

Press release

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Above: Quad ERA-1 headphones

New ERA for headphones

Quad's first-ever headphones use planar magnetic technology to deliver an enthrallingly fast, open and natural sound in keeping with the sonic heritage of Britain's original high-end audio company

Cambridgeshire, England – 'The closest approach to the original sound' – these words have formed the cornerstone of Quad's philosophy for many decades. More than just a slogan, it underlies the company's commitment to producing the finest audio equipment, capable of reproducing all the elements and emotion of a live musical performance.

Quad has been responsible for many landmark hi-fi products throughout its history, none more famous than successive generations of the ESL – the world's most revered electrostatic panel loudspeaker, a technology invented by Quad's founder, Peter Walker.

To create the ERA-1 – the company's first-ever headphones – Quad developed a planar magnetic driver delivering a fast, open and transparent performance. The resulting sonic realism and fidelity to the source is fully in keeping with the brand's heritage, displaying qualities akin to the famous ESLs.

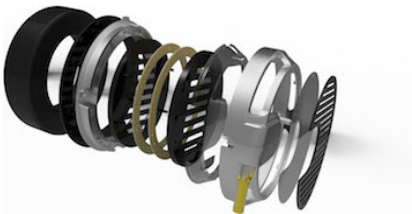


No ordinary headphones

Most headphones use mass-produced dynamic cone drivers, the limitations of which can hamper transient response and cause an uneven frequency response. Quad's cutting-edge planar magnetic technology delivers a more natural and accurate sound, ensuring you hear every nuance of a recorded musical performance.

The Quad ERA-1 incorporates an ultra-thin, electrically active diaphragm – thinner than a human hair yet extremely strong and highly elastic, weighing less than the volume of air it displaces. This is fused with a precisely arranged magnet system, designed to maximise sensitivity and consistency of the applied force over the driver area.

Patented nonlinear vibration suppression technology allows the driver's effortlessly extended frequency response to be heard unsullied, ensuring supreme clarity. The metal cavity behind the driver is specially designed for optimal acoustic performance, and the drivers themselves are closely matched to ensure spacious, three-dimensional stereo imaging.



Musical magnetism

When sound enters our ears, it has a planar wave front with all spectrum components in phase. A typical dynamic headphone driver disrupts this coherence with its phase irregularity, resulting in less than perfect signal peak reconstructions.

Quad's planar magnetic driver has much better phase coherency, since all parts of the diaphragm are vibrating in concert without break up and delayed resonance. The driver's flat conductor pattern, with an absence of inductive components, eliminates inductance-related intermodulation distortion – this is especially common in dynamic drivers with high impedance and a high number of voice coil turns.

Many planar magnetic headphones require high-power amplifiers to drive them. The Quad ERA-1 combines high sensitivity with low impedance to enable excellent performance with a wide range of partnering devices, from portable audio players to high-end headphone amps. Quad's valve-based PA-One headphone amp/DAC makes a superb match for the ERA-1, combining sonic clarity and fluidity to stunning effect.



Quad equals quality

Quad audio components combine the assurance of tradition with the buzz of innovation, and the ERA-1 headphones are a perfect example. Robust construction and a premium finish deliver a suitably luxurious feel, yet the headphones are comfortably lightweight compared to many planar magnetic designs. Two types of ear cushion are provided – one made of soft leather, the other of latex topped with a fleecy fabric – enabling a degree of personal tailoring according to the preferred feel and differing acoustic properties of the materials. A high-quality, detachable 215cm cable is also supplied, together with a durable carrying case.



Plug your ears into the music

High-resolution sound, teeming with effortless musical expression – the ERA-1 headphones submerge you in the performance of your favourite musicians with direct and engaging intimacy. Once again, Quad delivers ‘the closest approach to the original sound’, bringing you up close and personal to the music you adore with beguiling clarity and definition.

The Quad ERA-1 headphones are available from late July, with an RRP of £599.95 inc. VAT.



QUAD

Of all the British high-end hi-fi brands, Quad boasts the longest and most distinguished history. The company has been at the cutting edge of audio since 1936, continually pushing back the boundaries of performance with technologies both new and established. In 1953, the Quad II valve amplifier was launched, setting new standards for audio amplification, and three years later Quad invented the first full-range electrostatic speaker – later known as the legendary ESL 57.

Throughout the ensuing years, Quad products have continued to win worldwide acclaim, building a reputation for excellence that bears comparison with the most distinguished brands in any field. Quad has been part of the International Audio Group (IAG) since 1998, following its acquisition from the Verity Group (alongside Wharfedale). The company's design and technical support teams and much-admired servicing department continue to be based in Cambridgeshire, England, supported by key personnel who have worked with Quad for decades.

IAG's exceptional resources and unrivalled audio manufacturing facilities ensure that Quad's current range boasts many award-winning products, including the latest generation of ESL electrostatic speakers, class-leading valve amplifiers, dynamic 'box' speakers, planar magnetic headphones and a range of solid-state audio electronics that fuse high-end performance with elegant, versatile design. More than 80 years after its formation, Quad continues to be driven by the philosophy of its founder, Peter Walker, to produce "the closest approach to the original sound".

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