Subject: Re: Is a home theatre system really necessary?
Posted by Wayne Parham on Fri, 26 Oct 2018 15:15:54 GMT
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You might expound upon what you mean by "actual home theater system."

My personal definition is any audio/video system that is setup to play movies. Many of them double as music playback systems for their owners.

So from this definition, a "home theater system" can be a television with a pair of stereo speakers. Better if it has a large screen and the sound system has a center channel, surrounds and multisubs.

But I'd prefer a high-quality stereo system over a retail "home theater in a box" system with a bunch of little satellites and a single subwoofer.

To me, the importance of quality sound components goes in this order:

1. High-quality stereo loudspeakers
   - Setup at screen height
   - Uniform directivity is preferred
   - If speakers have uniform directivity, cross forward axes ahead of listeners
2. High quality stereo amplification
   - Enough power to reach THX levels without clipping
3. Flanking subwoofers (2)
   - Set below, beside and behind the mains
   - Mains run "large", e.g. No high-pass or very low high-pass
   - Subs run to 100Hz second-order
4. High-quality side surrounds
   - Height just above listeners
5. Distributed subwoofers (2)
   - Setup far from mains, per Welti or Geddes
   - Position matters little as long as four subs are used
   - Crossover at 60Hz fourth-order
6. Center speaker that matches the main stereo speakers
   - Height same a left/right mains
7. Rear surrounds
   - Height just above listeners

I rated the center channel last, but this is only the case if the main left/right speakers are capable of uniform directivity and they are toed-in properly to create an excellent phantom center. If this isn't the case, then I'd shift the importance of the center channel speaker up to the flanking sub position.

So to me, the necessity of equipment is more of a linear gradient, where the ability to create a realistic impression increases the further I am able to reach the goals shown above.