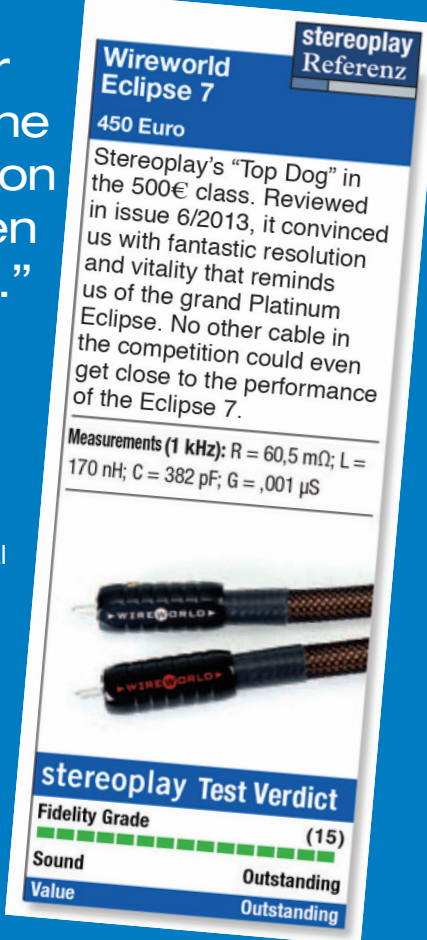


“No other cable in the competition could even get close.”

Highlights & Conclusions

The test results do not represent personal individual statements, but reflect the combined hearing perceptions of the entire panel... The results were altogether consistent in the three stereo systems... To provide an even broader basis for the listening test results, we also had the test takers make the same comparisons with headphones... The AudioQuest sounded harmonious in all chains, but dynamically compressed; Van Den Hul always appeared somewhere in the middle... The non-shielded Kimber and the Van den Hul with its relatively high shield resistance were somewhat sensitive to external noise sources such as fluorescent lamps... The insights we've gained show that the much vaunted sound tuning with targeted use of “cable sound” is a rather two-edged sword - because the cables emphasis of certain sonic properties cannot exist without creating disadvantages elsewhere. Consequently, stereoplay's top rated cables in the listening tests are therefore always the most neutral, detailed and dynamic.



For english language reprint of full study and link to free high-res, downloadable test files, scan the QR code below for direct access.

FULL ARTICLE



tinyurl.com/q7t2y2n

HI-RES DOWNLOADS



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For the original printed article, see *stereoplay* magazine Germany, issue 10/14, or visit stereoplay.de.

Independent Cable Survey of 14 Brands

by *stereoplay* magazine

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6545 Nova Drive, Suite 204
Davie, Florida 33317

phone 954.474.4454
fax 954.474.4414

email sales@wireworldcable.com



Do cables affect sound, and if so, why? *stereoplay* investigates these questions with the most elaborate test in recent years. Their results are made available to everyone - with downloadable HiRes tracks for comparison.

Legend:

- = Neutral
- = Warm, Bass Heavy
- = Cool, Spacious, Sharp

Standard 'In-the-Box' Cable

In direct comparison to the short jumper, the beginner cord sounded decently balanced, however the mid-range and presence region appeared milky, opaque and congested. In this comparison it was virtually the zero line at which we oriented ourselves.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 121 mΩ; L = 440 nH; C = 99,6 pF; G = ,0006 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (1)

Sound Sufficient

Value Very Good

Mogami Excellence stereoplay Highlight

330 Euro

The Mogami offers subtle unexcited, still fine, very detailed Play. It just sounded in an unspectacular way "right" and gave - no matter in which music material - always the right Sound with convincing natural spatiality.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 42,2 mΩ; L = 330 nH; C = 77,5 pF; G = ,0004 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (13)

Sound Outstanding


Value Outstanding

Oehlbach Black Connection MXXL stereoplay Highlight

380 Euro

The Oehlbach provided especially lively play. In the low frequencies it is quite bulky and full bodied with rather soft character. The upper frequency range was quite clearly emphasized and sounded a bit artificial.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 50 mΩ; L = 350 nH; C = 71,9 pF; G = ,0001 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (9)

