

# Q Acoustics 3050i review

Q Acoustics reaffirms its position of pre-eminence in the midrange floorstander market. *Tested at £649*

By [What Hi-Fi?](#) July 04, 2018 [Review](#)



## OUR VERDICT

The 3050is are full of energy and even better than their predecessors - Q Acoustics has come up with the goods once more

### **+** FOR

- Punchy, musical and subtle performers
- Large-scale presentation
- Smart finish
- Flexible about positioning

### **-** AGAINST

- Nothing of note at this price

If your love for bass and big sound is greater than your budget for new speakers, a pair of midrange floorstanders could be just what your living room needs.

But not just any old pair of course. You owe it to yourself to acquire a great pair... such as these Q Acoustics 3050is, for instance.

Regular readers of *What Hi-Fi?* won't be surprised to see five stars next to Q Acoustics' name – not only have both the [3010i](#) and [3020i](#) standmounters in the brand's 3000i range already bagged maximum stars, their predecessors ([the 3050s](#)) are also current Award winners.

## Build and compatibility



The 3050is are more evolutionary than revolutionary, in terms of both performance and aesthetic.

For the latter, there is the addition of a fourth colour finish (grey, walnut, white or black) and a chrome bezel around each driver.

But there are some technical advancements over their predecessors. As with the 3010i and 3020i, cabinet rigidity has been improved – P2P (point-to-point) cabinet bracing gives extra support to the parts that require stiffening to make them quieter; the baffle is thicker to support the tweeter and mid/bass driver; traditional terminal panel cut-outs make way for embedded sockets within the cabinet.



The 3050i's 20mm soft dome tweeter has been decoupled from the baffle via a suspension system to isolate it from vibrations from the two sandwiching 16.5cm woofers.

Unique to the 3050is in the range, however, is their use of HPE (Helmholtz Pressure Equalizer) technology, which Q Acoustics first introduced in its high-end Concept 500 and has since trickled down to this lower price-point.

Essentially, this is a tube filled with damping material inside the cabinet, which aims to absorb energy and reduce resonance.



The Q Acoustics 3050i's performance isn't short of energy. Echoing their predecessors' musicality as well as warmth, smoothness and scale, they are also clearer, cleaner and punchier than the company's previous midrange floorstanders.

We start with the wild groove of Jack White's *Corporation*. Its experimental approach feels like it was ad-libbed during a protest march, and the manifold patterns, flitting tempos and stereo interplay make for great tests of timing and rhythmic aptitude. There's never a dull moment as the instrumental parts switch between cascading guitar strums and solos, playful bass lines and various African drum patterns, while the vocals consist of shrieks between sparse lyrics.



The 3050is keep it all in check, clocking different dynamic signatures and tracking overlapping instruments in a spacious, orderly soundstage so that nothing feels like a mere footnote. It's an interesting delivery, and the QAs demonstrate their adaptability as we jump between genres.

Even with Gas's *Rausch* – whose ambient sounds could easily be deemed uninteresting when heard through dynamically flat speakers – the Q Acoustics have the subtlety to pick out textures and discern dynamics without combing over intricacies.

With effortless concentration they ride the piece's undulating waves of techno beats, taut and punchy and punctual through the 3050i's woofer. The Q Acoustics' ability to anchor the deepest, most foreboding notes allows them to communicate threat and peril effectively.



*Texas Midlands* by Nick Cave and Warren Ellis is also a great advert for floorstanders of this calibre, allowing these Q Acoustics to extract greater out-and-out low-end reach than just about any standmounting alternative.

Likewise, the tribal drum pattering in LCD Soundsystem's *How Do You Sleep?* reveals the Q Acoustics' low-end agility in all its glory.

Thankfully that talent doesn't come at the expense of the higher frequencies.

With Suede's *Filmstar*, Brett Anderson's midrange vocal lifts and lurches between the dense electric instrumental as he belts out his cynical lyrics, while there's crispness to the leading edges of the tangy guitar lines that reflect the recording's thorny production.

## Verdict

The 3050is are a pair of speakers you may only need to hear for a few minutes before wondering which finish will best suit your room.

Q Acoustics has squeezed more performance into its mid-level towers than ever before, albeit at a higher price (the 3050s launched at £500).

In doing so, it has comfortably filled an important price gap between the five-star [Fyne Audio F302](#) (£400) and [Monitor Audio Silver 200](#) (£1000).

With the 3050is, Q Acoustics has reaffirmed its position within the midrange floorstander market. As the 2018 Awards draw ever nearer, it certainly bodes well for the company.