

Press release



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Above Wharfedale Diamond 12i Series speakers in Stone Grey, Classic Walnut and Deep Black

Kings of 'sound per pound'

Wharfedale's iconic Diamond lineage of high-performance, high-value speakers sparkles brighter than ever with the new, improved, inflation-defying Diamond 12i Series

Cambridgeshire, England – Since 1982, Wharfedale's famous Diamond speakers have served as the classic entry point to true high-fidelity sound, their exceptional sonic value for money earning numerous 'product of the year' accolades in the UK and around the world. The current Diamond line – the Diamond 12 Series, which launched in 2020 – is the very embodiment of the Diamond ethos, delivering excellent quality at prices no one else can match.

The Diamond 12 Series has dominated the 'budget speaker' sector for the past five years. Its build quality and perfectly poised sound across a range of cabinet sizes have proved impossible for other brands to compete with – especially in the context of inflationary pressures that have forced most manufacturers to raise prices well beyond traditional entry-level price points, or else reduce the quality of their products. In contrast, Wharfedale has held the price of every Diamond 12 model at the same level since launch, ensuring even better value for money with each passing year.

No wonder, then, that the Diamond 12 Series has remained Britain's best-selling budget speaker range throughout its lifespan. And no wonder, also, that Wharfedale felt no need to replace this range during the course of those five years. After all, when you have an established, market-leading product line that

remains as popular as it was when it launched, why invest in redevelopment when the cost would have to be passed on to consumers by raising prices. And yet...

While there remains no obvious need to upgrade the Diamond 12 Series, a natural evolution in Wharfedale's design and manufacturing processes has presented an opportunity to update the speakers' design whilst maintaining the many strengths that contribute to the range's continued dominance. Impressive new finishes and subtle but worthwhile performance upgrades have been applied to every model, triggering a refresh that Wharfedale has named Diamond 12i.

Most remarkably of all, Wharfedale has brought these improvements without increasing prices by a single penny. Now that, in this day and age, is truly unique.

In a world of rising prices, Diamond's value for money gets better and better

With the price and size of each model identical to its Diamond 12 equivalent, the Diamond 12i Series comprises five stereo models: three standmount speakers and two floorstanders. Home cinema applications are catered for by a matching centre speaker and an effects speaker; the latter is designed to wall-mount or sit atop the 12.1i or 12.3i speakers to deliver the height channels in surround sound formats like Dolby Atmos.

Wharfedale Diamond 12i Series – Recommended Retail Prices		
Standmount speakers	Floorstanding speakers	Home cinema centre speaker
Diamond 12.0i – £199 per pair	Diamond 12.3i – £499 per pair	Diamond 12.Ci – £229
Diamond 12.1i – £249 per pair	Diamond 12.4i – £699 per pair	Home cinema effects speaker
Diamond 12.2i – £299 per pair		Diamond 12 3Di – £349 per pair

Freezing the speakers' prices means that in real terms, after adjusting for inflation, every Diamond 12i model costs around 22% *less* than the Diamond 12 equivalent did when the range launched in 2020.



Left Like all the models in the new range, the Diamond 12.1i sports new finishes and updated design without any increase in price

Updated aesthetics

The outgoing Diamond 12 range offers a choice of four wood-effect finishes – black, white, walnut and light oak – giving the speakers a smart, ‘classic’ appearance. The Diamond 12i Series replaces all four finishes with three new ones, updated for a fresher, more contemporary feel:

- Deep Black: a rich, semi-matt finish giving a sleek, modern look – subtle and sophisticated.
- Stone Grey: another smooth semi-matt finish that makes a striking contemporary design statement whilst complementing a range of décor styles and colours.
- Classic Walnut: this update of a timeless classic contrasts the natural warmth of walnut with a semi-matt black front baffle for a distinctly premium appearance.

The quality of these finishes, and the overall build quality of the speakers themselves, is unmatched at such accessible retail prices.



Left The new Stone Grey finish option, shown here on the Diamond 12.2i, gives the speakers a classy contemporary look

Enhanced performance

Whilst developing these new finishes, and at the same time considering advances in production processes five years on from the Diamond 12 launch, Wharfedale reviewed the design of each model to see where improvements could be applied. Critically, the company was determined that any changes must be delivered without increasing retail prices.

With Wharfedale’s Director of Acoustic Design Peter Comeau leading the project, alongside engineers Dan Bailey Ornellas and Oliver Davies, the team focused on bass port tuning and airflow control. Their intention was to refine low-frequency performance through extensive empirical testing and listening evaluations, making use of laser interferometry, computational fluid dynamics (CFD) and anechoic and in-room measurements to assess airflow and pressure in the port structure.

