

# Best desktop speaker

Epoz Aktimate Micro £260



**We're massive fans of B&W's excellent MM1** desktop speakers, so the ease with which Epoz's Aktimate Micros trumped those gems in a *Group Test* was something of a surprise.

These Micros are hard to pigeonhole. Yes, they have a USB input, 40 watts of internal power and are small enough to put on a desk next to a computer, so desktop speaker it is. However, they also come with a 30-pin iPod dock and a 3.5mm line-level input so they can form part of a handy small-room or student system, working in tandem with a more conventional music source. And if you want a more conventional finish, they come in black or white too.

However you use them, you can be sure these speakers will shine. Ideally, if using the Epoz on a desk, place them slightly away from the rear wall, or bass notes will become a little over-cooked. In every other circumstance they're a pleasure to listen to.

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They'll deliver everything from an Elgar symphony to Rihanna's *Loud* set without showing favouritism, thanks to a vibrant sound packed with punchy bass and plenty of detail. High frequencies can cause problems with more affordable speakers, but the Micros rise to this challenge too, delivering plenty of bite without emphasising the hardness that is part of most modern commercial recordings.

## **Loud? Yes, but don't push it**

These speakers will deliver a decent turn of volume too, though if you're looking to have a party that might be a step too far.

Essentially, £260 buys a well-made and conceived set of powered speakers that sound better than any dedicated desktop set-up we've heard. It's a bonus that they can double as a pretty effective second system too. That's great value in anyone's judgement, and reason enough to award the Micros a Best Buy gong.