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*Above* Wharfedale Denton 1S – available in blue, white or black

## A blast from the past, remade for the future

**Launched in 1974, the Denton 1 was a forward-thinking speaker that broke new ground for Wharfedale. Now it's the inspiration behind the company's latest Heritage model: the Denton 1S**

*Cambridgeshire, England* – In the 1960s and '70s, Denton speakers by world-famous British manufacturer Wharfedale were renowned for delivering natural, realistic sound from compact cabinets. Several Denton models were launched during this period, encompassing both two-way and three-way designs, the first appearing in 1967.

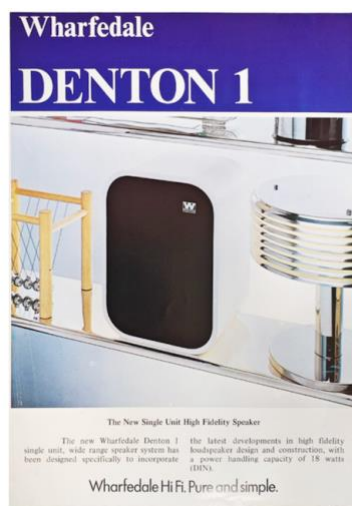
Since 2012, Wharfedale has paid homage to the classic Denton line by introducing new speakers inspired by the original Denton models as part of its Heritage Series – a celebration of the company's rich history of loudspeaker design that began in Yorkshire in 1932. As we approach summer 2026, these are set to be joined by another Denton model. But this one is distinctly different.

The new Denton 1S has a specific muse that inspired its creation – 1974's Denton 1. By the early '70s, new styling trends were making increasing inroads into the global audio market. To this point,

Wharfedale's Denton models – the original 1967 Denton and its 1971 replacements, the Denton 2 and Denton 3 – were more traditionally styled wood-veneered designs. In response, Wharfedale's recently revamped engineering team created a new Denton speaker to sell alongside the other models, featuring a fashionably modern aesthetic and a lower price, and designed for positional flexibility.

The result was the Denton 1, a speaker design well ahead of its time. It incorporated an unusual full-range coaxial drive unit with two cones mounted on the same axis, which was beneficial for time alignment and allowed the speaker to be positioned horizontally as well as vertically. In place of the square-edged wood-veneered cabinets of other Wharfedale speakers, everything was housed in a moulded white polyurethane (plastic polymer) enclosure with curved edges. For its time, the Denton 1 was an innovative and thoroughly modern-looking compact speaker, in line with the futuristic interior design trends of the early 1970s.

It's worth noting that the number '1' in the speaker's name referred to its single coaxial driver, not its chronological launch position. The two-way Denton 2 and three-way Denton 3 launched *before* the Denton 1 – a common point of confusion!



*Left The Denton 1's progressive styling and unusual coaxial driver arrangement was a response to new design trends in the early 1970s*

### The new Denton 1S – a versatile speaker built for 2026 and beyond

The Denton 1 was a bold concept in 1974, but perhaps more notable for its eye-catchingly modern design than the outright quality of its sound – especially in comparison to the natural warmth of the other Denton models of the time. The new Denton 1S takes key elements from the Denton 1 – its relative size, curved cabinet edges and use of a coaxial driver – and delivers a new design engineered from the ground up. It pays homage to the style and ethos of the Denton 1 but is, in fact, an entirely different speaker delivering vastly elevated sound.

The Denton 1S is designed for versatility. Measuring 330x236x229mm (HxWxD), it suits a wide variety of environments – domestic and commercial – delivering a thoroughly engaging, full-scale performance from a speaker that's conveniently sized. It's designed for close-to-wall placement and can be wall-mounted if desired, as well as being suitable for siting on stands, shelves, sideboards, desks and so on.

## Purpose-built coaxial drive unit

The full-range driver in the 1974 Denton 1 incorporated what's known as a 'whizzer' cone – essentially a cone within a cone, attached to the same voice coil. This extends the frequency response upwards beyond that of a solo mid/bass cone, thus negating the need for a separate tweeter. It did not require a crossover network and the time alignment delivered by its coaxial arrangement gave the Denton 1 positional flexibility, but there were inconsistencies in its performance that would be considered substandard in a high-performance coaxial drive unit today.

