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Subject: Crossover components

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Fri, 16 Jan 2009 23:36:26 GMT

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In all models of my speakers, I use Solen, Jantzen, Dayton or Erse polypropylene capacitors as standard issue parts. Standard inductors are 18 guage Jantzen air core coils.

Some models are offered with upgrade options where you can call parts, choosing Auricaps for example. Some are offered with larger guage coils as an upgrade option too.

If you upgrade to larger coils, you get a little tighter bass but slightly less depth. Think of the difference in bass sound between using SET and push-pull amps. Increasing DCR reduces damping factor, and that has an effect similar to increasing woofer Qes and ultimately Qts. So the stock 18 guage coil sounds a little fuller down low, whereas a larger guage coil sounds a little tighter.

I've substituted a lot of caps, and the differences are a little more subjective. It isn't a simple matter of DCR and damping factors, like the coil swap is. I've used everything from Solen, Jantzen, Dayton and Erse (which all sound very nice to me) to oil filled motor runs to Auricaps and even Audio Notes.

Solens, Daytons and Erse poly caps all sound the same to me. They're great, maybe sound quality doesn't get any better than that. But of course when you spend fifty bucks on a cap, you're

and I think they sound more pure with Auricaps. Do they really? I don't know. But they do sound nice. They have the same character, at least to me, but maybe a little more silky sounding smoothness. Nah, probably just the added cost making me think so.

Audio Note caps disappoint me. I hate to say that 'cause I consider those folks over there to be friends. I love their amps. But they just don't have the capacitors down, in my opinion. After a while they leak, and a megabuck cap shouldn't do that. I prefer other high end caps.

There are other brands I've tried, Mundorfs, Kimbers, even non-polarized Black Gates just to see. I don't recommend non-polarized electrolytics, even Black Gates. Might be just because I still remember the unnatural plastic sound of older NP 'lytics, but I don't trust 'em, even from Rubycon. Kimbers are fine, seem to be a little bit more etched. More HF, too much maybe. Mundorfs are good.

Now then, understand this. Everything I've just told you about caps is very subjective. Measurements of systems with most of these components don't show anything to tell me one was better than the other, and the sound differences are all too slight (if even there) to qualify as demonstrative one way or the other. Could be all psychology. I am fairly certain I can't detect differences in a blind test, with reasonable exceptions. For example, I am sure I can hear a difference between a motor run capacitor, a poly cap and a cheap electrolytic. But I am reasonably sure I could not tell the difference between a Jantzen, Solen, Erse or Dayton poly cap in a blind test. I probably couldn't tell the difference between any of those and an Auricap blind either. I could tell the Audio Note cap though, because it would not make a sound but would leave

its ooze all over the table.

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