

# Pump up your iPod

Alex Kidman tests 20 speaker sets with iPod docks to find out which ones offer the best bang for buck.

**20  
TESTED**

Apple has seemingly licensed the iPod dock connector to any company able to string a pair of speakers together, whether they're with quality cables or bits of mouse-nibbled string. It can therefore be tough to tell whether a given iPod speaker dock is actually worth the asking price, and it's critical to listen to any set of speakers you're considering before handing over any cash. Compared to previous iPod-speaker roundups, one feature we saw a lot more of this time was iPhone compatibility. If you plug an iPhone into an unshielded iPod dock, by default it'll suggest switching off its phone components, not to save power, but to eliminate electromagnetic interference, something you've probably experienced if you've put any mobile phone too close to a speaker before. iPhone shielding costs money and predictably, a shielded speaker dock will cost a little more than those that aren't. That said, we were surprised by the number of high-cost docks that weren't shielded.

## How we tested

Each speaker dock was tested with an iPod Touch and an iPhone 3G with a variety of musical styles, including some bass-heavy tracks, as well as lighter classical music to develop a full picture of the capabilities of each speaker set. Any additional functions were tested, but unless they related to the iPod-centric functionality of the dock, they weren't assessed as part of the final score.

## DESKTOP IPOD SPEAKER DOCKS

**90%**



### SONY SRS GU10IP

**PRICE** \$240  
**CONTACT** SONY  
**PHONE** 1300 137 669  
**WEB** www.sony.com.au

**PC USER  
BEST  
BUY**

Sony's SRS GU10IP is a physically large unit with a fairly standard 'speakers behind the dock' arrangement. And while it's certainly too big and heavy to be particularly portable, it has some serious power behind it, with a vendor-claimed output of 20W — quite meaty for an iPod speaker dock. Impressively,

it was only when we really pushed these speakers with a bass-heavy audio track at top, ear-bleeding volume that they distorted; otherwise the audio quality was genuinely superb for a dock in this price range. It's iPhone compatible, although one thing we did miss that other mid-priced docks feature is

any kind of inline display; you're limited to only the iPod's own screen. At this medium price point, you can't beat the SRS GU10IP. **PC User says:** An excellent dock for those who just want good audio.

### ALTEC LANSING T612

**PRICE** \$315 / **CONTACT** ALTEC LANSING  
**PHONE** 1800 089 681 / **WEB** www.alteclansing.com

**85%**

The T612 places your iPod dead centre of a large speaker stack and is similar to the iMT702 (see page 32) in most respects, except that it omits radio from the equation in return for a slightly cheaper asking price. Like the iMT702, it's rather large and resolutely deskbound, with no battery option to speak of. The remote control is similar to most other iPod dock remotes, being small

and rather easy to lose, although it does benefit from a pretty wide angle of reception. The T612's audio quality was very good and easily on par with the similar iMT702 — and for a lesser asking price. If you're after an iPhone-compatible dock, even though it's older the T612 is still what we'd plump for.



**PC User says:** A good-quality iPhone-compatible dock, as long as you don't need extras.