



KEF IQ9 LOUDSPEAKER

Reviewed by Paul Messenger



When it comes to consumer electronics, affordable floorstanding speakers are the most popular purchase in the home entertainment category (as long as we ignore flatscreen TVs that is). Shame then that so many of them deliver such a lamentable performance. Their thick, boomy bass and shrieking, exposed treble might sound impressive enough on a Batman movie, but hi-fi it most surely is not.

But there are exceptions and chief amongst them is KEF's iQ9. A large box loaded with drivers, it seems to fit the "more bang for your bucks" mold perfectly – except that the mix also includes an elaborate, boat-backed cabinet, the latest Uni-Q driver, incorporating many of the evolutionary modifications found in the excellent Reference series speakers, and careful detailing that goes well beyond the purely cosmetic. The result is a combination of decent bass extension, good sensitivity and well integrated and remarkably smooth high-frequencies – but the thing that really sets the KEF apart is its overall musical coherence. Always a strength of the Uni-Q driver, the iQ9 has managed to banish the big-box boom that afflicts so many of its competitors, twin drivers and generous twin reflex ports pushing the well-controlled low-frequencies down to 30Hz or so. The result is a speaker that does everything pretty well and with considerable scale and enthusiasm to boot – which at £800 a pair is a pretty remarkable achievement!

Price: £800

Manufacturer: KEF (UK) Ltd
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