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Subject: Re: All the different kinds of amps

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sun, 04 Mar 2018 17:36:43 GMT

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An amplifier is just a signal multiplier. That's all. Having said that, most people categorize them as follows:

Power amp - an amplifier that takes a preamp-level signal and creates a loudspeaker-level signal.

Monoblock - a power amplifier for one channel. If running monoblock amplifiers, each channel requires it's own amplifier.

Stereo Amp - an amplifier designed to work with two channels.

Integrated amplifier - an amplifier that combines the functions of preamp and power amp in one chassis.

Preamp - an amplifier that provides signal control at the preamp level. Preamp level is around 1vrms, although professional preamps work at a slightly higher preamp level. The main function of the preamp isn't really amplification. It provides channel selection, volume control and sometimes other signal processing functions.

Phono amp - An amplifier that amplifies the tiny signal from a magnetic phono cartridge to preamp level. Sometimes called a phono stage. Note that moving coil and moving magnet cartridges usually produce slightly different signal levels and often have different impedances, so they work best with different input impedances on the phono stage. But most of the better ones have the ability to select levels between moving coil and moving magnet, and the resistive and capacitive load on the cartridge can be chosen too.

RF amp - an amplifier for antenna signals, sometimes used with television or FM radio receivers placed far from the transmitter.

Power booster - a generic term for many kinds of amps, but often used in the car stereo market for an amplifier designed to connect to the output of the factory radio/tape/disk player and provide more power to the speakers.