest you check them out.



Simple design but superb performance

TEST RESULT

In a *Group Test* with not one bum note, it's the all-new **Spendors** that take the glory. We can't praise them enough

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Spendors that take the glory. We can't praise them enough

THIS TEST SERVES to highlight the superb quality available from floorstanding stereo speakers, with half the entrants receiving a coveted five-star verdict, and none dipping below four stars.

The Aurousals are the odd ones out here, but although their crossover-free design won't suit everyone's taste and circumstances, for others they will be exactly what they've been looking for.

The other two four-star speakers are also excellent: the Neats are charming, with a unique style and excellent detail, while the big Dalis have exceptional scale and authority at a very attractive price. Just make sure you've got enough room for them to work at their best.

Star performers battle it out

When it comes to the five-star entrants, the PMCs offer one of the most clean and well-organised soundstages that you're ever likely to hear. The Dynaudios don't quite match them in this regard, but they have greater weight and scale.

Each is the best in its particular speciality, but it's the Spendors that just nose ahead of the pack.

The A5s get very close to the clarity of the PMCs, and equally near to the scale of the Dynaudios, and it's this all-round performance, contained within an unfeasibly compact cabinet, that sees them take first place.

"This test highlights the superb quality available from floorstanding units"

Spendor A5

★★★★★
£1495



WHAT HI-FI?
SOUND AND VISION
GROUP TEST WINNER

NOW ADD THESE



CD PLAYER
CYRUS CD8SE

★★★★★
£ 1100

Awards 2008

The CD8SE is so good it puts many players costing twice as much to shame. It's supremely musical, capable of getting across the feeling and emotion in a song, and it has the same all-round balance as the Spendors.



STEREO AMPLIFIER
ROKSAN CASPIAN M SERIES-1

★★★★★
£ 1000

Awards 2008

The speakers and CD player could easily be partnered to a very high-end amplifier, but the Caspian offers a system-appropriate combination of excitement and refinement at an excellent price.



SPEAKER CABLE
CHORD COMPANY
CARNIVAL SILVERSCREEN

★★★★★
£ 6/m

May 2008

We never get tired of recommending this Award winner, thanks to its dynamic and authoritative delivery.

TOTAL SYSTEM £3655

FACTS AND FIGURES

PRICE RANGE	AUROUSALVS	DALI IKON 7	DYNAUDIO EXCITE X32	NEAT MOTIVE 1	PMC GB1i	SPENDOR A5
£1200-£1600						
SPECIFICATION						
PRICE	£ 1600	£ 1200	£ 1600	£ 1295	£ 1275	£ 1495
FLOORMOUNT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SENSITIVITY	89 dB/W/m	92 dB/W/m	87 dB/W/m	86 dB/W/m	87 dB/W/m	85 dB/W/m
IMPEDANCE	4 ohms	6 ohms	4 ohms	6 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms
MAX POWER	250 Watts	200 Watts	200 Watts	120 Watts	150 Watts	150 Watts
BIWIRABLE	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
FINISHES	1	3	4	4	4	4
DIMENSIONS (HWD)	108 x 22 x 26cm	114 x 20 x 34cm	92 x 17 x 27cm	93 x 16 x 20cm	87 x 16 x 23cm	79 x 17 x 25cm
HOW THEY RATED						
SOUND	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
BUILD	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
COMPATIBILITY	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
VERDICT	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★