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Subject: Best low cost gear

Posted by [Dynavector](#) on Wed, 09 Apr 2008 16:48:26 GMT

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Hi all,I am looking for opinions on low cost gear. It's easy to make a great sounding system when the budget is \$10K+. What about budget gear? What are your favorite cheap speakers, amps and players? DIY is OK.David

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Subject: Re: Best low cost gear

Posted by [FredT](#) on Wed, 09 Apr 2008 21:39:05 GMT

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I recently picked up an NAD-320BEE integrated used on Audiogon for \$250. Nobody's going to sell their megabuck equipment to buy this one, but for the money (\$450 new) it's hard to beat. Cambridge audio also makes some very affordable components that look more appealing than the NAD's drab colors. I haven't heard them, but I understand that dollar for dollar the sound is comparable. Another good source for budget equipment, including speakers, is AV-123. I have their \$299 Onix XCD-88 CD player, and it sounds as good as anybody else's \$500 one. The latest model, the CD-5SE, sells for \$399. I also like their X-Series speakers, especially the \$699 Xstatik dipoles. No mainstream speaker selling for under \$2K will have that quality in the crossover parts. I also recommend the Oppo Digital universal players. I recently bought the \$170 DV-980H to watch music videos. It sounds very good for the price, and its HDMI output upconverts to HD, but with CD's it doesn't sound as good as the Onix XCD-88. If you're going to need high efficiency speakers for use with a low power tube amp, and can build your own enclosures, the Pi speakers are hard to beat. I have the Studio One Pi's and the Theater Three Pi's, and they're hard to beat for the price.

AV123 Xstatik Speaker

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Subject: 2nd the NAD

Posted by [Shane](#) on Wed, 09 Apr 2008 23:25:23 GMT

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I've got the 320Bee and the matching 520Bee CDP. They sound quite good together, especially through my Klipsch heresy's or my old Polk monitor 5's. FWIW, I bought them a little over a year ago and the amp was \$300 and the cdp \$275. There are some good deals if you look around.

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Subject: Re: 2nd the NAD

Posted by [Dynavector](#) on Thu, 10 Apr 2008 22:28:28 GMT

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Thanks FredT and Shane,I will look at those and may ask a few more questions later.David

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Subject: Re: Best low cost gear

Posted by [akhilesh](#) on Fri, 11 Apr 2008 17:18:47 GMT

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Sony CD players tend to sound good, especially the ES models that are older. Another one that sounds good is the Ah Njoe Tjoeb player. If you are going budget, make sure you get a good push pull tube amp, and a great pair of full range vintage speakers (Klipsch/JBL/Altec)-akhilesh

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Subject: Re: Best low cost gear

Posted by [SteveBrown](#) on Mon, 14 Apr 2008 23:56:17 GMT

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I'm thinking that even better than spending money on a CD player, using your PC as a music server is a better option these days. Get a DAC from Hagerman and you're all set. Hagerman is also a good source for kits, though there is some DIY involved in the metal work.

Hagerman's site

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Subject: Re: Best low cost gear

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Tue, 15 Apr 2008 00:13:50 GMT

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Better as a video server too. Try to get a DVR - They're not sold as stand-alone units anymore. Dish Network or Cox Cable will rent one, but if you want to buy one, you're out of luck. But you can always setup a PC as a DVR. That's what a DVR is anyway, a PC running Linux with a program running to turn it into a DVR.

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Subject: Re: Best low cost gear

Posted by [gumby1](#) on Sat, 19 Apr 2008 06:01:31 GMT

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I've been very satisfied with Onkyo and Yamaha 2-channel receivers. I have the Onkyo 8222 and the Yamaha RX-797. I consider them to be very high value. I use the Onkyo for my 2-channel home theater and the Yamaha for our bedroom system. My main music system has Van Alstine and McCormack Audio components. Also high value, but much more expensive.

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