Subject: Re: Powered soundbars
Posted by lilbill on Sat, 21 Mar 2020 17:36:47 GMT
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Madison wrote on Thu, 19 March 2020 22:02Sometimes it's an either/or game. Many modern televisions (and soundbars too) come with options such as "enhance spoken dialogue," and "increase audio depth." Tinker around with those options first to see if it helps.

Soundbars are usually pretty cheap, so there's not much risk in rolling the dice. I've never heard anyone complain about the one they bought or I'd tell you which ones to avoid. My grandfather is heard of hearing, so I bought him a ZVOX AccuVoice AV200 Soundbar which wasn't a brand I recognized, but it was talked up by AARP so he wanted it. It was a little less than $200 and it looks pretty cheap, but it's still going strong after three years or so, which is amazing because the cats and dogs aren't shy about rubbing on it. Most soundbars are pretty simple to set up, however this one doesn't have an HDMI port. That meant taking a few extra steps for me, but it wasn't a big deal.

I have to say that the dialogue really is easier to understand, especially when they're whispering or talking low. I don't have golden ears, but as someone who can already hear normally, I find the enhancement annoying after a while. My grandfather loves it though because he can finally hear the dialogue over the sound effects and background music, which is something that caused him frustration before. He also likes using the Output Leveling feature which prevents commercials from being louder than the show. Overall, he's very happy with it!

It's an either/or soundbar - music sounds below average. Not a big deal while watching a show, but not the best for just listening to your music collection.

I have a soundbar at home with Dolby Atmos that's supposed to mimic surround sound which you've already said you aren't looking for. To be honest, it's a fancy device that isn't any better than the $200-$400 models. But then again, I don't have golden ears.

I agree that most soundbars are cheap, though there are pricey ones as well. The output leveling feature is one that I would love to explore. Does a soundbar wattage matter? How do you settle for the best quality?