

Possibilities Cubed

MISSION M-CUBE 5.1 SPEAKER PACKAGE \$3299

Don't you hate it when your wife and architect collude to stop you buying those big floorstanding speakers you've always wanted? After all, is it really too much to ask that you have just five large speakers plus a subwoofer populating your lounge? We all know the unfortunate truth is that it's usually just too hard to get everything you need for a proper home cinema into your average sized living room. Don't worry, the people at Mission are well aware of your predicament and have intervened to bring you a simple solution in the form of the M-Cube 5.1 sub/satellite package.

The M-Cube system is available in either ivory or midnight (black!) finishes. Each component has a velvet wrap (or skin) that is interchangeable. A choice of coloured wraps is supplied so that the speakers can be customised to fit in with your home décor. Coincidentally, the ivory colour supplied matched perfectly with my 'Dulux suede effects' paint, and if I had fitted them permanently on the walls (tempting) they would have pretty much disappeared into the décor.

This is no ordinary sub/sat combination. The satellite speakers employ Distributed Mode Loudspeaker (DML) technology within the five nine-centimetre-cubed aluminium enclosures. DML speakers differ from traditional speakers in that instead of moving a speaker cone back and forth with a magnet, DML applies a more complex vibration pattern to a flat panel to create sound waves.



The technology negates the need to use large speaker enclosures and, as a result, products employing DML are often referred to as flat panel or NXT speakers, NXT being the company that developed the DML technology. The satellite speakers are partnered with a more traditional 250-watt subwoofer that has dual 8-inch long throw bass drivers. Everything you need is included in the package, even down to five wall brackets and ample high grade Mission speaker cable.

Following Mission's recommendation, the satellites are not connected directly to the receiver; instead, all speaker connections are made on the subwoofer. This permits the sub to introduce a high pass and a low pass filter between the bass drivers and satellites. I decided to trust my Denon receiver to perform its auto setup function and set the size of each speaker according to its measured frequency response. Somewhat predictably, the Denon chose the large setting for each channel.

Playing music DVDs was particularly rewarding, and the M-Cube package deals with many of the disadvantages normally associated with the subwoofer-plus-satellite configuration. Gone is the annoying distortion caused by cone break-up at mid-high volumes, and these little puppies punch well above their weight in terms of sheer volume. Also gone is the annoying high frequency shrill normally associated with tiny satellites. In fact, the aluminium and polycarbonate enclosures deliver a smooth, detailed performance that never becomes wearying.

The choice of dual 8-inch drivers in the subwoofer allow it to work up into the 300Hz range. This is really into the lower-mid range, which would explain the clean integration with the satellites. The result is a performance more akin to larger floorstanders.

The M-Cube system sounds so good playing surround sound I doubt anybody would listen to anything else.

So there we have it, the M-Cube package is a great solution that produces a fine surround sound experience.

■ STEVE SMITH



CONTACT

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SPECIFICATIONS

Satellites
ENCLOSURE: DML infinite baffle
FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 280Hz to 20kHz
SENSITIVITY: 85dB
IMPEDANCE: 8 Ohms
POWER HANDLING: 30-150 watt
DIMENSIONS: 90 x 90 x 90mm

Subwoofer

ENCLOSURE: Sealed box
FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 28Hz to 300Hz
POWER AMPLIFIER: Active 250 watt
DIMENSIONS: 322 x 322 x 322mm

PROS

- + Great looks
- + Sound even better than they look

CONS

- ✗ Do they have any?

VERDICT

Highly recommended for the music DVD fan

Aesthetics	94%
Performance	91%
Features	88%
Functionality	91%
Price Value	86%
Overall	



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