

## PRESS RELEASE

# audiolab

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Above: Audiolab 8300A in silver finish option

## A classic reborn: the best integrated amplifier Audiolab has ever made

*Radical redesign ensures Audiolab's new 8300A is perfectly poised to build on foundations first laid in 1983 by the classic 8000A integrated amp*

**Cambridgeshire, England** -- Audiolab, one of Britain's most revered audio brands, has redesigned its most famous component to deliver an entirely new level of performance. The 8300A is the latest in a long line of Audiolab integrated amplifiers that began in 1983 with the 8000A – one of the most influential British audio products of all time.

The original 8000A was the quintessential 'step-up' amplifier, delivering build quality, reliability, functionality and performance that were a clear level above the classic 'budget' amps of the time. It proved a tremendous success, its crisp, clean sound quality offering an upgrade path well trodden by music fans in the UK and beyond throughout its 14-year lifespan.

The 8300A is the second component to be announced from Audiolab's new 8300 Series, hot on the heels of the 8300CD CD player/DAC. While the 8300CD is a careful evolution of its predecessor, the 8300A is a full redesign of the product it replaces, the 8200A. Its external design is refreshingly clean and simple; still recognisably Audiolab, albeit sporting the updated 8300 Series aesthetic. Inside, the changes are more radical – a clean-sheet circuit design resulting in unquestionably the best integrated amplifier that Audiolab has ever made.

According to Jan Ertner, who led the 8300A development project, the new amp represents “a fresh approach to the same challenge: genuinely ‘high-end’ audio amplification in a single box, delivered to the end user at an affordable price”. Its design enables it to adapt to its user’s evolving requirements, offering three distinct operational modes: integrated amplifier, preamplifier or power amplifier, the latter enabling it be partnered with a surround sound processor in a high-performance AV system.

At the amp’s heart is a powerful dual-mono power amp section, delivering 75W per channel into eight ohms, with a maximum current delivery of 15 Amps into difficult loads. This is significantly more powerful than the outgoing 8200A, which was rated at 60W into eight ohms, but greater power delivery is only part of the story.

The output stage of the discrete power amp circuits uses a CFB (Complementary Feedback) topology in combination with conventional emitter follower circuitry. The CFB stage offers superior linearity and ensures excellent thermal stability, as the idle current is kept independent of the temperature of the output transistors. Using an emitter follower in combination with the CFB stage is an efficient way of increasing the current ability of the amplifier without compromising the advantages of the CFB circuit.

Having the emitter follower deliver additional current only when needed allows for a simpler current-limiting arrangement, which can be voltage independent. Audiolab calls this ‘Active Current Drive’, where the current limiting is under microprocessor control and programmed to allow the amplifier to supply high currents (+- 15A) into complex loads on par with amplifiers that are bigger and more powerful on paper. A 300VA toroidal transformer supplies the two mono amplifiers using separate secondary windings, followed by 2x15000uF reservoir capacity per channel (60000uF in total).

The preamp section is kept as simple as possible to maintain signal purity, with line input signals simply passing through a unity gain buffer and a precision analogue volume stage. The latter covers the range from -80dB to +8dB in steps of 2dB, 1dB and 0.5dB (step resolution increasing with volume position). Much effort has gone into the physical layout of the 8300A’s circuitry, keeping the sensitive preamp section as free from noise interference as possible. This, plus the use of independent power supplies for critical circuit stages, helps to deliver performance on par with high-quality two-box pre/power amp systems.

The inclusion of a phono stage is another important enhancement – the 8200A eschewed this facility, but the 8300A brings it back to capitalise on the current vinyl revival. Turntable users will appreciate the care with which this new stage has been designed, fed by its own power supply and delivering a high-quality, low-noise performance with both MM and MC cartridges, thus removing the need for an off-board phono stage.

Externally, the most obvious addition is an OLED display in the centre of the amp’s fascia, showing volume level, input selection, mode of operation and MM/MC phono setting. This display reflects the design of the 8300CD, helping to ensure that Audiolab’s new 8300 Series integrated amp and CD player/DAC are a perfect match for each other both aesthetically and functionally. Around the back, five line-level RCA inputs nestle alongside the phono input, plus a balanced XLR input for suitably equipment source components (including the 8300CD). Two pre outputs, a power input, a 12V trigger loop and a full set of loudspeaker binding posts for bi-wiring complete a comprehensive array of connectivity options.

The 8300A’s all-new circuit design delivers all-new sound quality. The outgoing 8200A was no sonic slouch – in fact, it was good enough to be named ‘Best Amplifier up to £1,000’ in *Hi-Fi Choice’s* 2011 Awards.

