



STEREO SPEAKERS  
CAMBRIDGE  
AUDIO S30



£ 120

**FOR**

Crisp, punchy; decent bass from 50 small enclosure; beautifully built; fine value

**AGAINST**

Styling won't be to every taste; deep cabinet might not suit some users

**VERDICT**

This clever design has an air of quality that extends from its build to its sound

A very impressive pair of speakers from a company better known for its electronics

# Budget speakers ooze class

**THIS ISN'T THE** first time Cambridge Audio has made speakers: some 30 years ago its R50 and R70 speakers were well-respected designs.

However, those were nothing like the new speakers: the S30s are small, standing just 32cm tall and 16cm wide. Much smaller and it would have been hard to fit the room woven composite mid/bass unit and 25mm soft-dome tweeter into the front baffle. As it is, the

**“It's in the midband and treble that the S30s really shine”**

faceplate of the tweeter is cut away to bring the two drivers closer together for better integration. The design of the drivers allows a simplified crossover to be used between them, and the speakers are biwirable for even greater definition and control.

Cabinet volume is maintained by making the S30s quite deep front to back, and to the rear a

single component combines the biwirable terminal block and bass reflex port, the loudspeakers being designed to be used at least 8cm out from your rear wall.

## Winning punch and detail

These are highly accomplished speakers, with a winning mix of punch and detail. The bass isn't seismic, even if extension down to 59Hz is impressive, but entertains by being fast and precise, powering music along whether with crashy rock or dramatic classical pieces. Basslines are easy to follow, and drums sound reasonably substantial and

are well defined. But it's in the midband and treble that the S30s really shine, and we suspect this has a lot to do with the minimal crossover used. Voices are open and detailed,

and instruments – from acoustic to electric – have excellent character and real bite when required. Get these speakers on some decent heavy stands, toed-in slightly toward the listening position, and you also get a well-focused, precise soundstage with a really good sense of ambience.

The S30s live up to the familiar Cambridge formula: they're classy-looking, sound superb, and offer an intriguing alternative to the established favourites at this level.



**ALSO CONSIDER**



**QACOUSTICS 1010**



£100

April 2007

Best speakers under £150 in our 2006 Awards, and still excellent

**TANNOY MERCURY FI CUSTOM**



£109

April 2007

These revamped Mercury speakers are a truly fantastic budget buy