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Above LEAK Sandwich 100 – the smallest, most accessibly priced new-generation Sandwich speaker

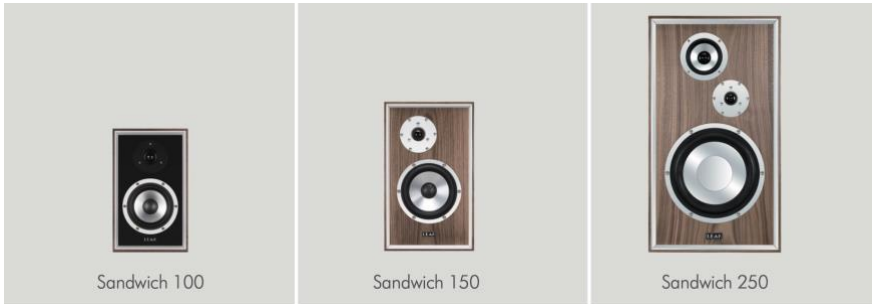
LEAK launches bite-sized Sandwich

After bringing back a bona fide British hi-fi classic in 2024 with the Sandwich 250 and Sandwich 150, LEAK has developed a third, smaller Sandwich loudspeaker – the compact Sandwich 100

Cambridgeshire, England -- One of the biggest names of the mid-20th-century hi-fi scene, LEAK has returned this decade with its first new products since the late 1970s. In addition to a range of walnut veneered amps and source components, including the just-launched TruStream network player, the revitalised brand has resurrected a landmark loudspeaker design from the Swinging Sixties: the legendary LEAK Sandwich.

Arriving in 2024, the Sandwich 150 and Sandwich 250 took the blueprint established by the original LEAK Sandwich speaker, which debuted in 1961, and applied state-of-the-art technologies and materials to deliver the ultimate incarnations of an innovative British classic. By modern standards, these are standmount models of considerable size – especially the three-way Sandwich 250 – so LEAK decided to create a more compact speaker with the same distinctive driver technologies, re-engineered into a smaller cabinet to suit rooms where space is at a premium.

The result is the new Sandwich 100 – a third contemporary LEAK Sandwich model with dimensions that many will find easier to accommodate. And with an RRP of £499 per pair, it's more accessibly priced than the Sandwich 150 (£999) and Sandwich 250 (£1999), further extending its appeal.



Left Smaller size, lower price, same technology – the third new-generation Sandwich speaker broadens the range's appeal

The original LEAK Sandwich – a landmark loudspeaker design

In the 1950s, speaker cones suffered from a common problem: a lack of stiffness. This affected their ability to follow the waveform of the signals applied to their voice coils accurately, as both lightness and stiffness are crucial in this regard.

Many conventional cone materials – paper, impregnated fabric, plastics, aluminium and so on – exhibit less than ideal stiffness. This results in significantly larger areas of the cone vibrating in motion, uncontrolled by the voice coil. These uncontrolled motions produce transient 'hangover', amplitude distortion and intermodulation distortion, all of which are detrimental to sound quality.

Introduced in 1961, the original LEAK Sandwich speaker tackled this issue in an innovative way. Its mid/bass cone was the first to be constructed from a 'sandwich' of different materials: expanded polystyrene foam between two sheets of aluminium foil. This made a cone that was exceptionally light *and* stiff, enabling true pistonic motion and therefore more accurate sound.

A publicity photograph produced at the time showed LEAK's founder, Harold Leak, standing on a Sandwich cone to demonstrate its exceptional rigidity. But the cone was not the Sandwich speaker's only innovation – for example, the cabinet introduced bracing techniques subsequently adopted by many other manufacturers – and LEAK went on to produce other two-way and three-way iterations through the 1960s and '70s to great commercial and critical success.



Left LEAK's founder Harold Leak pictured standing on an original Sandwich speaker cone in a contemporaneous advertisement

New LEAK Sandwich cone: innovation evolved

66 years on from the introduction of LEAK's innovative Sandwich cone, speaker designers continue to face the same challenge: how to make driver cones both very light and extremely stiff. Whilst many new materials and construction techniques have been applied to speaker diaphragms since, the sonic shortcomings caused by sub-optimal stiffness remain widespread. LEAK's sandwich cone construction, then, is as relevant now as it was in the 1960s.

The latest version of the Sandwich diaphragm is enhanced with a core of Rohacell aircraft-grade structural foam between aluminium skins, bonded with adhesives used in the aerospace industry. The natural qualities of Rohacell make it an ideal component in speaker cone technology, especially because of its exceptional strength-to-weight ratio. Combining this extremely rigid yet lightweight material with an aluminium skin creates a surface that greatly reduces cone break-up, delivers ultra-fast transient response, and introduces minimal harmonic and intermodulation distortion.

The new 150mm mid/bass driver developed for the Sandwich 100 is built around a long-throw motor system with a high-gauss magnet and low-loss suspension, ensuring linear excursion even at high volume levels. The cone is shaped to naturally reinforce stiffness and suppress breakup modes, maintaining purity across the vocal range and upper bass. Whether conveying the warm timbre of a cello or the taut punch of a synthesised kick drum, the Sandwich 100 reproduces every note with immediacy, clarity and conviction.



Left LEAK has modernised the original Sandwich cone concept with a layer of aircraft-grade structural foam between aluminium 'skins'

Seamless integration – from agile bass to soaring treble

Complementing the Sandwich mid/bass driver is a specially developed 30mm coated textile dome treble unit – larger than typical dome tweeters, especially within this price class. This allows for lower crossover points and superior power handling in comparison to speakers of similar size and specification. High frequencies are open, finely detailed and free from glare, delivering shimmering cymbals and sparkling strings.

