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Subject: "HiFi" buzzwords for a simple engineer...  
Posted by [Magnus](#) on Sat, 22 Nov 2003 12:21:06 GMT  
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Fellow hornlovers, when discussing speakers and such I often run into quite a bit of terminology describing sonic qualities which I am not too familiar with. If somebody says that there is a -6 dB/octave falloff above 10 kHz or 3% THD below 100 Hz at 100 dB/SPL or irritating phase cancellation due to comb-filter effects I know exactly what they mean. But when somebody says for example that a speaker is "bright" - now what is that? And what about "imaging", "sound stage" and the like? Thanks for any clarifications! /Magnus

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Subject: Re: "HiFi" buzzwords for a simple engineer...  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sat, 22 Nov 2003 16:03:09 GMT  
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ever hear a piano played in a room with all windows and a terrazzo tile floor? That's "bright". Ever close your eyes at a classical concert and picture the clarinets on the left and horns on the right? That's "imaging" Measuring a speaker to determine how good it sounds is like measuring the light spectrum coming off a Rembrandt to see how good it looks.

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Subject: Re: "HiFi" buzzwords for a simple engineer...  
Posted by [Tightwad](#) on Sat, 22 Nov 2003 16:51:32 GMT  
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"Measuring a speaker to determine how good it sounds is like measuring the light spectrum coming off a Rembrandt to see how good it looks." Bad analogy. To the original point, the English language is pretty poorly equipped to describe sonic phenomena, so it borrows terms. Hence "bright", "dark", "muddy", "soundstage", etc.

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Subject: Re: "HiFi" buzzwords for a simple engineer...  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Sat, 22 Nov 2003 17:19:04 GMT  
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somehow I don't think that was what Magnus was driving at. I think he kinda knew that.

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Subject: Re: "HiFi" buzzwords for a simple engineer...  
Posted by [Magnus](#) on Sat, 22 Nov 2003 18:13:39 GMT  
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Manualblock,look I was not trying to say that sound perception by any means can be fully quantified just by a few technical parameters. I have played clarinet for years in both symfonic orchestras and jazz bands and yes, good music is nothing you read from a diagram, even if it is three dimensional. It is simply that I hear a lot of words that I do not know the correct meaning of (especially since my native language is Swedish and not English). If you, for example say that is sounds like sitting in a tin can I understand fully what you mean (looking at an FFT plot of this particular sound would probably tell me absolute nothing). But when somebody said "bright" or "good imaging" it was not obvious to me what that was referring to. Now that you have explained the terms I know better. Thanks for the clarification!/Magnus

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Subject: Re: "HiFi" buzzwords  
Posted by [Mike.e](#) on Sat, 22 Nov 2003 18:46:19 GMT  
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I know ive had the same trouble,i hear that lowthers can have 'shout'its annoying because 'bright' for one person ,may mean 'harsh ' for another.I think that when people dont have freq response graphs,FFTs it becomes the only way to do it.Theres no solid quantification.'HIFI' magazines are bad for this..however they do test the DVD players to test signal - noise ratios-when its already very excessively good! haha.Cheers

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Subject: <http://www.stereophile.com/reference/50/index2.html>  
Posted by [newsjeff](#) on Sat, 22 Nov 2003 23:29:40 GMT  
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This may help. Or not.

<http://www.stereophile.com/reference/50/index2.html>