



Tangent

Spectrum X5 **£249**

The Danish design knowhow is clear for all to see, but can this diminutive cabinet sound as good as it looks?

DETAILS

PRODUCT

Tangent
Spectrum X5

ORIGIN
Denmark

TYPE
2-way standmount
loudspeaker

WEIGHT
5.5kg

DIMENSIONS
(WxHxD)
166 x 345 x 205mm

FEATURES
● 25mm tweeter
● 127mm mid/
bass driver
● Quoted sensitivity:
88dB 1W/1m (6ohm)

DISTRIBUTOR
Avoke Limited

TELEPHONE
07971 634239

WEBSITE
tangent-audio.com

It's probably fair to say that of all the brands in this group, Tangent is the least readily known, but the Danish company has been making inroads into the entry-level market with a range of models that benefit from a touch of Nordic design flair. The Spectrum X5 is piggy in the middle of the three standmounts in its X Series and the specification can more than hold its own in this exalted company. A 127mm paper mid/bass driver is partnered with a 25mm soft dome tweeter, while a single set of speaker terminals is fitted out back.

The most notable aspect of the X5's design is the recessed tweeter with a fairly prominent wave guide surround intended to aid dispersion. The cabinet is rear ported and stands 345mm high, making it the tallest speaker in the test. This is offset by the box being relatively narrow, so the overall volume is on a par with the rest of the models in the group. While it comes across as looking a bit lightweight, the design is undoubtedly pleasant. The wooden plinth at the base of the cabinet is enough to lighten up what is otherwise a rather dark look, and the matte finish – which is also available in white – looks very smart. The X5 is unique in the test in that as well as the passive incarnation you see here, it is also available as a powered version featuring Bluetooth (see boxout).

Sound quality

The Tangent is about average for sensitivity and isn't a challenging drive. The tonal balance is subtly different to many designs here. While the midrange and upper registers are clear, detailed and very prominent, there is a slightly recessed portion to the lower midrange before lifting again in the bass response, which is usefully deep. Depending on what you listen to, this can make it lively and agile with some tracks – it does a fine job with Pink Floyd and lends Emily Barker a sense of life and energy. Vocals are clear, well formed and full of incidental detail and there is a pleasing sense of soundstage.

The slightly uneven response is made more apparent when listening to the *Synchrony* track. This has instrumentation playing at the area where the Spectrum X5 is slightly recessed and as a result it doesn't sound as cohesive and full as it does with the very best on test. This is a real shame because the Tangent does a very good job with the complex timing of the track and even though the speaker itself might be fractionally on the bright side of neutral, it never sounds harsh or aggressive.

With the punchy electronica of *Precious* the Spectrum X5 once again returns to its comfort zone and puts in a lively and potent performance with plenty of space at the top combined with a fast and deep bass ●

AMPED UP

The Spectrum X5 can also be purchased as the Spectrum X5 BT (see HFC 399) – a powered version that costs an additional £350. The X5 BT takes the same basic cabinet design and builds in a stereo amplifier to one of the speakers to provide power to the drivers that it resides in as well as the partnering speaker, which is otherwise identical to the model on test here. With 50W on tap, the BT-powered version has fairly similar headroom to the passive model, but benefits from a DSP to make best use of the power. Tangent fits it with a pair of digital inputs, limited to a sampling rate of 48kHz, aptX Bluetooth support, an RCA stereo input and a 3.5mm line in. It comes with a useful remote control to aid playback operation along with treble and bass adjustments to tailor the sound. Depending on the connections that you actually require, this could be a very interesting self-contained alternative.



A lively and highly agile performer

Hi-FiChoice

OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY



LIKE: Lively and airy performance; pleasant looking design

VALUE FOR MONEY



DISLIKE: Slightly recessed lower midrange

BUILD QUALITY



WESAY: An attractive and engaging speaker that isn't quite the all-round package

EASE OF DRIVE



OVERALL

