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Subject: What Should I Look For In A Good Solid State Amp?

Posted by [Maxie](#) on Thu, 06 May 2010 01:39:27 GMT

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I am looking for a solid state amp. Until now I have been using a tube amp but I am wanting to try solid state. This will be my first solid state purchase. What should I be looking for?

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Subject: Re: What Should I Look For In A Good Solid State Amp?

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Thu, 06 May 2010 03:27:44 GMT

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If you like tubes, you might try FET amps. Especially if you're into SET, try a Class A FET.

On the other end of the spectrum, you could try a digital amp. To my way of thinking, that's a 180° turnaround and I'm personally not into them. But there is some merit in the design approach; It's basically very similar to the most modern 1-bit DACs.

In between those two extremes are the more traditional chip amps, like the LM1875 and LM3875. And of course the garden variety receivers and home theaters. Some are terrible but there are a few that actually sound pretty good. Close your eyes and you almost can't tell they're retail midfi.

I have a Harman Kardon receiver that sounds good, for example. I bought it for utility purpose, things like the demonstrations in the "Crossover Electronics 101" seminar. It actually sounds pretty good. I also like the old late 1970's and early 1980's Yamaha receivers. Those are a couple examples that come to mind.

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Subject: Re: What Should I Look For In A Good Solid State Amp?

Posted by [Adveser](#) on Sun, 25 Jul 2010 02:37:44 GMT

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Whatever you do, do not use the Bass Boost button if it has one. Those things destroy audio quality. You'll find yourself trying to boost the high's because of how muddy and boomy they will make everything and you'll end up with really glassy sound in a best case scenario to match the lows and highs. Since exaggerated lows effect the pace of music, you might be doing much more harm than your ears are aware of, your ears like extended and exaggerated tonal response and aerodyne production quality. Your brain will know something is wrong and unnatural and you won't get as much pleasure from the sound.

Right now, I have a Techwood integrated amp that I bought cheap at Cash Converters when I desperately needed one. I haven't really had any money lying around since then. I think it sounds pretty good.

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A couple months ago I decided the worn/broken/not 100% balance potentiometer was likely screwing something up, so I took the pre-amp out of the thing.

The best compliment I can give the amp is that it is invisible now. It provides a good, but not nearly as loud boost in the volume and nothing else really. I would guess it lost about 12db of gain after the pre-amp surgery and obviously there are no longer tone controls, balance or bass boost. This is why I say never use Bass Boost. After rebuilding my sound after the whole thing I noticed just how much I had to compensate for this this button destroying everything.

All that being said, I would go with a solid-state power amp with no pre-amp built in. The pre-amp I removed looked ridiculous. It was something that looked like exactly what I pulled out of a 10 dollar set of PC speakers years ago that I was using to power some 240 watt speakers (!) Get the pre-amp separately. The ones in an integrated amp are pretty much crap.