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Subject: Impressions and Recommendations - 3pi and 4pi variants

Posted by [krikor](#) on Thu, 11 Mar 2010 17:58:09 GMT

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As you can probably surmise from my previous post, I'm liking the 3pi speakers a lot even in the very short time I've had this older used pair... enough that I'm starting to consider upgrade and improvement paths.

I've been scouring the threads and have come across some comments and comparisons between the different 3pi/4pi variants, but it's tough to make sense of it that way... so I thought I'd just ask.

Wayne or anyone else please chime in on the following:

1. What type of improvement can I expect going from the older xover to the latest? (I assume this would yield the greatest bang for my buck)
2. What type of improvement can I expect going from the PSD2002 tweeter to the DE250?
3. The 3pi and 4pi seem very similar, small differences in size and price aside it seems like a matter of woofer preference. What is the sonic difference between these two models... why choose one over the other? Upgraded woofer differences?

Thanks in advance for any input as I weigh my cost-to-performance options.

Size-wise, 3pi or 4pi work for me... 4pi size is preferable but I may stick with the 3pi for expediency since I've already got the cabs. I also saw a reference to putting the top of a 6pi/7pi on the 3pi/4pi bass bins, which is also possible since my room can't accommodate corner horns... benefits being a better midrange?

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Subject: Re: Impressions and Recommendations - 3pi and 4pi variants

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Thu, 11 Mar 2010 19:42:37 GMT

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I think I sent you these links, but maybe not. It's probably good to have them in this thread anyway, so here they are:

Upgrades

These two threads talk about upgrades, and describe the differences between models and the upgrades available for each of them.

The crossover upgrade is actually pretty subtle, but then again, sometimes subtle differences are the most profound. Normally, I wouldn't say that because we all have heard differences that were night and day and others that were hard to even hear. Seems like audiophiles are sometimes influenced a lot by preconceived notions, and can sometimes think they hear something they don't. But in this case, the new crossover puts the forward lobe exactly where we want it, an

improvement over the old crossover that was close, but not as good. The new crossover is slightly smoother in the crossover region too.

The biggest difference is going to be heard in the woofer swap, second in the tweeter swap. The crossover is probably third, but I don't think I would invest in the improved drivers until I knew the crossover was upgraded too. The crossover is not an expensive upgrade, and you can even buy the unstuffed crossover PCB and populate it with parts from your old crossover if you want, because many of the components are the same.

way I do. They're much more alike than they are different, with the main difference being a slight

excellent, it's like choosing between a Corvette and a Porsche.

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Subject: Re: Impressions and Recommendations - 3pi and 4pi variants

Posted by [krikor](#) on Thu, 11 Mar 2010 20:32:23 GMT

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Those links help. Didn't have the one on upgrades.

As a follow-up, how would you characterize the difference in sound between the JBL and AE woofers?

For that matter, how would you characterize the PSD2002 and DE250?

Thanks again for your patience... you are very generous with support and time.

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Subject: Re: Impressions and Recommendations - 3pi and 4pi variants

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Thu, 11 Mar 2010 20:53:57 GMT

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thoughts about JBL and AE. I have a lot of experience with JBL, and really know their sound and how they act at all conditions, ages and drive levels, from brand-new to 20 years old, and from less than a watt to full-out, time to recone after this show. I don't have nearly this much experience with the AE drivers, so I will want to live with them for quite some time before I will feel like I know them as well. I will say they measure very nicely and my early impressions are very favorable, even more than I expected. Read that thread for more elaboration.

As for the PSD2002 verses DE250, these have measurable and audible differences, all above 8kHz. The DE250 is just plain smoother. It isn't night and day though, more like shades of grey, but I also wouldn't say it's subtle. Well, maybe I would. The PSD2002 sounds clear and has adequate extension, good sparkle and clarity but is maybe a little bit harsher. It's pretty well behaved for a titanium diaphragm but its breakup modes do give a bit more ripple in the top octave than I'd like. Still, it's a great bang-for-the-buck driver, and I can listen to it for extended periods without becoming fatigued, even at relatively loud levels. But then, swap in the DE250 and compare, and you'll feel like you went from denim to silk. It's much smoother, and doesn't lose any top-end extension in the trade. In fact, the DE250 reaches a bit higher on the top end as well as having a few decibels less ripple.

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**Subject: Re: Impressions and Recommendations - 3pi and 4pi variants**  
Posted by [krikor](#) on Fri, 12 Mar 2010 13:32:00 GMT  
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Again, thanks for all the insight. This helps a lot with my decisions. Probably going to first upgrade the 3pi tweeters and xovers, listen for awhile, then decide if I want to use those to plunge forward into building the 4pi 2226. The track record of the JBL and the smaller size of the cabinet are very attractive.

Plus... that way I still have the old 3pi for something else

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