

PRODUCTS

Focal XS Book speakers

By Aaron Tan

With curvy lines and a bulging body, the French-engineered Focal XS Book speakers have an edge in the looks department over the cookie-cutter shapes of most PC speakers.

They look hefty because of their built-in mid-bass cones but the upside is that you do not have to make space for the bulky subwoofer which comes with 2.1 speaker systems.

The power supply unit is built into the body of the right speaker, so you do not have a power adaptor cluttering your workspace.

Setting up the Focal XS Book is easy. There is a RCA connector on the right speaker for music purists to hook it up to a CD player and a 3.5mm stereo jack to pipe audio from portable devices and laptops.

To adjust the volume, you have to reach for the hybrid volume/power knob on the right speaker.

With its price, Focal should have included a remote control to make it easy for people sitting farther away from the speakers to adjust the volume.

The set also lacks treble and bass controls so there is no way you can moderate the sound.

With 20 watts per channel, the built-in power amplifier offers ample power for belting out music in a small room such as a bedroom or home office.

As expected from the French audiophile specialist, this pair punches above its weight in terms of audio quality.

The 0.75-inch aluminium tweeters do well in reproducing the highs and mid-range tones in

Speakers

contemporary jazz and classical pieces. In a recording of a performance by the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, the spatial depth of the stage was apparent, with instruments such as cellos seemingly placed deep behind the orchestra and high up on the listening plane.



The writer is an infocomm professional

HOT ■ Svelte design
■ Excellent audio quality

NOT ■ Lacks bass and treble controls
■ Expensive

- \$569
- Polyglass 4-inch mid-bass driver
- 0.75-inch aluminium tweeter
- RCA input
- 3.5mm stereo jack
- 20 watts per channel