This research led to a new bass-reflex port design and revised internal damping, the results of which were confirmed over hundreds of hours of listening tests. This has enabled improved bass clarity and control throughout the range, especially noticeable in real-world environments where space is at a premium. Low frequencies are more articulate, with enhanced transitions between bass and midrange and a more consistent spatial performance, no matter where the speakers are placed. These changes

maintain the signature neutrality and transparency of the Diamond 12 Series whilst subtly increasing listener engagement and dynamic flow.

Other incremental improvements have been brought to the new Diamond 12i range through refinements to the manufacturing process. This includes the drive units which, though fundamentally of the same design as the previous Diamond 12 models, benefit from even tighter production tolerances to maximise their impressive sonic potential.

Klarity™ – the difference is clear

The new Diamond 12i speakers' bass and midrange drivers incorporate diaphragms made from a composite of polypropylene and mica that Wharfedale calls Klarity. Developed for the Diamond 12 Series introduced in 2020, this cone material is equally fundamental to the Diamond 12i models' price-defying sound quality.

Polypropylene has been used to make speaker cones since the BBC first researched its use in the 1970s. The material offers many inherent benefits for driver diaphragms, including low distortion and controlled 'breakup', as well as resistance to moisture in the air. On the other hand, polypropylene cones have a reputation in some quarters for sounding a little 'unexciting' – a perception that is largely the result of mediocre engineering.

The addition of mica to Klarity's formulation is highly significant. It increases the material's stiffness compared to polypropylene alone, reducing flexing and enabling the production of a lightweight cone with high rigidity, low colouration and lightning-fast response – ideal characteristics to deliver a sound that is both accurate and highly engaging.



Left The mid/bass drivers feature Klarity composite cones, with ribs for further stiffening

Klarity cone surround and magnet assembly

Polypropylene speaker cones are often combined with high-damping surrounds to achieve a smooth response curve. However, the hysteresis of these surrounds can restrict dynamics and make bass sound somewhat 'soft'.

For Wharfedale, the clear intention was to develop Klarity driver cones so that a low-damping surround could be used, achieving both low colouration and expressive dynamics. This was not a simple task but,

by simulating many different cone shapes and adding ribs to provide further stiffening, a flat response curve was achieved without resorting to a high-damping surround, thereby striking the ideal balance.

The Klarity diaphragms are driven by a substantial, precision-made magnet system with an aluminium compensation ring to reduce the effects of variations in inductance caused by the movement the voice coil. The latter is wound on a bobbin made from a composite of glass fibre and epoxy resin – this performs significantly better than commonly used materials at this price point, offering greater power handling, thermal stability and structural strength. The resulting motor system minimises intermodulation and distortion, producing cleaner and more accurate sound.

Treble unit and crossover

High frequencies are produced by a 25mm woven polyester dome with a high-loss damping coating, delivering smooth, extended treble response. The front plate has a flat profile and minimal waveguide, exposing the dome as much as possible to enhance dispersion, with a short duct to balance the acoustic load and improve the SPL (sound pressure level) measurement. The result is clear, natural high frequencies with excellent off-axis performance.

The treble unit combines seamlessly with the speakers' mid/bass drivers via a sophisticated Linkwitz-Riley crossover network, finely adjusted for minimal phase shift and smooth integration. Its design includes air-core inductors – components typically found in high-end speakers, selected here despite their higher cost because they produce the lowest distortion of all inductor types. The magnet structure for the mid/bass driver is modified to address the resistance of these high-quality inductors, ensuring fast, clean bass without compromise.



Left The treble unit used throughout the range sports a 25mm woven polyester dome

Cabinet construction

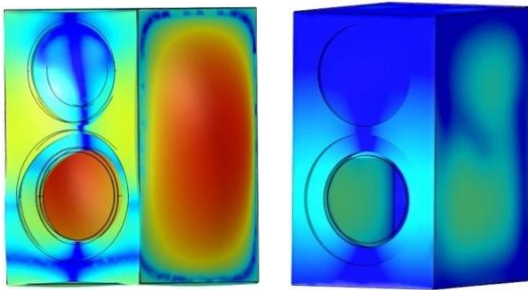
The cabinet is a critical part of any high-performance loudspeaker. At entry-level price points, corners are often cut to constrain cost; but no matter how good the drive units, their performance will be wasted if the cabinet's construction is suboptimal. For this reason, Diamond 12i Series speakers feature cabinets constructed with a level of sophistication usually reserved for much more expensive designs.

The rear-ported enclosure of each model is precisely sized so that the internal volume works in harmony with the drive unit system to deliver the desired sonic result. The cabinet walls are made from

sections of wood fibre board of varying thickness, constructed in such a way as to subdue the identifiable characteristics of the cabinet's 'sound' and ensure the drivers' output remains unsullied. The resonant properties of each element – even the glue – were considered to determine the ideal combination of materials and placement.

