

Ruark Audio MR1 Mk2 £330

FOR Stunning musical sound; stylish, compact design

AGAINST No hi-res support; no USB input



With their gorgeous looks, streamlined design and features, and improved sound quality, the Ruark MR1 Mk2s go straight to the top of our favourites list.

The original MR1s were the closest any desktop wireless speaker came to sounding like proper hi-fi, and thanks to a clearer, more insightful sound, that's even more true for the Mk2s.

The Ruark MR1s are wonderfully musical, with plenty of space between instruments in the airy soundstage, breathing new life into whatever music you play through them. They sound lush and smooth while also being articulate - but their stylish retro looks are a huge part of the charm, too. The MR1s' handcrafted wooden cabinets are beautifully made, the speakers are good to use, and they're just the size to fit onto a bookshelf, TV stand, or desk.

Ruark has kept its characteristic look, but streamlined the design. The most obvious update is the grey fabric on the grilles, but there's also an optical input, which means you can use the MR1s as TV speakers. The rotary dial on top of the main unit turns smoothly and allows you to switch between the inputs. The MR1s automatically start searching

The retro looks are a huge part of the Ruark's charm



"Superb speakers that deserve a place in your home"

for a Bluetooth connection, making it much quicker to play your music.

The Ruarks don't support hi-res files, but any negatives are overshadowed by the design and performance of these excellent speakers. The step up in performance is impressive and, quite simply, the MR1s are superb speakers that deserve a place in your home.

WHAT HI-FI? says

Rating ★★★★★

SOUND	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
BUILD	★★★★★

VERDICT Gorgeous design and superb performance make these Ruark MR1s a new favourite

Dali Zensor 5 AX £800

FOR Rhythmic and well timed; convenient functionality

AGAINST Needs careful partnering; remote too small



As powered floorstanders, the Dali Zensor 5 AXs should be up and running with minimum fuss. But take care with set-up and these speakers will shine.

They look just like their passive siblings save for a small LED on the left master speaker that informs you of the input selected. This master speaker holds the brains of the set-up, including the 50W-per-channel Class D amplifier, a choice of physical inputs and the wireless components for Bluetooth.

There isn't a huge choice of inputs - 3.5mm auxiliary, digital optical and apt-X Bluetooth - but enough to hook up portable devices or a laptop via the mini jack, and a CD player or even your TV.

Fast, detailed and enthusiastic, they are unmistakably Dali, offering a better sound than any one-box solution at this price. It's a clean, thoroughly articulate

performance, with voices sounding warm, natural and filled with expression.

Although they aren't the biggest sounding floorstanders we've heard, they're still spacious and handle scale and dynamics with verve.

A slightly toned-down treble hasn't taken away their ability to entertain either, with a fun and lively tone and a strong sense of timing, even with complex rhythmic patterns. Improved bass helps deliver a much fuller bodied and authoritative presentation across the board.

We listen over Bluetooth and notice some expected compromises - it's a smaller sound with some loss of

"The 5 AXs are unmistakably Dali"



The Dalis offer better sound than a one-box solution

detail - but still a hugely enjoyable listen that holds true to the 5 AXs' cohesive and engaging musical character.

The Zensor 5 AXs are a real success, delivering all the convenience of a one-box solution in something altogether more hi-fi. Spend some time getting them just right, and the best of both worlds is well within reach.

WHAT HI-FI? says

Rating ★★★★★

SOUND	★★★★★
COMPATIBILITY	★★★★★
BUILD	★★★★★

VERDICT All of the hi-fi with fewer boxes, the Zensor 5 AXs are a neat and convenient solution that sounds superb