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Subject: New to Car Audio

Posted by [papy2000](#) on Sat, 04 Jul 2009 11:01:25 GMT

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Hey guys, new to the forum and new to the world of car audio. I have been doing some reading on the forum and love the personality here

I drive a Dodge Nitro SUV and am looking to get some sort of system for it. I don't have a ton of cash to blow, but I have enough (I think) to get me a decent set up.

I am a rap/country guy, so I need something with some bump but won't distort the music.

I am looking to buy and install at my local Best Buy or Circuit City (any preference here?), and I would like to keep my budget between \$400-\$800 including install if possible. (Is this a realistic number?)

I was thinking a single 12" sub, and maybe some nice speakers to replace the stock ones up front, plus an amp to power it all. What do you guys recommend as far as brands and prices? I am looking for some crisp sound, and will sacrifice some "thump" to keep the sound crisp and clean.

Keep in mind, I am new to all of this, and it is over my head, so forgive me if I sound n00bish. Any help you can provide is appreciated.

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Subject: Re: New to Car Audio

Posted by [ushana](#) on Sat, 04 Jul 2009 11:12:16 GMT

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its actually very easy to install. i started the same way and now im going to be installing my own first system once i get it. installation is about 80% of your cost overall so eliminating this will drastically improve the quality you will be able to put into your system

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Subject: Re: New to Car Audio

Posted by [Head\\_Unit](#) on Wed, 17 Feb 2010 04:10:29 GMT

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It is true you can save substantially, and get a lot of satisfaction, installing it yourself.

I strongly suggest logging onto Crutchfield.com; their site can show you exactly what will fit in your car, and they have an extremely comprehensive selection of brands. If you do decide to install it yourself, they give very detailed instructions and if needed I believe phone support. If you still don't feel comfortable, that's fine, but you'll have learned a lot about what fits in your car.

As for dealers, it is most important that you feel comfortable. Don't give your money to a place that seems poorly run, is condescending, or seems fixated on selling you what THEY want to sell you instead of what is right for YOU.

I'd go to Alpine1.com to look up independent Alpine dealers in your area. Alpine is tops in car audio for lo these many years, so their dealers tend to be the cream of the crop. That doesn't mean they'll all be right for you, but it's a start. As for Best Buy, big chain installers used to be a joke, but BB is a good and serious company and have probably improved this a lot. Visit some dealers, ask for proposals, look at their install bay, ask "why should I buy here?" and go with the place that makes you most comfortable.

For really good bass in a car, you generally need a subwoofer. If you like your sound except for the bass, you might leave the stock speakers alone for now. The woofers will not really make so much difference for the low bass, because with a subwoofer there should be a crossover to cut the bass out from the woofers.

For the sub, there are standard boxes all the way up to custom fiberglass. AudioForms and similar are premade custom fits for certain vehicles. To avoid boom, insist on a sealed box. No ports, no bandpass. Those are for SPL and boom. Yes, you can make tight sounding ported boxes but that's rarer than living dinosaurs in car audio. Forget it. Explain and repeat and insist that you want TIGHT sound (but by the way, are you SURE you don't care how loud it is? A 12" etc will provide very strong and pretty loud bass, but won't be heard 3 blocks away).

It is indispensable that your amp have crossovers INDEPENDENTLY adjustable for sub, front, and rear. Also, the frequency adjustment should be continuous, or in steps of 10%. This is absolutely necessary for proper system tuning. If you're keeping the stock radio, your best bet might be a 5-channel amp that can just feed from the stock radio and then derive the subwoofer output, so your fader still works. The fader should be mostly set forward. Forget those rear speakers, this is not surround sound, those rear speakers are a historic legacy from when car amps had 3 watts and the rear passengers couldn't hear without a speaker by their head.

Your budget should be more than fine for what you want to do.

If your stock system is amplified, you need to re-post and explain that, because it could make things more complicated and need different advice.

Do post back and tell us what you do, we're curious.

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Subject: Re: New to Car Audio  
Posted by [Drummer](#) on Wed, 12 May 2010 12:06:52 GMT  
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In reference to the topic, I'm somewhat new too. The newer model vehicles that are coming off the assembly line, are they all equipped to play mp3 players? I think I would rather have an mp3 player set up in my new vehicle than a CD player.

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Subject: Re: New to Car Audio  
Posted by [Dizzy](#) on Thu, 13 May 2010 21:30:06 GMT

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My last decent car would play MP3 CDs but had no way of directly inputting MP3s. It was replaced ultimately with a player that would take a USB flash drive.

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Subject: Re: New to Car Audio

Posted by [hibuckhobby](#) on Mon, 24 May 2010 20:19:07 GMT

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Even a 10" will give you clean output in your Nitro. With the amount of cabin gain you get in a car, a sealed box is your best choice IMO...

Find out what is in the front doors in terms of speakers and upgrade them. You can even use the factory head unit if money is tight and get a hi/lo convertor to run the signal into the rca's on an amp...or you can get one of the MTX amps that accept speaker level input.

Car audio is like any other portion of the hobby...you can spend a little or you can let the bug bite you and spend a lot. I spent a couple years competing in IASCA, so I spent a lot.  
hibuckhobby

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