Wharfedale has developed an entirely new two-way coaxial driver specifically for the Denton 1S. It places a 25mm silk-dome tweeter concentrically within a 165mm enhanced polypropylene mid/bass cone. This configuration allows both drivers to radiate from a single acoustic centre (or point source), producing sound that is inherently time-aligned and phase coherent.

The profile of the mid/bass diaphragm has been specially developed to enhance rigidity and control breakup modes, accompanied by a cone surround that provides critical damping at its periphery – this achieves a wide and balanced frequency response that's ideally smooth through the crossover region. The relatively shallow cone profile also contributes to the excellent Directivity Index of the complete speaker, while a 44mm voice coil allows for a high power handling of 100W.



*Left Specially developed for the Denton 1S, Wharfedale's new coaxial drive unit delivers exceptional sound whether the listener is on- or off-axis*

The result is a driver that combines natural tonal balance with excellent transient accuracy and reduced colouration across the critical midrange region. Bass delivers warmth and texture, coupled to a midrange that exudes expressive clarity. High frequencies are delivered with smooth yet crisply rendered detail, aided by the tweeter's damped rear chamber and high-flux motor system.

Developing this new coaxial driver was a challenge – not least because as the mid/bass driver moves it acts as a waveguide for the tweeter. But, with clever engineering to negate the potential problems of coaxial drivers whilst maximising the benefits, the result is a presentation of remarkable unity and focus, with stable imaging, a wide soundstage and a consistent tonal balance across a broad listening area. Whether the listener is seated centrally or positioned off-axis, the Denton 1S delivers a smooth, immersive and fully scaled sound despite its relatively compact dimensions.

## A touch of brilliance

Developed through advanced computer modelling and hundreds of hours of listening tests, the Denton 1S's crossover network is mapped to Linkwitz-Riley 4th order acoustic slopes at 2.6kHz and consists of a silicon-iron core low-loss bass inductor, low-loss polypropylene capacitors and an air core treble inductor mounted on a 'short path' PCB that's optimised for signal flow.

In combination with this crossover, Wharfedale has engineered a form of EQ dubbed the 'Brilliance switch', residing on the back of the speaker with two positions – 'norm' and 'max'. The latter lifts the response by 1.5dB between 2 and 4kHz, adjusting the sound for close-to-wall positioning. Its use is left to user discretion and a preference can be quickly determined by the speakers' owner.

This switch further enhances the Denton 1S's positional flexibility whether stand-mounted, shelf-mounted or wall-mounted, adapting effortlessly to the room rather than dictating it.



*Left Working in concert, the coaxial driver, crossover and cabinet deliver an effortlessly entertaining sound wherever the speakers are positioned*

## Boxing clever

While reminiscent of the 1974 Denton 1 in its size and curved edges, the new speaker's cabinet is entirely different in its construction. The moulded polyurethane enclosure of the 1970s model was sub-optimal from an acoustic perspective, lacking the rigidity and anti-resonant qualities demanded of a high-quality modern loudspeaker cabinet.

The Denton 1S echoes the style but greatly improves the acoustics, building its cabinet from a thicker, denser combination of woods to scatter panel resonances. Fibreboard panels of differing thickness are bonded and braced to control critical resonance modes, and the front baffle is mildly recessed to improve structural integrity.

The coaxial driver configuration enables greater cabinet rigidity because only one aperture is needed through the front baffle. The driver's die-cast chassis further contributes to the overall strength of the combination, and its height within the baffle is precisely set for optimal performance.

To the rear, the bass reflex port is double-flared with a soft rubber material on the inner flare – this reduces turbulence and avoids 'chuffing' whilst augmenting bass response. The rear panel also includes

a mounting point for secure on-wall installation, together with a pair of high-quality binding posts positioned just above the 'Brilliance switch' towards the base of the cabinet.

### **Smart, modern, versatile – classic design for contemporary living**

The Denton 1S sports a smooth matt finish, of the same premium quality as Wharfedale's EVO 5 Series speakers. Three colours are available – there's crisp, clean white, of course, echoing the 1974 Denton 1. And deep, dark black, because black is always a super-popular option.

