



TYPE SURROUND SPEAKERS ON SALE NOW

Tannoy Sensys

Heavyweight combo displays deft all-round ability

Verdict ●●●●●

We say...

Certainly not the most compact of systems, but if you do want a set-up combining thunderous home cinema ability with striking detail and musicality, this could be just the package for you

Almost any loudspeaker system is a compromise, and one that needs to do double duties for both home cinema and music can often become a compromise too far. Yes, the ideal loudspeaker would be a perfect all-rounder, but in truth it takes some cunning design, not to mention plenty of care in set-up, to serve both boisterous soundtracks that need plenty of ambience and serious bass power and the fine detail and flow of music.

Tannoy has a strong reputation in music reproduction – its huge Prestige speakers are much sought after by jazz and classical fans – but it's also big in many major cinemas. Put that together and you have the basis of the Sensys speaker system.

The roots of these speakers are in two proprietary Tannoy technologies:

the Dual Concentric drive unit, which places a high-frequency tweeter in the 'throat' of a large mid/bass one, and the pod-mounted Super Tweeter, designed to deliver high frequencies beyond the scope of conventional treble drivers. Both are in evidence here, with the DC2 speakers used for the front left/right, the DC1s used on the rear channels and the DCC centre speaker each using the 17.5cm Dual Concentric driver, incorporating a 25mm titanium dome tweeter, and a further 25mm titanium Super Tweeter in a pod atop their cabinets. In addition the big floorstanding DC2s use a dedicated 17.5cm bass driver, while the package is completed with a TS12 subwoofer, in a black rubberised finish, combining a downward-firing 30cm long-throw bass unit and a 500w BASH digital amplifier in a sealed enclosure for tight bass. The main speakers all have front ports which can be stuffed with foam bungs to tighten the bass if required. We used them unbunged and away from the walls.

The speakers are finished in the same light maple veneer, with rosewood and black ash available as options, and while they're all pretty large, it's the centre that's likely to

AT A GLANCE

Tannoy Sensys

Value for money ●●●●●
There are few speaker systems capable of turning on the power as this one can. The Tannoy system looks good, is immaculately finished and sounds the business, too.

Build quality ●●●●●
Nice veneers, high-quality drive units and impressive attention to

detail – that's the story here, creating a set of speakers that look suitably expensive and have the performance to match.

Sound quality ●●●●●
Smooth, refined, open, fast and exciting, this package shows the benefit of using similar drivers all round, and the subwoofer integrates superbly with the rest of the speakers. You'll need to spend a lot more cash to better this.

THE FACTS

Drive units 25mm SuperTweeter, 25mm tweeter and 17.5cm mid/bass in main speakers, additional 17.5cm bass unit in DC2s, 30cm bass unit in TS12 subwoofer
Sensitivity 89dB/w/m (DC2), 88dB/w/m (DC1/DCC)
Impedance 8 ohm
Power handling 20-175w (DC2), 20-150w (DC1/DCC), TS12 has internal 500w amp
Dimensions (hwxwd) 96.6x21x29.3cm (DC2), 40.6x21x29.2cm (DC1), 26.6x35x28.4cm (DCC), 37.2x33.5x33.5cm (TS12)
Weight 17kg (DC2), 8.5kg (DC1), 9.5kg (DCC), 12.5kg (TS12)
For more details 01236 420199
www.tannoy.com

MAIN RIVAL

M&K K-5 E1715

A much smaller package than the Tannoys, but still sounds terrific in multichannel and stereo. The front speakers are precise, and the sub fast.

create the problems, as it's too big to be used in a stand below a screen, and at 9.5kg it's pretty hefty for wall-mounting. In our test we ended up with it on an old short stand we keep for just this purpose, but you can find something suitable in most companies' ranges. The rears were used on 60cm Atacama stands and the front-left and right speakers had their spikes fitted.

We tried the Tannoys with a range of amplification, including the Marantz SR7500, to be reviewed in next issue, as well as our usual TAG McLaren Audio reference set-up, and the speakers proved themselves as capable of turning on the excitement with big action movies as cruising through some music with a generous, easy sound that's still packed with detail and atmosphere. The subwoofer in particular is impressive: the TS12 dovetails in seamlessly beneath the floorstanding speakers, giving the sound a delicious growl and rumble, and a good snap and thump on instantaneous effects.

What's more, those Super Tweeters really do seem to give the sound an extra openness and a far better sense of the space around you. Change to a tense drama or even a concert on DVD and the Sensys speakers give that same impression of focus allied to airiness, offering a gutsy, full-blooded view of voices and instruments, while at the same time placing you right in the middle of the ambience.

There's no shortage of compact 5.1-channel systems around, some of them up in the £1000 or so price range; for less than twice as much the Tannoys offer a lot of speaker and sound for the money. If you have room for a full-size speaker package, this should certainly be on your list.