

IF YOU LOVE SOUND MINUS GIMMICKS, SONODYNE SAMA 5000 DOLBY ATMOS SOUNDBAR WILL WIN YOUR HEART

By putting a soundbar to work, it will be the easiest, most affordable way to get a cinematic sound experience at home. Further, a Dolby Atmos soundbar is definitely going to sound better than TV speakers claiming to offer Dolby Atmos. The technology tends to sound bigger, more expansive and more three-dimensional.

Sonodyne, which has been enthusiastic about sound since the 1970s, has always been a stickler for quality, something that comes through when you use SAMA 5000 Dolby Atmos soundbar system. The Sonodyne sound spoils the listener, always aiming to produce good vibrations rather than marketing gimmicks.

THE NEED FOR SOUNDBARS

The sound output for most TVs is so poor that we easily mix up dialogues. It's lousy even on TV sets with gorgeous picture quality. The problem is that with TVs continuing to get slimmer and sleeker than ever before, there's not much room for powerful drivers. Some TV makers, like Sony, offer great-sounding speakers in their most premium models, but these can set you back quite a bit.

Remember, a soundbar tends to last longer than a TV, so it's wise to invest in a quality option, even if that means extending your budget a bit.

In terms of future-proofing, it is recommended to purchase a soundbar with Dolby Atmos, as there's now a massive selection of content across streaming services that supports the modern surround format.

GETTING TO KNOW SAMA

What you get is a 3.1 channel setup with a total output power of 400 watts. The audio formats that are supported over HDMI are Dolby Digital, Dolby Digital Plus, and Dolby True HD, and over Bluetooth 5.4 you get SBC.

There is a lot to unpack here. Sonodyne is claiming a system frequency response of 35Hz to 20kHz (-10dB). These are realistic and achievable figures. Usually, 20Hz to 20kHz is commonly considered the full range of human hearing, so it's covered off well here.

There are three high-definition full-range drivers for LCR and one high-excursion 6.5-inch subwoofer.

There is HDMI eARC with 4K Dolby Vision passthrough. So you can enjoy uncompressed Dolby Atmos surround sound through a single



Sonodyne SAMA 5000 creates a room-filling immersive effect while staying true to a storyteller's vision. Pictures: Mathures Paul

HDMI cable.

Bluetooth 5.4 allows pairing to other devices. It is designed to help new devices use less power. Further, it's far more stable and secure. Input and output terminals include HDMI, optical, AUX and Bluetooth.

The IR remote control in the box is well-designed and has all the features you may want to use.

Users can move between Music, Movies and Speech modes. In Movie mode, the focus is on immersive effect with clear dialogue. Within Music mode, Dolby mode allows the centre channel to come on, else sound will come from left, right and sub. Speech mode boosts dialogues and is particularly helpful if you are watching non-OTT content.

The only drawback involves the remote collecting grease from the fingers.

WHY HAVE DOLBY ATMOS?

Dolby Atmos, which has been around for some time now, always feels like what surround sound should have always been. It's a simplistic view but it's a good way to look at Dolby Atmos.

With 3.1 channel soundbar, you get left, right and centre channels, besides a subwoofer. The centre channel significantly improves the quality of dialogue in movies and TV shows. The subwoofer is for the bass.

If a fly is buzzing around in a Dolby Atmos-enabled speaker, the buzzing sound can be represented by any of the channels

independently or together. It can fly from the centre to the left or the right. It puts the sound in a somewhat three-dimensional space using coordinates. Dolby Atmos allows you to place sound in the room with control over where the sound is located, no matter how many speakers are being used.

At home, we will feel highly fortunate to have a 7.1.4 system. But 3.1 is what most of us go for. The chip inside the system knows the sound setup and knows how to position sound effects. Dolby Atmos sound can be small or scaled up. It's a technology that started in theatres and then made its way into our homes.

