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# SUPERTEST

## EXPLICIT

### Floorshow

**L**ess is more? Not always. Sometimes, you just want your music to sound bigger. Go louder. Beat harder. You need floorstanders. And when you're spending the best part of £1000, you're entitled to expect some frankly revealing speakers that will lay your music bare.

That's not to say you should throw all thoughts of practicality out of the window. There are good reasons to choose floorstanders over standmounters. For starters, you don't need to invest in stands, leaving more cash to spend on your speakers. Then there's space: floorstanders don't always take up a lot of room. Whether you're starting out or upgrading, the right pair of floorstanders can be a sound investment.

To help you decide, we've put together a seven-way death match. Our trusty Q Acoustic Concept 40s are joined by newcomers from Bowers & Wilkins, Cabasse, Epos, PSB, Tannoy and Triangle. All of them have been working hard to shout louder and better than the others. It's been deafening at times, but it's also been a lot of fun.



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#### ON TEST

**B&W** 684 S2 p30

**Cabasse** Jersey MT32 p31

**Epos** K2 p32

**PSB** Imagine X1T p33

**Q Acoustics** Concept 40 p34

**Tannoy** Revolution XT6F p35

**Triangle** Antal 902 p36

**TANNOY REVOLUTION XT6F £1000**

**Vive la révolution.** Tannoy has historically done well in this arena, but at the moment it gets to strut around proudly like very loud peacock.

We don't deal readily in hyperbole, but we feel compelled right about now. The Tannoy Revolution XT6Fs are incredible speakers for the money and you must seek them out for an audition.

Their aptitude is obvious. They waste no time in setting out their stall: what you get is an entertaining listen. There's a tremendous immediacy to the Tannoys' delivery that has no problem attracting your undivided attention.

#### Well endowed

We put on a bit of Prince and party like it's 1999. Your feet will tap. Your fingers will snap. So infectious is the level of energy that you can't escape, at the very least, doing a tiny dance in your chair.

That said, these Tannoys are more than just a joyride. These are versatile speakers, and while they're happy to bop along with Pharrell Williams they are just as content chilling to Portishead.

Timing and dynamics are the key here, and these Tannoys are well endowed in both departments. Whatever you throw at them will be handled with precision and agility, while

the wide dynamic range offers enough zest to ensure the performance never veers into the clinical.

#### Spacious and airy

Despite their lively demeanour, the sound is nice and balanced. No part of the frequency demands your attention.

The midrange is lovely. It's direct without being demanding. Vocals stand out without feeling isolated. There's a good deal of bass, but it's agile and nicely controlled. We move up to the treble and find it could be a little sweeter and more delicate, but now we're just nitpicking.

We're impressed by the level of integration. The various elements cooperate to perform as a unified whole. There's also plenty of detail throughout the frequency range. The various textures are entirely convincing.

It also helps that it's a big sound, tall and wide as you like. The presentation is spacious and airy. There's room enough whether you want to occupy that soundstage with brass bands or full orchestras. Whichever you choose will be organised and fully ready to rock.

A stunning performance, then, and it's entirely down to the engineering. We're always nervous when a manufacturer decides it's time to shake up a winning

**The Revolution XT6Fs will get your feet tapping and your fingers snapping**

formula, but the Revolution has definitely been improved - at least where the XT6Fs are concerned.

#### Attention to detail

'XT', by the way, stands for 'extra technology'. The most obvious change here is the angled base of cabinet and an integrated plinth and down-firing reflex port for better dispersion of low frequencies. Tannoy's signature Dual Concentric driver has also been tweaked to improve integration between the tweeter and mid/bass cone.

The trapezoid shape of the cabinet, as always, helps to reduce internal standing waves. And as always, fit and finish is superb. We're particularly keen on the attention to detail: look closely enough and you'll see 'TANNOY' written on the in the bolts at the front. This is very pleasing. We are very pleased.

#### Rating ★★★★★

**FOR** Timing and integration; upbeat, lively demeanour; good balance; fine build

**AGAINST** Treble could be a little more delicate, but that's just nitpicking

**VERDICT** Talented, hugely entertaining floorstanders. These will be hard to beat



# TEST VERDICT



## THE WINNER

**Tannoy Revolution XT6F**

£1000 ★★★★★

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The seven pairs of floorstanding speakers we tested have something to suit every need. But there was one clear winner – step forward **Tannoy Revolution XT6Fs**, the floor is all yours

**T**his was fun. There's a lot of talent among these seven pairs of speakers, and pitting them against one another has been fascinating. At times we struggled to establish a hierarchy, but when it came to picking the winner, there was only one clear choice: the Tannoy Revolution XT6Fs.

