

Gadget

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Damson Oyster Bluetooth Speaker

£179.99 from <http://uk.damsonaudio.com>

It's finally dawned on manufacturers that popping your iPod or smartphone into the top of a speaker dock isn't the best idea. For one, you've just lost a fully functioning touchscreen remote control, and second, diving across the living room to grab yet another incoming call gets a

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bit boring after a while. Wireless Bluetooth speakers like the Damson Oyster solve both of these problems.

The thing is, there is an absolute glut of mediocre Bluetooth speakers on the market; Ford Fiestas pretending to be Ferraris is the norm. Thankfully the rugby ball-sized Damson Oyster proves to be the exception.

Inside its bivalve-themed form it houses two twins of audio fury; a pair of 2in front-facing midrange drivers and two side-firing 1.5in tweeters each driven by a separate amp. There's also a passive radiator subwoofer thrown into the mix giving total power output of 10 watts. There's no doubt this growling Asbo-fuelled, cock-fighting Alsatian of a speaker is loud. I was subject to its fiery sound signature in a large conference room; with the speaker positioned at one end of the eight metre table my hand was still shivering from its bombastic bass at the table's tail. Bass heads will love it, although it did show some limited restraint on gentler pop melodies as well.

Apart from vicious volume, the four speakers include Wave Field Synthesis 3D Sound, virtual surround sound that did an admirable job of orbiting

chimes around my head. It's not Dolby digital, but it's not far off. The Oyster uses Bluetooth A2DP and the Apt-X codec for wireless audio streaming meaning that most iPods, iPhones and Android Smartphones work fine. There's also a built-in rechargeable battery as well which pumps out 12 hours of juice. The Damson Oyster is an ear bleeder, but in a good way.

