



Mission MX3



Having enjoyed to the tune of either four or five stars the previous three representatives of Mission's MX series we've tested, the diminutive MX3s have (a) a reassuring pedigree, and (b) a lot to live up to. Happily for all concerned (not least the customer who fancies a pair of floorstanders at a truly budget price) the MX3s could well be the best MXes we've heard.

Unlike the other speakers in this test, the MX3s are designed to work with their grilles in place. They also sound their best when biwired - but we can't help wondering why the Missions, uniquely in this group, have their binding posts halfway up the cabinet when everybody else puts them near the floor. Trailing lengths of cable up your speakers isn't the most elegant interior décor statement we've ever seen.

Fortunately, that's pretty much the extent of our moaning. After they've been treated to a lengthy running-in period, the Missions prove an alert, vigorous and dynamic listen, not the most expansive we've ever heard, but tight-knit and unified in their presentation. Wookiee's thumping *Scrappy* is perfect for the MX3s' forward, attacking and expressive inclinations - punchy and exciting, but poised and focused at the same time, the Missions integrate adroitly and time well, judging the attack and decay of bass notes *just so*.

Despite their impeccable dance-floor credentials, though, the MX3s have the subtlety, and powers of resolution, to make the most of sparer, more down-tempo material and communicate eloquently throughout the midrange. Some rivals offer a little more in terms of out-and-out scale and spaciousness, but the cohesiveness of the Missions' voice, and their palpable enthusiasm, means they should certainly appear near the top of your shortlist. At £350 they represent pretty impressive value.

Rating ★★★★★

FOR Tidy, nicely finished design; engaging, up-and-at-'em presentation

AGAINST Others offer greater openness and scale

VERDICT Peppy and communicative, the MX3s are a real achievement at the price