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Subject: First Post, 2 Pi, Ear Discomfort

Posted by [j0nnyfive](#) on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 20:09:57 GMT

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Hey everybody! I believe this is my first post here. I just bought the 2 Pi kit for my projection home theater in my small apartment. Love em! They sound very theatery! (I make up words.)

I was just curious about an issue to see if anyone else has experienced this... I've emailed Wayne about this and he agreed with my first idea that it may be listeners fatigue. I tried playing the speaker with dynamic compression turned on and the volume low, and that seemed to help.

Now, I'm not so sure. I didn't go into too much detail with Wayne about this, but I will try to be more specific here. My problem is that I'm experiencing a discomfort in my ears, and it seems like slight loss of high frequency hearing. It's almost a sickening feeling. You know that loss of hearing you get after walking out of a loud theater? It's not that. It really feels different than a temporary threshold shift from loudness in general. It's almost like I've been listening to a very very high pitched sound, so high I can barely perceive it, but like it's been slicing my ear drums.

I have NOT been playing the speakers loud at all. At first I thought that maybe I had been, but I realized that I still had to turn the movie up to hear some of the dialogue in some scenes. If I had to do that... there's no way it could have been "loud." No, because I have a pair of Ascend CMT-340se and I can play those louder without this sensation.

Anyway, is anyone familiar with this? Could there be some super high frequency distortion or interference somewhere? Can a careless build of a speaker cause the drivers to "squeek" at a super high pitch? Room reflections? (It's a small room.) Could large drivers in a small room somehow... "push in?" on the ear drums?

I'm at a loss and I'm feeling kind down. I love these speakers, but they hate me. lol

What would you suggest I do? Is there a good meter and software tool to test for these sorts of things? I really wanna get this taken care of.

Thanks in advance!

Setup: Denon 1712 receiver -> thick cable -> speakers.  
Small room.

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Subject: Re: First Post, 2 Pi, Ear Discomfort

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Thu, 28 Jun 2012 22:36:04 GMT

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That's listener fatigue. It's a temporary form of tinitis, and is what you'll get anytime you listen to something loudly for a period of time. You can also get it when rising in a convertible, motorcycle or even when your windows are just turned down.

There's nothing wrong with the speakers, they're just capable of playing louder than you're used to, probably mostly during the peaks (like explosions and stuff).

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Subject: Re: First Post, 2 Pi, Ear Discomfort  
Posted by [j0nnyfive](#) on Sat, 30 Jun 2012 12:59:35 GMT  
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Thanks for the response Wayne!

After relocating the speakers to a larger room, I believe the room may have a lot to do with it. I took them to my parents' house and listened to them at a louder volume for a while, and when my Dad came home, he turned them up even louder, and even after all that, the sensation in my ears wasn't nearly as pronounced. I was watching Iron Man and oddly enough, the weird ache only happened when Rhodey would yell at Tony! lol

The room at my parents' is very large compared to my living room, and I sit farther away from the speakers. When I mentioned a bad build I was referring to whether or not the guy that assembled them got a couple screws too tight or something. I read that could alter sound a bit. Dunno. That was just a left-fielder.

But anyway, I'm going to break them in over at my parents'. I'm going to see if break in affects it before I start looking into room treatments. (Which I was going to look into anyway.)

Okay, I didn't think this needed to be said, but I'm going to say it anyway just in case some ding dong out there misinterprets this thread: If anybody out there is on the fence about getting these speakers, DO IT! I don't think you can find a better bang for your buck anywhere for a sound this big! Keep in mind that I have very sensitive hearing (according to some of my friends). (I think I may have inherited this. It doesn't take much to make my ears ache. My left ear tends to be worse. My Mom has some problems with ear pain.)

My Dad was also very impressed! He cranked 'em high and they definitely put a smile on his face! He has the Ascend Acoustics Sierra towers (\$2,000), so it's not like he has no basis for comparison. (Sierra Towers are exquisitely amazing, but at different things. So, apples and oranges here. And they are \$2,000 DERRR!!) He also said the Pis sound very good, especially for the price! (\$100 per kit. That's insane.) These are good for anything: Music, Movies.. but I gotta say something about movies. If you are into building an awesome home theater, DO NOT underestimate the affect that speaker efficiency will have on the sound. BIG MISTAKE. Gotta be heard to be understood.

So anyway, I think this is ultimately a minor thing, and I'll have these babies back home pretty soon after some break-in cranking. Cheers!

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Subject: Re: First Post, 2 Pi, Ear Discomfort

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Posted by [steve f](#) on Sun, 01 Jul 2012 17:14:32 GMT

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Go to Radio Shack and buy an SPL meter. The level of playing may have been much higher than you think.

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Subject: Re: First Post, 2 Pi, Ear Discomfort

Posted by [j0nnyfive](#) on Tue, 03 Jul 2012 14:38:16 GMT

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Thanks for the advice, that's a good idea. I have one of those but I can't find it.

I think it's the room acoustics. Like I said, the trouble isn't that I was having "normal" desensitization. The problem was an abnormal feeling that is unfamiliar. This only happened at my apartment but not at the house. The weird feeling at the apartment wasn't accompanied by much desensitization, but it was a little.

I think it's a combination of raw SPL and room acoustics. Playing it at the house, we really cranked it at times. I got "normal" desensitization but not that weird uncomfortable feeling that I can't describe very well. After experimenting, I really think I have an odd room at my apartment that will need a bit of tweaking.

What makes me hesitant to say it was just SPL at the apartment is that I'm really paranoid about playing it too loud because of my apartment neighbors. I tend to always caution on the low side, and it didn't sound very loud at the apartment. However, it DID sound loud at the house. I'm telling ya these high sens. speakers are awesome with the movie Thor! "Hamma!!" Anyway, thanks for the advice everybody and I will buy another SPL meter if I have to. That's a great idea either way!

p.s. I know that a loud sound can still sound quiet, which also leads me to think I need to address my room acoustics. If it was playing too loud at the apartment, then it shouldn't sound "too quiet". lol Just thinking out loud here... also keep in mind that I'm a n00b. I could be doing this all wrong. lol Just sayin. Thanks!

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