No matter what the setup is, Dolby Atmos improves sound quality substantially. From a technology standpoint, there is processing involved, and this is the super-smart aspect. It knows your device's capabilities, and it adapts sound so that you get surround sound from just about anything. Some Dolby Atmos implementations are more impressive than others.

ROOTING FOR SOUND

When it comes to design, it would be difficult to pick this soundbar from others, but the unassuming design blends in with most living spaces. Further, it fits easily below your TV set.

What matters most is the sound. With SAMA 5000, the soundscape is ethereal and feels all-encompassing when watching films like *Inception*, *Dunkirk* and *Elvis*. In films with choppers, the height effect can be felt to quite some degree.

In music-focused films like *Elvis* and *Walk the Line*, high-end detail is easy to hear. At the same time, its output never dampens the actors' speaking parts. The upside here is that dialogue almost always comes through clearly.

Dolby Atmos content sounds great while non-Dolby Atmos content gets a perfect boost. Even while listening to ordinary content from YouTube, the jump in audio quality is noticeable.

The overall sound quality for

movies is room-filling and bass is accurate, while the mids retain the much-wanted sparkle. Listening to music is pleasing, produces good and balanced high, mid and low. This soundbar's length (880mm) is just about right to help spread the sound stage and sound fills the room with clear instrumentals and vocals.

The subwoofer reproduces enough thumps that make films like

Die Hard highly enjoyable. The compact wireless subwoofer sits, almost hidden, to deliver enough bass from its compact size, which takes up very little space.

Personally, an old JBL soundbar is attached to the TV. It sounds open but the sound has always been too bright, so bright that the first few bars of George Harrison's *My Sweet Lord* can be oh-my-gosh. The Sonodyne soundbar is much more fun to listen to and gets the toe tapping.

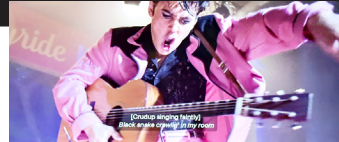
MAKE THE CALL

What makes this an excellent choice is the absence of clutter and fuss. With a single HDMI cable (in the box) via eARC connectivity, you can make content dazzle with SAMA. There is an option for placing the bar on top of a ledge or table, or for mounting it on the wall below your TV set.

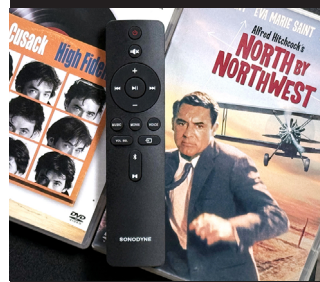
During our testing, we have been impressed by the level of immersion given the compact form factor, much of this is owed to the way Sonodyne processes sound. Besides immersive audio processing power, the clear dialogue and defined bass have been two highlights of the sound quality.

It indeed fills the room with sound that has greater height. During *Avengers: Endgame*, in the battle at the end, otherworldly beasts flying in from the sides of the screen sound impressive. In other words, if you love sound minus marketing gimmicks, Sonodyne SAMA 5000 Dolby Atmos soundbar system will win your heart.

Mathures Paul



There are custom modes for movies, music and speech



A dedicated IR remote control is provided for easy operation and functionality



With Dolby Atmos height rendering, the dialogue seems to come from the TV and above



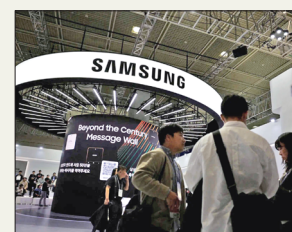
Users get deep, detailed bass from a compact subwoofer with dedicated level control

BYTE BUZZ



BIGGEST OPENING

F1, the movie, has already made over \$200 million globally, handing Apple Original Films its biggest opening yet.



SAMSUNG UNPACKED

It's the week that may present a new Galaxy phone form factor. Coming on July 9, 7.30 pm IST.

THE SINCLAIRS

Grant Sinclair, the nephew of Sir Clive Sinclair, has created a new handheld emulator called the GamerCard.