We were won over by their astonishing precision. Their remarkable timing and strong dynamics make for an entertaining and engaging listen. And yet there's enough detail and subtlety for those with more refined tastes. Tannoy has traditionally been great at making floorstanders at this price – so practice does make perfect indeed.

### A bit more bite

Don't be too downheartened, Q Acoustics! The Concept 40s are also formidable speakers, and thoroughly deserving of their five-star rating. Their level of refinement is second-to-none in this group. We only wished they packed a bit

more bite, which would make them a more rounded, versatile performer.

### Power and vivacity

But don't write off our four-star rated speakers just yet. They are all worth your consideration, even if a flaw here and there stands between them and full marks.

In third place we've put the Triangle Antal 902s. They may not be the subtlest of performers, but they make up for it with sheer power and vivacity. They are a force to be reckoned with, and we find them thoroughly invigorating. Try them and prepare to smile.

Next up are the Bowers & Wilkins 684 S2s. We were impressed by their scale, their strong dynamics and expressive midrange. Sadly they lose out in the bass department, which could have been less restrained and more articulate.

Then there are the PSB Imagine X1Ts. Like the Triangles, these place fun and outright energy ahead of subtlety. But they're not quite

as adept as the Triangles, because they suffer from a relative lack of transparency.

The Epos K2s are interesting, largely because they will be able to be converted to run actively later this year. However, until then we can only judge them on their passive skills. And while we are impressed by their smooth, solid sound, we find our attention drawn to their bass, which needs better definition. Transparency could also be improved.

### Precision and nuance

Bringing up the rear are the Cabasse Jersey MT32s. Like their standmounted siblings they offer a large, well-integrated sound, which makes up for a weaker performance in terms of precision and nuance. Sadly, their performance fails to get us excited. It's decent, but your money can get you further.

Seven pairs of floorstanders: we've picked our favourite, but there's plenty here to suit every need. Go out and try them.



**Bowers & Wilkins 684 S2**  
**£800 ★★★★★**  
 Power handling 150W • Sensitivity 87dB • Impedance 8 ohms  
 • Biwirable yes • Finishes 2  
 • Dimensions 92 x 16 x 23cm



**Cabasse Jersey MT32**  
**£900 ★★★★★**  
 Power handling 100W • Sensitivity 89dB • Impedance 8 ohms  
 • Biwirable no • Finishes 2  
 • Dimensions 100 x 22 x 32cm



**Epos K2**  
**£1000 ★★★★★**  
 Power handling 150W • Sensitivity 89dB • Impedance 4 ohms  
 • Biwirable yes • Finishes 2  
 • Dimensions 86 x 19 x 25cm



**PSB Imagine XIT**  
**£750 ★★★★★**  
 Power handling 200W • Sensitivity 90dB • Impedance 8 ohms  
 • Biwirable yes • Finishes 1  
 • Dimensions 87 x 21 x 40cm



**Q Acoustics Concept 40**  
**£1000 ★★★★★**  
 Power handling 150W • Sensitivity 90dB • Impedance 6 ohms  
 • Biwirable yes • Finishes 2  
 • Dimensions 97 x 17 x 29cm



**WHAT HI-FI? TEST WINNER**

**Tannoy Revolution XT6F**  
**£1000 ★★★★★**  
 Power handling 150W • Sensitivity 90dB • Impedance 8 ohms  
 • Biwirable yes • Finishes 2  
 • Dimensions 10 x 27 x 32 cm



**Triangle Antal 902**  
**£900 ★★★★★**  
 Power handling 120W • Sensitivity 91dB • Impedance 4.5 ohms  
 • Biwirable yes • Finishes 1  
 • Dimensions 110 x 26 x 31cm



**Location, location, location**

It's very important to consider where you put your floorstanders. Here are a few thoughts that will hopefully help you with positioning, but also with choosing speakers.

The size of the room matters as much as the position. If you have a large space, you'll never fill them with small floorstanders. Likewise, don't get large speakers for a small room, because things will get very boomy indeed.

Now, let's talk about walls. There are no universal rules about positioning. Some speakers sound fuller and more controlled when placed close to a wall. Others prefer a bit of breathing space, out in the open.

Don't be fooled by front-firing reflex ports, either. They don't guarantee that a pair of speakers will like being put near a wall.

Only by moving speakers about will you find their optimum positions. The best thing you can do is play around.

**SYSTEM BUILDER**



**Turntable**  
**Rega RP6/Exact £1000**  
 ★★★★★

This articulate and engaging Award-winning turntable is the perfect partner to the Tannoy Revolution XT6Fs.



**CD player**  
**Naim CD5si £1000 ★★★★★**  
 A truly terrific player with a winningly enthusiastic approach to music.

**Total build £3900**



**Stereo amplifier**  
**Rega Elex-R £900**  
 ★★★★★

One of the most talented sub-£1000 amplifiers we've heard.