The treble unit integrates seamlessly with the mid/bass driver thanks to a sophisticated crossover design, developed from extensive listening and engineering trials. It incorporates audiophile-grade polypropylene capacitors, air-core inductors and low-loss resistors, all arranged with a precision layout to minimise phase shift and signal loss.

This meticulous design ensures accurate time alignment between drivers, maintaining phase coherence and providing a stable, three-dimensional stereo image across a broad listening axis. Off-axis response remains smooth and predictable, which is crucial for real-world placement – whether listening from the sweet spot or moving around the room, imaging and tonal balance remain consistent.

Cabinet walls are sandwiches too

The enclosure is a critical part of any loudspeaker system, just as vital as the quality of the drive units. The Sandwich 100 utilises further advances in cabinet design since the original Sandwich to deliver a modern study in resonance control in this price class.

The mid/bass driver cones are not the only things benefitting from a sandwich construction. The cabinet walls are formed from an outer layer of MDF and an inner layer of high-density particle board – the different densities of these materials help to scatter panel resonances – enhanced by a filling of special glue that bonds the layers and provides resonance-damping properties. This is combined with internal bracing to eliminate panel flex and unwanted colouration, strategically placed acoustic damping material to suppress cavity resonance, and a rear port for controlled bass extension.



Left With its walnut-finished cabinet, black front baffle and aluminium detailing, the Sandwich 100 is a strikingly handsome design

Externally, the new model takes design cues from the original Sandwich with build quality elevated to meet modern expectations. Their cabinets sport a premium walnut finish, complemented by aluminium driver trims and an aluminium insert around the edge of the front baffle – an attractive visual reference to the Sandwich speaker’s heritage.

The baffle itself is finished in soft-touch matt black, contrasting with the Sandwich 150 and 250 which continue their walnut veneer to the front of the speakers. This gives the Sandwich 100 a striking look all its own. The speaker’s vintage-style protective grille is reminiscent of the original LEAK Sandwich, enhancing its classic appeal whilst maintaining the highest acoustic standards.

A few words from Peter Comeau

As LEAK’s Director of Acoustic Design, Peter Comeau – one of the world’s most renowned speaker designers – led the design team for the Sandwich 100, just as he did the 150 and 250 models. Commenting on the new addition to range, Comeau said:

“With its innovative aluminium-foam-aluminium cone construction, the original LEAK Sandwich was a landmark loudspeaker design. Bringing the concept back in 2024 with the Sandwich 150 and 250 speakers was a fascinating project upon which we’ve built with this new, additional model.

“In developing the Sandwich 100, our intention was to make a more compact speaker offering uncompromising sound for a smaller space. And, at the same time, take our new, evolved version of LEAK’s classic Sandwich design to a more accessible price point, thus broadening its appeal.

“The speaker’s modest footprint belies a performance that is richly detailed, rhythmically confident and emotionally involving. It shines across all musical genres – from jazz trios and string quartets to rock, pop and electronica – delivering natural tone, believable scale and a level of transparency that draws the listener in.”

Compact in size yet rich in musical output, the Sandwich 100 is a loudspeaker for the modern age, built upon principles and styling forged in the golden era of British hi-fi. It is available from mid-April at an RRP of £499 per pair.



Left Sonically and aesthetically, the new Sandwich 100 speakers are a perfect match for LEAK’s vintage-styled audio electronics

SPECIFICATIONS	LEAK SANDWICH 100
Configuration	Two-way standmount
Enclosure type	Bass reflex
Treble driver	30mm coated textile dome
Mid/bass driver	150mm Aluminium-Foamcore Sandwich cone
Sensitivity (2.83V @ 1m)	86dB
Recommended amp power	25-100W
Nominal impedance	6Ω (8Ω compatible)
Bass extension (-6dB)	44Hz
Crossover frequency	2.2kHz
Cabinet volume	10.6L
Dimensions (HxWxD)	340x210x250mm

LEAK

Founded in 1934 by Harold Joseph Leak, pioneering British hi-fi manufacturer LEAK was a mid-20th-century trailblazer in the field of high-performance audio equipment.

LEAK has been responsible for many technological firsts. For example, the Point One series of valve amplifiers (1945) were the first to reduce total harmonic distortion to 0.1 per cent, and the ground-breaking Trough-Line FM radio tuner (1955) is still considered one of the finest FM tuners ever made. LEAK's Sandwich speakers (1961) heralded true-piston cone action by sandwiching polystyrene foam between outer skins of stiff aluminium foil. And the Stereo 30 all-transistor amplifier (1963) spearheaded the use of transformerless transistor output stages over then-standard transformer-coupled designs, thus paving the way for future solid-state amps.

In 2020, following a 40-year hiatus, LEAK – now part of the International Audio Group alongside Audiolab, Castle Acoustics, Luxman, Mission, QUAD and Wharfedale – launched two new audio components: the Stereo 130 integrated amplifier and CDT CD transport, fusing retro design, classic analogue engineering, and the latest digital technologies. In 2022, these components were joined by the Stereo 230 integrated amplifier, followed in 2024 by the remarkable rebirth of LEAK Sandwich loudspeakers. In 2026, the legend continues with the launch of LEAK's first network streamer – the TruStream – and the new Sandwich 100.

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Left Jimi Hendrix turns up the volume on his LEAK Stereo 30 hi-fi amplifier in the late 1960s

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