

BEST STEREO SPEAKERS £150-£350

Monitor Audio Bronze BR2 £200

THERE'S A NEW kid in town, and it's after an Award. We loved the BR2's predecessors, and we're pleased to inform you that things are even better now.

Monitor Audio has broken a basic rule: the BR2s weren't broke, but they fixed 'em anyway. But during the 'fix' process, they left the solid construction, quality finish and neat cosmetics.

"Adding the BR2s to more capable kit won't see them out of their depth"

Simon Lucas, First Tests Editor

The improvements are not only skin deep, though. The new and improved tweeter has a wider bandwidth, giving an airy, but not artificial, top-end. The bandwidth improvements also mean that the tweeter can venture lower in the frequency range, making sonic integration that bit easier.

Solid build, sonic performance and decent aesthetics make the BR2s a 'must audition'

→ VERDICT

For unashamedly good budget speakers, there's no point in looking any further

However, it's the overall results that impress more than individual upgrades. Although they come in at £200, these are refined speakers, so they won't make a meal out of aggressive systems, or harsh, raw recordings. The detail resolution, too, is superb for the money, so adding



them to more capable kit won't see them out of their depth, unlike many rivals. We put them on a pair of Soundstyle Z2 stands, biwired them, and the sonic improvement was immense.

Polite partners need not apply

The only minor disappointment is the slight smooth edge, which renders some aggressive music – like *Be Your Own Pet* – a bit on the polite side, for our tastes. That aside, if you're into your music, but can't justify thousands of pounds on high-end speakers, these won't disappoint.



CD PLAYER

CAMBRIDGE AUDIO AZUR 640C V2
£250

For all-round performance at a price that won't have your bank manager in fits, try this

STEREO AMPLIFIER

ROTEL RA-05
£350

The addition of this amplifier will give this Award-winning system finesse as well as brawn