

GEAR PATROL

The Best Bookshelf Speakers of 2019

Under \$300

ELAC Debut 2.0 B6.2



Having built audio products for ninety-two years, ELAC knows a few things about loudspeaker technology. While firmly established in Europe and Asia, the German brand never really caught on in North America until it hired Andrew Jones, a famed loudspeaker designer for his award-winning work at KEF, Pioneer, and TAD. At the entry-level, manufacturers often design using off-the-shelf drivers and you get what you pay for. The [Debut 2.0 B6.2](#) may not be a very catchy sounding model name, but you get a lot of performance from the in-house designed 6.5" Aramid fibre woofer, and 1" cloth dome tweeter. So much performance, that they almost beg you to spend considerably more on the amplifier that drives them. The front-port means that users can place them up against a wall as a last resort, but you probably don't want to do that. They may not be as balanced sounding as their more expensive brethren in the Uni-Fi line, but the Debut 2.0 B6.2 disappear in the room on solid stands and let you dig deeper into your music collection at a price point that should be considerably higher.

Specs:

Key Features: 2-way Bass Reflex, 6.5" Aramid fiber woofer, 1" cloth dome tweeter

Frequency Response: 44Hz – 35kHz

Sensitivity: 87dB @ 2.83v/1M

Impedance: 6 ohms

Power Handling: 120 watts

Inputs: 5-way metal binding posts

Weight: 16.3 pounds

Under \$500

ELAC Uni-Fi UB5



ELAC offers many outstanding bookshelf loudspeakers including the super affordable Debut 2.0 B6.2s, but its real gem is the [Uni-Fi UB5](#). Concentric drivers offer an ideal set-up from a time-domain perspective; the tweeter and woofer diaphragm are combined within a single voice-coil allowing the sound to reach your ears from a singular “point source” making music sound more cohesive. Concentric drivers are complicated to get right and are usually found on more expensive loudspeakers such as the KEF LS50 and LS50 Wireless. Andrew Jones took a chance combining the concentric driver with a separate 5.25” aluminium cone woofer in such a small cabinet but the coherency of the sound is unmistakable. The UB5 have a smoother presentation than their less expensive siblings and also benefit from higher quality sources and amplification upstream. Like the LS50, the UB5 require power to really get up and go, but the reward is a sense of effortlessness with all genres of music and a level of transparency rarely achieved with loudspeakers this affordable.

Specs:

Key Features: 3-way Bass Reflex, 1” soft dome concentrically mounted tweeter, 4” aluminum cone midrange, 5.25” aluminum cone woofer

Frequency Response: 46Hz – 25kHz, +/- 3dB

Sensitivity: 85dB @ 2.83v/1m

Impedance: 4 ohms

Power Handling: 140 watts

Inputs: 5-way metal custom binding posts

Weight: 16.5 pounds
