

The Inside And Out Of A Home Theater

By Roberto Sedycias

Home theater is a home cinema system that tries to reproduce video and audio in home that is of cinema quality and gives a real cinema experience. A basic system could comprise of an arrangement of a DVD and CD player, a television and a set of speakers. According to the people in the consumer electronics industry, a home theater is primarily an integration of high quality video and surround sound.

A home theater design generally comprises of input devices, processing devices, audio output, video output, and proper ambience and atmosphere.

Home theater input devices are sources of audio and video. There can be a single or multiple input devices for the same system. HD-DVD (High Density DVD) and blue-ray are one of the most preferred high quality formats that are being used. Often, VHS (Video Home System) and Video game systems are also included. They are available now, also have a home theater PC that acts as a library for video and audio content.

The processing of the input devices is carried out by either an AV amplifier or a Preamplifier and sound processor. These are used for complex surround sound formats. Before forwarding it to the output devices, the user should first select the input device.

The audio output system consists a minimum of 2 speakers. The number of speakers can be as high as 11, in addition to the sub-woofer. Sub-woofer is important as it reproduces the bass audio frequencies. Regular floorstanding or bookshelf speakers cannot do this work.

A large HDTV (High Definition Television) forms the video output system. LCD TVs (Liquid Crystal Display Television), Video projectors, plasma TVs, rear-projection TVs, or a traditional CRT TVs are other available options.

Comfortable seats and proper arrangement of all the devices with respect to the seats is also important for that great cinema experience. Sound insulation for preventing sound from escaping the room and specialized walls for sound balancing within the room are a part of the higher end systems.

There exist two options for purchasing a home theater system. One can either, purchase and assemble various components, or purchase a home theater box kit. Assembled systems provide the best combination of components for the consumers budget. System in box kits includes a set of speakers, an amplifier or tuner for volume adjustment and video source selection, and at times a DVD player.

Few enthusiastic of the lot of home theater lovers take an extra step and build a room in the house, that functions as a home theater. To create a perfect listening environment, sophisticated acoustic design elements, like room-in-a-room construction, can be added to the system. Recreation of an ideal cinema experience does not stop here. A projector enclosed in a projection booth, specialized furniture, curtains in front of the projection screen, movie posters, etc make the experience much more real.

It is possible to set up systems in backyards too, provided proper outdoor atmosphere exists. Considering the availability of space, either a temporary or a permanent system could be installed. A temporary system could be a basic arrangement of foldable screen, a projector and a few speakers. On the other hand, an outdoor version could be elaborate with permanent fixtures, large video display components and dedicated audio output components. These

backyard home theaters are one of the favorites with outdoor parties.

The rapid development in audio and video technologies has brought down the prices of home theaters. This in turn has enabled a do-it-yourself enthusiast to experience a true digital home theater at his doorsteps.

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