

SPEAKER SYSTEMS UNDER \$2000

HIGHLY COMMENDED

JBL BALBOA \$1499

This is a full 5.1-channel system, complete with active subwoofer, that sells for just \$1499 for the lot. And in this case the subwoofer is crucial to the overall performance – it is, in a word, a cracker.

The two main front speakers are Balboa 30 floorstanders, with a pair of Balboa 10s for surround work, the Balboa Centre, and the Balboa SUB10 for bass. The Balboa 30 main loudspeakers conform to something that JBL has been reintroducing against much of the industry trend over the last 20 years: a three-way design. Each stands 889mm tall with their plastic feet, 229mm wide and 321mm deep. A single set of gold-plated binding posts is provided for wiring. At the top (above 3500Hz), a 19mm titanium-laminate dome tweeter looks after treble, while a 100mm cellulose fibre cone covers all the midrange (from 600 to 3500Hz), and a 170mm cellulose fibre cone covers below 600Hz. They are ported at the front, while the Centre and rears are rear ported, so that close wall-mounting should be avoided. It's the 16kg 100W SUB10 that holds it all together, with a powerful bass underlying the clean and easy-listening



sound that comes from the rest of the system, especially for movies, although music is also enjoyably smooth. And despite the near entry-level pricing of this speaker pack, it comes with a confidence-inspiring five-year warranty. Excellent performance at the price.

More info: www.e-hifi.com.au