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## EXO Stereo Monitoring System

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By: Eugene Robinson

More than external computer speakers, the EXO is a speaker system good (and inexpensive) enough to use for either studio monitoring or just MP3s.

Even though at first it seems like Blue Sky's EXO 2.1 configuration stereo monitoring system (\$399 list) is answering a question no one's asked here at MacLife – how do you get your nearfield monitors so you can make mixes on your home system? – with no more than a little digging we found a few reasons to be excited about these recently received goodies. Not the least of which is the fact that we had forgotten how nice it is to hear music actually in a room, versus being jammed down your ear canal via ear buds.

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The grand unveiling: love the soft dome tweeters.

Besides which with form factors – MP3s, DV, HDTV, for example – where you might want to actual HEAR something clearly multiplying like, well, things that multiply a lot like, um, er, rabbits these speakers might be the right thing at the right time. So, we opened the box and yanked out both of the smaller speakers (three-inch two-way satellites) and the eight-inch subwoofer. These would quite nicely fit on to most desks even though subwoofers, with their cube-like architecture always present the same problem: where do you put them so you can hear them but they don't get in the way? Probably the floor, but floor layout decisions aside what makes this whole unit more than just speakers is probably the EXO hub. The hub lets you plug a bunch of stuff in and monitor a whole raft of peripherals so that you can jack in an MP3 player, your laptop and even an off-board mixer and control them from the desktop, which is nice.



Well on the way to annoying the neighbors.

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But if the proof of the pudding is in the tasting, after having done all this, enquiring minds want to know: how do they sound? Just hooked up to my iPod? Very cool if not a little annoying to everyone within hearing distance given my musical choice of the day (death metal). Could I mix a record or a dance mix on it? I don't know now but I am aiming to find out.

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