And yet, an A/B comparison between the two models immediately reveals the 8300A's superiority. The soundstage it produces is deeper and broader, with greater space and separation within. Instruments and voices are better defined, their character vividly portrayed. Dynamic range is greater and frequency response further extended, with greater bass definition and treble that is both crisper and sweeter. In short, it delivers an open window on the music being played, as all great hi-fi should, engaging the listener with natural, unforced energy that is fully reflective of the source material.

The Audiolab 8300A integrated amplifier is available from October in a choice of silver or classic Audiolab black, with an RRP of £899.95.

### **SPECIFICATIONS: AUDIOLAB 8300A**

PARAMETER	CONDITIONS	VALUE
Rated max power output into 8ohms	Both channels (< 1% THD)	75 W
Rated max power output into 4ohms	Both channels (< 1% THD)	115W
Peak output current (Power Amp)		+/- 15A
Max. Output Voltage (Pre-Amp)	Volume = 0dB	3.0V
Volume Control	Analogue, 2dB, 1dB & 0.5dB steps	-80dB => +8.0dB
Gain (Power AMP)	@ 1KHz	+29.0dB
Input impedance (line inputs)		50K
Input impedance (XLR input)		10K
Input impedance (Phono input)		47K // 100pF (MM) , 100R // 1.5nF (MC)
Frequency response	+/- 0.2dB	10Hz – 20KHz
Frequency response (HF)	-1.0dB	55KHz
Phono RIAA response	+/- 1.0dB	20Hz – 20KHz
Input sensitivity (Line)	for rated Output Power, Volume = 0dB	865mV
Input sensitivity (XLR)	for rated Output Power, Volume = 0dB	1.7V
Input sensitivity (Phono)	for rated Output Power, Volume = 0dB	3.3mV (MM) , 330uV (MC)
Total harmonic distortion + Noise (THD+N)	50W / 8ohm @ 1KHz	< 0.003%
Signal-to-noise ratio (Line & XLR)	BW=20-20KHz & A-Weighted	> 107dB & >109dB(A)
Signal-to-noise ratio Phono (MM) Pre-Out	BW=20-20KHz & A-Weighted	> 73dB & > 78dB(A)
Signal-to-noise ratio Phono (MC) Pre-Out	BW=20-20KHz & A-Weighted	> 68dB & > 73dB(A)
Crosstalk	@ 10KHz	< 80dB
Output Impedance (Pre-Out 1&2)		120R

## audiolab

Formed in the early 1980s by Philip Swift and Derek Scotland, Audiolab earned worldwide acclaim with the 8000A – an integrated stereo amplifier that became a classic 'step-up' from the budget models of the time. During the ensuing years, the 8000A established itself as one of the most successful British amps ever produced, and was joined by a range of electronics including CD players, pre/power amps and an FM tuner. The brand switched hands in 1997, changing its name to TAG McLaren Audio; and so it was known until 2004, when Audiolab became part of the International Audio Group and returned to its original name.

Audiolab introduced the full-width 8200 Series components in 2010, combining the company's original ethos of simple, well-constructed ergonomics and crisp, transparent sound with innovative, performance-led design concepts. The quality of these components, in tandem with the now-legendary M-DAC and its siblings from the compact LAB Series, earned Audiolab more awards in the UK press during the last five years than any other brand of high-performance audio electronics. 2015 sees the next major evolutionary phase in Audiolab's story, as the new 8300 Series propels the brand to even greater heights.

[www.audiolab.co.uk](http://www.audiolab.co.uk)

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IAG (International Audio Group) is a manufacturer of audio equipment for domestic and professional use, plus professional lighting systems and luxury yachts. With its headquarters and manufacturing facilities in Asia and offices (including R&D) in the UK and North America, IAG is a manufacturer with a truly global reach.

IAG's audio business employs more than 2,000 people worldwide. Its factory complex in China is one of the largest custom-designed consumer electronics manufacturing facilities in the world and benefits from an exceptional level of vertical integration, with all component parts – even the tooling – made in-house. The Group's domestic audio brands – Audiolab, Castle Acoustics, Luxman, Mission, Quad and Wharfedale – all enjoy a worldwide reputation for excellence, with illustrious histories that stretch back decades. Top-class British audio engineering remains critical to these brands, with world-renowned designer Peter Comeau leading an acoustic design team brimming with international talent.

The combination of rich brand heritage, purpose-built production facilities in China and experienced audio engineers from around the globe makes IAG a unique proposition in the world of consumer electronics.

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