Inside the cabinet, Intelligent Spot Bracing connects opposing walls with a specific form of wood brace to achieve optimal reduction of cabinet resonance. These braces are precisely modelled by computer simulation to improve upon the commonplace 'figure of eight' brace, which can have the effect of transferring resonance from one wall to another.

The result of these extensive efforts is a range of speakers with best-in-class build quality that not only looks and feels superior to their price-point competition but emphatically sounds that way too.



Left These images reveal cabinet resonance before and after Intelligent Spot Bracing is applied – the 'hotter' the colour, the greater the resonance

The Diamond 12i Series – a music lover's best friend

For many decades, Wharfedale has been famous for fusing even-handed neutrality and transparency with captivating clarity and expression, and the Diamond 12i Series embodies that sonic goal. These are 'budget' loudspeakers that capture the spirit of the music, whatever you play – from rock to classical, jazz to electronica – whilst accurately conveying the recording as all great 'hi-fi' should.

From the classically sized 2-way standmount speakers to the 2.5-way floorstanders with their extra bass driver, each model delivers the same adroit balance of subtlety and expression, with increasing levels of sonic power and scale as one moves up the range.

For high-performance sound at entry-level prices, as Wharfedale likes to say: "Only a Diamond cuts to the heart of the music". The inflation-defying Diamond 12i Series speakers are Wharfedale's finest gems yet – true kings of sound per pound, available from December.



Left Once again, Wharfedale raises the bar for affordable, high-performance loudspeakers with the Diamond 12i Series

SPECIFICATIONS	DIAMOND 12.0i	DIAMOND 12.1i	DIAMOND 12.2i
Speaker type	2-way standmount	2-way standmount	2-way standmount
Enclosure type	Bass reflex	Bass reflex	Bass reflex
Treble driver	25mm textile dome	25mm textile dome	25mm textile dome
Mid/bass driver	100mm Klarity cone	130mm Klarity cone	150mm Klarity cone
Dedicated bass driver	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sensitivity (2.83v @ 1m)	87dB	88dB	88dB
Recommended amp power	20-60W	20-100W	20-120W
Nominal impedance	8Ω compatible	8Ω compatible	8Ω compatible
Minimum impedance	4Ω	4Ω	4Ω
Frequency response (+/-3dB)	70Hz-20kHz	65Hz-20kHz	50Hz-20kHz
Bass extension (-6dB)	65Hz	60Hz	43Hz
Crossover frequency	2.7kHz	2.6kHz	2kHz
Dimensions (HxWxD)	265x160x200mm	312x180x250mm	335x200x285mm
Weight (each)	5.1kg	6.8kg	8.2kg



SPECIFICATIONS	DIAMOND 12.3i	DIAMOND 12.4i	DIAMOND 12.Ci	DIAMOND 12 3Di
Speaker type	2.5-way floorstander	2.5-way floorstander	2-way centre speaker	2-way effects speaker
Enclosure type	Bass reflex	Bass reflex	Closed-box system	Closed-box system
Treble driver	25mm textile dome	25mm textile dome	25mm textile dome	25mm textile dome
Mid/bass driver	130mm Klarity cone	150mm Klarity cone	130mm Klarity cone (x2)	100mm Klarity cone
Dedicated bass driver	130mm Klarity cone	150mm Klarity cone	N/A	N/A
Sensitivity (2.83v @ 1m)	89dB	89dB	90dB	82dB
Recommended amp power	30-150W	30-200W	20-120W	20-100W
Nominal impedance	8Ω compatible	8Ω compatible	8Ω compatible	8Ω compatible
Minimum impedance	5Ω	5Ω	4Ω	4.3Ω
Frequency response (+/-3dB)	45Hz-20kHz	40Hz-20kHz	90Hz-20kHz	110Hz-20kHz
Bass extension (-6dB)	40Hz	35Hz	80Hz	90Hz
Crossover frequency	2.2kHz	2.1kHz	2.2kHz	3kHz
Dimensions (HxWxD)	975x180x320mm	1150x200x350mm	180x480x180mm	145x180x310mm
Weight (each)	19.5kg	22.4kg	8.5kg	3.2kg



British loudspeakers have always enjoyed an excellent reputation around the world, and Wharfedale is perhaps the most famous brand of all. Stretching back to 1932, when Wharfedale's founder Gilbert Briggs built his first speaker in the cellar of his Yorkshire home, Wharfedale has been responsible for some of the most important loudspeakers ever produced, introducing many techniques and technologies that became commonplace such as the two-way loudspeaker (invented in 1945) and the use of ceramic magnets (pioneered in 1962).

Now in its 94th year, Wharfedale continues its quest to deliver excellent sound quality and value-for-money with an array of class-leading speakers, from the latest iteration of the famous Diamond line – the quintessential entry point to high-fidelity sound – to the upmarket EVO 5, Aura and Elysian ranges, and the reborn classics of the Heritage Series.

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