Subject: All the different kinds of amps
Posted by EasyE on Sun, 04 Mar 2018 02:09:30 GMT
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I've been looking around at amps and boy, there seem to be a lot of different types. Could someone explain the differences between amps, pre-amps, integrated amps, and power amps? I'm sorry, I know this is probably a basic question. Are there are a lot of distinct differences between them all or is there a lot of overlap?

Subject: Re: All the different kinds of amps
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 04 Mar 2018 17:36:43 GMT
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An amplifier is just a signal multiplier. That's all. Having said that, most people categorize them as follows:

Power amp - an amplifier that takes a preamp-level signal and creates a loudspeaker-level signal.

Monoblock - a power amplifier for one channel. If running monoblock amplifiers, each channel requires it's own amplifier.

Stereo Amp - an amplifier designed to work with two channels.

Integrated amplifier - an amplifier that combines the functions of preamp and power amp in one chassis.

Preamp - an amplifier that provides signal control at the preamp level. Preamp level is around 1vrms, although professional preamps work at a slightly higher preamp level. The main function of the preamp isn't really amplification. It provides channel selection, volume control and sometimes other signal processing functions.

Phono amp - An amplifier that amplifies the tiny signal from a magnetic phono cartridge to preamp level. Sometimes called a phono stage. Note that moving coil and moving magnet cartridges usually produce slightly different signal levels and often have different impedances, so they work best with different input impedances on the phono stage. But most of the better ones have the ability to select levels between moving coil and moving magnet, and the resistive and capacitive load on the cartridge can be chosen too.

RF amp - an amplifier for antenna signals, sometimes used with television or FM radio receivers placed far from the transmitter.

Power booster - a generic term for many kinds of amps, but often used in the car stereo market for an amplifier designed to connect to the output of the factory radio/tape/disk player and provide more power to the speakers.

Subject: Re: All the different kinds of amps
Posted by EasyE on Tue, 06 Mar 2018 21:16:33 GMT
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Oh, wow. There are even more types of amps than I initially realized. Thank you so much for taking the time to list them all out and tell me about them. I'm going to have to print this out!