



## Home Theatre System Buying Guide Quick Reference Handout

A home theatre sound system adds power and clarity to your TV's speaker system. When you synchronize the video on your screen with room-filling sound, every sporting event, blockbuster movie, or favourite TV series will feel more immersive.

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### What makes up a home theatre system?

A home theatre system is a set of audio components you connect together to make a home theatre or surround sound setup. A traditional surround sound home theatre system has 5.1 or 7.1 channels and includes one subwoofer and five or seven speakers including a center speaker, left speaker, right speaker, and two or four-tower, bookshelf, or ceiling speakers.

### Building your home theatre system

Now that you know what to consider before choosing components, here is a step-by-step guide to building the best home theatre system for your home.

- 1. Decide how many channels you need** - The first step in choosing the components to make up your home theatre system is to decide how many channels you'll need. The number of channels you choose depends on how many speakers you would like to connect with.
- 2. Wired vs Wireless speakers** - The decision to have cords and cables vs a completely wire-free experience is usually an easy one. Your main issue will be whether or not it's difficult to place or hide the cables connected to your home theatre.
- 3. Choose a receiver home theatre system or sound bar** - The latest TVs and projectors have spectacular picture quality, but to get the best audio from your display, you'll need to choose a receiver or a sound bar.
  - **If you'd like a receiver-based home theatre system** - You can choose a receiver-based home theatre system with speakers, a home theatre in a box, or an individual receiver and speakers
  - **If you'd like a sound bar home theatre system** - Sound bars are popular because you can just plug them in and they will enhance your TV's audio. You don't need to add a receiver and you can choose a sound bar that will pair with add-on speakers.

**5. Choose your speakers** - If you are choosing your speakers individually, you can choose bookshelf speakers, tower speakers, center channel speakers, ceiling or wall speakers, and subwoofers.

### 6. Home theatre system accessories

- **Universal remote control** - Some remote controls will not pair with all components so you may want to choose a universal remote control for your home theatre setup.
- **HDMI cables and speaker wires** - Some home theatre systems connect via speaker wire. A good rule of thumb when choosing **HDMI cables** is to buy the best cables for your home theatre setup.
- **Power protection and plugs** - The best power bar for a home theatre is one with enough ports for a TV or projector, sound bar or receiver, and all of your speakers.



## What to consider before choosing a home theatre system?

**Consider room size and setup** - Your room size will have the biggest impact on the type of surround sound system you'll choose.

- **If your room is fairly small** - You may only need a few speakers and a single subwoofer.
- **If you have a larger room** - You can choose a powerful receiver or sound bar and add bigger speakers with more wattage or features.
- **If your room is mid-size** – In a mid-size room a good way to choose the best system is to decide based on the size of your TV.

## Features to look for on home theatre systems

Here are a few individual features that can make your home theatre even better.

- **Number and type of HDMI connections** - Most receivers have multiple HDMI, optical, and other connections so you can connect everything from your TV to gaming consoles.
- **Surround sound technology** - If you'd like Dolby Atmos or DTS:X, you can choose a receiver with that technology built-in. Dolby Atmos supported home theatre receivers use 3D object based sound.
- **Phono input** - One important feature you might wish to have on your receiver is a dedicated “Phono” input. This input offers better sound quality than computer chips or integrated circuits and allows for improved dynamics, depth of field, and sound detail. Even if you don't have a phonograph to connect to your receiver, it's a good feature for other electronics.
- **Enabled pass-through** – You may wish to choose a pass-through for 3D, HDMI, 4K Ultra HD, or 8K Ultra HD. This means that your receiver will support 3D, 4K, or 8K resolution.
- **Apps and connectivity** – If you want your receiver to be able to run apps like Spotify or use Google Cast you can find many choices with these options built in.
- **Smart features** – There are receivers with voice control built-in.
- **Automatic speaker setting calibration** - Some speakers have automatic speaker setting calibration so it's easy to set up and perfect the sound of your speakers.