

## **Here are some handy tips that might just help you to get more music from your loudspeakers**

### ***Safety notes:***

Do not connect or disconnect speaker cables while the amplifier is still switched on. Turn it off when making any changes. And do take care when moving large and heavy objects.

### ***Placement***

Avoid placing floor standing speakers on furniture that raises them to what might seem a better height. They'll definitely work better and be safer on the floor.

Use good speaker stands with compact 'bookshelf' speakers. This will sound better than putting them on bookshelves! The stand will allow the speaker to 'sing' better, and may also help carry away some of the cabinet resonances. Always use the supplied spikes at the base of stands, however on the top plates use four pieces of Blu-tak to rest the speakers on. This will form a good bond between them that sounds good! Use of top spikes will only damage the undersides of the speaker.

Try toeing the speakers inwards a little so that they point towards your seating position, to see if this sounds better.

Moving a speaker closer to the wall behind will increase the bass, though the sound may become duller and less 'open', with extra midrange coloration and less precise imaging. However, this is a great way to add some extra bass in a natural way, without recourse to tone controls.

Typically, if a speaker is moved away from any walls, it will tend to sound clearer and relative bass output will be reduced. The trick is to experiment and find the best overall 'sweet spot'.

The distance *between* the speakers will also affect the overall performance, because the stereo pair work together to produce the music. It's therefore worth experimenting to find the sweet spot, where the energy of the two speakers interacts to best effect. Every inch of movement – closer together, or further apart from each other – will affect how a pair of speakers convey the music.

Spending a few fun hours to find the best positions for your system, room and taste will pay off by delivering many years of enjoyable sounds in that room.

### ***Mechanical checks***

Consider using the speakers without their cloth grilles, especially if the grilles feature a substantial plastic or wooden frame which may interfere with the projected sound. (Grilles with simple frames that don't affect the sound waves needn't be removed.)

Make sure that the spike locknuts under the speakers are tight and the spikes themselves are adjusted so that the speakers are 100% level. This will give the cones, surrounds and magnets inside the speaker an easier job. Set the spikes as short as possible so that the bottom of the speaker just clears the carpet.

If you have a wooden floor, still use the spikes, but put some coins or floor protectors under these. That way you'll still have the benefits of the sturdy spikes.

Check that the speaker's input terminals are properly tightened, and that the speaker cable's plugs are fully inserted and fit well.

Check that the screws or bolts holding the drive units (tweeters & woofers) have not become loose over time. However, do take care not to over-tighten them.

### ***Cabling***

Many speakers are fitted with two (or more) pairs of terminals, allowing an optional bi-wire connection. If you decide to bi-wire, remember to remove the links that are usually fitted by the manufacturer. Those who prefer not to bi-wire the speakers should consider upgrading the 'bridging' links that connect together the positive terminals and the negative terminals on the back of the speakers. As supplied by the manufacturer, these are often just a basic strip of metal. Some surplus speaker cable, preferably of the same type used to connect the speakers, will usually sound better. Better still are proper links made for the purpose, which often have a spade connector at one end and a 4mm plug at the other. When using just one pair of cables from amplifier to speakers, it's also a good idea to try the alternative speaker terminals to check which makes the system sound better.

### ***Care***

When using furniture polish, avoid spraying it on the drive units or input connections; the chemicals in the polish will only do harm over time.

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GETTING THE BEST FROM YOUR SPEAKERS  
CED & PAUL MESSENGER