The third option is blue. Why? Because it's a colour that's eye-catching and modern, whilst also complementing a wide range of decor. Varieties of blue have been named Pantone Colour of the Year more often than any other colour, while a range of other organisations from Vogue to Dulux have declared shades of blue as their top colour of 2026. Blue is always fashionable, always popular, and therefore a great choice for the Denton 1S.



*Left Available in black, white or blue, the Denton 1S has its roots in the past but is a thoroughly modern speaker, inside and out*

This is a genuinely contemporary loudspeaker: clean, confident and visually bold, yet unmistakably rooted in Wharfedale's classic design DNA. The removable, magnetically attached protective grille sports Wharfedale's classically styled Heritage Series badge, but this is silver rather than gold to differentiate the Denton 1S from mid-century, 1960s-inspired Heritage designs like the Linton and the other Denton models. The result is a speaker that feels utterly at home in contemporary living spaces – confidently modern in presence yet timeless in character – proving that heritage and contemporary design can not only coexist but also elevate each other.

The Denton 1S's smart design and compact size, combined with the sonic qualities of its coaxial drive unit, mean it can be placed almost anywhere and still deliver a detailed, engaging and room-filling performance. Its carefully tuned bass-reflex enclosure, with its precision-engineered port and an internal cabinet volume of 11.5 litres, achieves bass extension down to 45Hz (-6dB) – impressive for a speaker of such modest dimensions.

Sensitivity of 88dB (2.83V at 1m) and an impedance averaging 8 ohms, with a minimum of 4.5 ohms, allow easy matching to a wide range of amplifiers. In all kinds of systems, and all sorts of environments, the Denton 1S delivers a delightfully engaging performance with exceptional coherence, precise imaging and a wide, stable soundstage.

## A few words from Peter Comeau

The new Denton 1S was a two-year design project led by Peter Comeau, Wharfedale's Director of Acoustic Design. Speaking about the concept, Comeau said:

"The Denton 1 from 1974 was a fascinating design of its day. It incorporated a dual-cone coaxial driver that Wharfedale had previously marketed as a 'DIY' unit, developed by Raymond Cooke before he left to found KEF. Incorporating this in a moulded plastic cabinet enabled a compact speaker that was easy to mass produce and sell at affordable prices, with a consistent off-axis response that made it exceptionally flexible in terms of placement. Plus, it reflected the modern, hip styling that had emerged in the late 1960s in a way that Wharfedale's traditional wood-veneered cabinets did not.

"It wasn't without its foibles, however, and both the driver and cabinet had issues that wouldn't be considered acceptable in a high-performance loudspeaker today. Our intention with the Denton 1S was to pay homage to the Denton 1's forward-thinking design and useful versatility whilst delivering a speaker that's elevated in every way. A progressive 1970s concept, once ahead of its time, now vastly improved with the benefit of contemporary acoustic engineering.

"The hundreds of hours spent refining the drive unit and cabinet and fine-tuning the crossover through critical listening have resulted in a speaker that's fun to listen to across all music genres. It will make its way into a variety of audio systems, especially where it's tricky to accommodate conventional hi-fi speakers, such as on shelves and worktops, or mounted on walls. You can place the Denton 1S on dedicated speaker stands or insert a pair into an Ikea Kallax shelving unit – the choice is yours!"

The Wharfedale Denton 1S is available from late May in a choice of matt black, white or blue, at an RRP of £649 per pair.



## Wharfedale Denton 1S coaxial drive unit – exploded view



SPECIFICATIONS	WHARFEDALE DENTON 1S
Configuration	2-way compact speaker with coaxial drive unit
Enclosure type	Bass reflex (rear-firing port)
Coaxial drive unit	165mm enhanced polypropylene mid/bass cone with 25mm silk-dome tweeter
EQ adjustment	'Brilliance switch' lifts response by 1.5dB between 2-4kHz to adjust for wall proximity
Sensitivity (2.83V @ 1m)	88dB
Nominal impedance	8Ω
Minimum impedance	4.5Ω
Recommended amp power	30-100W
Peak SPL	95dB
Frequency response (+/-3dB)	50Hz-20kHz
Bass extension (-6dB)	45Hz
Crossover frequency	2.6kHz
Cabinet volume	11.5L
Dimensions (HxWxD)	330x236x229mm
Weight	6.8kg
Wall mounting	Rear panel 3/8 inch (9.5mm) thread



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 approaching its 95th 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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