

# Excite? It's a bold claim that delivers

STEREO SPEAKERS  
DYNAUDIO  
EXCITE X32  
★★★★★  
£1600

**FOR**  
Fine standard of build and finish; an eloquent, expansive sound

**AGAINST**  
Not as stable on their spikes as they might be

**VERDICT**  
If you're more interested in the sound of your recordings than the sound of your speakers, these will be right up your street

**CALLING A RANGE** of loudspeakers 'Excite' is a bold move. It can mean 'agitate' as easily as it can mean 'arouse', after all – and when a name as dynamic as 'Excite' is applied to speakers that look as frankly humdrum as these new Dynaudios, well, that's asking for trouble.

Last month's *First Test* of the Excite X12 standmounters showed Dynaudio had just about got away with it – and these floorstanders are even more impressive. Don't let the so-so looks put you off – the X32s are truly an exciting way to spend £1600.

## Lovely finish, natural sound

The compact (92 x 17 x 27cm) cabinets are smoothly constructed, and the real-wood veneer (there's a choice of four finishes) looks and feels expensive. If the tweeter-and-dual-driver configuration is off-putting, the Dynaudios are supplied with full-length grilles.



The Excite X32s really do live up to the promise of their ambitious name

Only the spiked base plinth, which is as narrow as the cabinet and doesn't offer the speaker much stability, strikes an ergonomic false note.

Once well run in, and placed slightly into the room with no toe-in, the X32s sing in a natural, unaffected and utterly musical voice. The testing tempo and bludgeoning attack of Amon Tobin's *Get Your Snack On* is handled with unshowy authority, the Dynaudios delivering punchy, rapid low

**“The X32s sing in a natural, utterly musical voice; they deliver punchy low frequencies and an open midrange”**

frequencies and an open, uncluttered midrange. Treble sounds are judged well, with plenty of bite but fighting shy of hardness or sibilance. The many dynamic peaks and troughs in the tune are dispatched with conviction, and the X32s knit all the information together smoothly.

This consummate performance isn't flashy or attention-seeking, though. The Dynaudios can, at first listen, seem a little passive and undemonstrative, but over time reveal themselves to be articulate, attentive speakers. They simply get on with the job of handing over your recordings as faithfully as possible, and we'd say that's precisely what you want your loudspeakers to do.

ALSO CONSIDER ?

PROAC STUDIO 140  
★★★★★  
£1440

May 2006  
Take an age to run in, but reward in spades with an agile, entertaining and brilliantly balanced performance

WILSON BENESCH SQUARE TWO  
★★★★★  
£2200

February 2007  
A bit of a price-hike over the Dynaudios, but worth every penny. You won't find a better-sounding floorstander at the money

MP3 PLAYER  
SANDISK  
SANSO FUZE  
★★★★★  
£60 (2GB)

**FOR**  
Solid, with a smart finish; clean interface; decent sound; expansive storage

**AGAINST**  
Headphones aren't much cop; lacks a little punch and weight

**VERDICT**  
Not quite up to the best sonically, but the card slot and intuitive interface give it plenty of appeal

## Sandisk lights MP3 Fuze

**UNLESS YOU HAVE** a certain fruity logo on the back of your device, the MP3 player market is hard going. This, though, is a good offering.

This Sanso Fuze player has a 2GB hard disk – there are 4 and 8GB versions available in a variety of finishes, too – as well as SDHC card slot, which allows you to increase the storage capacity. There's an FM radio and voice recorder, while you can view videos and pictures on the zin colour screen, too.

It's a sleek unit, with simple, intuitive buttons. It's a doddle to use, too, with drag and drop compatibility for PC and Mac. The interface is sensibly laid, and the responsive, fast scroll wheel helps you get about quickly.

With a 320kbps version of Portishead's *Sour Times*, vocals are detailed and intimate, while

**“An SDHC card slot allows you to increase the storage capacity”**

dynamics are okay: the drums sound a touch soft and rounded-off rather than packing the punch and weight we'd like. Change the supplied headphones, and the player opens up, delivering a crisper, more precise sound. The screen is a little small for video – it looks fine but it's not on a par with the useful, larger screens offered by Apple.

So, ditch the freebie 'phones, and then enjoy an MP3 player that's a pleasure to use, has plenty of features, and sounds, if not class-leading, then not too far off.



A clean, clear control system and smooth-edged design