Sound Good


Value Good

Kimber Kable Timbre stereoplay Highlight

400 Euro

Among the test candidates the Kimber exhibited the clearest character: It sounded impressive, precise, with sharp outlines and stable focus. Details were produced very clearly, without grit. Very spectacular, very informative - A real wow factor with quite vivid presence.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 34,2 mΩ; L = 360 nH; C = 74,6 pF; G = ,0003 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (14)

Sound Outstanding


Value Outstanding

Chord Company Anthem Ref. 2

450 Euro

The Anthem Reference 2 was profiled in the listening test with an especially lively style of play, with unrestricted dynamics, but surprisingly the midrange sounded rather reserved.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 38,4 mΩ; L = 470 nH; C = 181 pF; G = ,0006 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (9)

Sound Good


Value Good

Cardas Audio Parsec

460 Euro

With a beautifully layered spatial impression, open and clear sound, particularly in the midrange. Not to mention the fine Treble - wrote the tester favorably on the Cardas Parsec. Overall, the bass is rather full and plump.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 223 mΩ; L = 460 nH; C = 217 pF; G = ,0018 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (10)

Sound Very Good

Value Good


"A middling CD-player with a good cable can outperform a top player with only a modest cable."

Straight Wire Expressivo

475 Euro

The Straight Wire was described as tasty in the listening test with its luminous and pleasing effect that we'll rewrite with the term "tasteful". The representation of space was convincing. On top of that there was plump, rich bass.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 19,5 mΩ; L = 220 nH; C = 133 pF; G = ,0003 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (11)

Sound Very Good


Value Good

Van Den Hul 3T The Rock

500 Euro

The Van Den Hul was ambivalent in the listening test: With smooth, natural mids resulting in a stress-free, "Musical" impression. On the other hand, it sounded dark with a lack of presence and there was something missing in the bass.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 5,3 Ω; L = 1230 nH; C = 91,7 pF; G = ,0004 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (8)

Sound Good


Value Satisfactory

in-akustik NF-1203

500 Euro

The In-akustik played freely and dynamically in the listening test. With its clear presence, it was not unlike the Kimber in the spectacular direction, but with less homogeneous and structured mids. "Frantic Rocker" wrote one tester.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 232 mΩ; L = 750 nH; C = 46,2 pF; G = ,0001 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (10)

Sound Very Good


Value Good

Goldkabel Executive Rhodium

500 Euro

With its balanced, detailed play earned the gold wire ample advantages in the listening test. With high resolution and precise space representation it was not unlike the Mogami, but offered not quite as magnificent timbres.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 95 mΩ; L = 410 nH; C = 68,4 pF; G = ,0003 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (11)

Sound Very Good


Value Good

Clearaudio Sixstream Plus

520 Euro

"Balanced, round, neutral - But no wow factor" wrote it one of the testers in the Clear Audio test profile. By this he meant that it is quite clean and structured, but like the generic cable its overall sound is somewhat congested.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 243 mΩ; L = 540 nH; C = 217 pF; G = ,095 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (8)

Sound Good


Value Satisfactory

Audioquest Water

550 Euro

With 72 volts DC bias on the insulation material between the conductors to avoid dielectric losses, the AudioQuest reproduced the voice pitch contours, but sounded slightly withdrawn overall.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 61 mΩ; L = 750 nH; C = 71 pF; G = ,0006 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (7)

Sound Good

Value Sufficient

Silent Wire NF 8 MK2

580 Euro

It took only a few bars for the Silent Wire to prove a favorite among the jurors. Balanced, resolved, open clear, present, dimensional - Hailed from all sides with good attributes. A finer midrange would have made it a top contender.

Measurements (1 kHz): R = 192 mΩ; L = 970 nH; C = 57,7 pF; G = ,0002 μS



stereoplay Test Verdict

Fidelity Grade (13)

Sound Very Good

Value Good