

# Equipment Comparison

Joey White

*Hephaestus Audio*

Type	Audiophile	Pro Audio	Consumer
Cost	High	Moderate	Low
Volume	Low	Moderate	High

## Audiophile

- Special, sometimes esoteric, audio components
- Industrial design is critical and often represents the dominant cost (e.g. machined aluminum chassis)
- Outdated types of interconnects (RCA, binding post, IEC) modified to give high perceived value (gold-plating, oxygen-free copper, exotic materials, etc.)
- Customers have minimal price-sensitivity (sometimes a *higher* price is required to effectively market “boutique” types of products)
- Designs may be fairly robust, but it is usually not an option to sacrifice audio quality for robustness

Pros: Sound quality/aesthetics  
Cons: Diminishing returns

## Pro Audio

- Designs have features meant to appeal to the audio professional
- Industrial design is not quite as critical (e.g. steel sheet metal is the norm)
- Modern types of interconnects (XLR, Speakon, Powercon) with high ratio of performance to price
- Customers have moderate price-sensitivity (having a unit go down during a show is a major issue, but value is important too)
- Robust designs that can survive extreme abuse over the life of the product

Pros: Robustness  
Cons: Aesthetics

## Consumer

- Many features are packed into a given unit to maximize shelf-appeal
- Industrial design is important, but low-cost materials are used (e.g. thermoplastic)
- Outdated types of interconnects (RCA, binding post, IEC)
- Customers are very price sensitive (features are desired and failure is inconvenient at worst)
- Designs are not very robust and are not generally designed for continuous use or abuse

Pros: Maximum features/minimum cost  
Cons: Audio quality and robustness