

WHAT HI-FI?
SOUND AND VISION
TEST WINNER**Hi-Fi Racks
Podium**

£460 ★★★★★

When the Podium stormed onto our Awards stage back in 2009 it moved the goalposts, with wood suddenly becoming the new black. Two years on, it's still with us in unchanged form - so is it still a champion contender?

Chunky sounds from our Award winner

The answer is a resounding yes. Resting on the Podium, our reference kit served up a dynamic sound packed with subtlety and insight. The timber's timbre is enjoyable, with good tonal balance in the main. Some might find the bass a little on the beefy side, but that just comes down to personal taste. One thing, though: the leg design means it's hard to align everything nice and square during construction.

So, the Podium again gets our praise. Despite some strong challenges here, especially from the Tokyo 4, this kit rack still stacks up nicely.



Want a system boost? Try some

Shelf help

Tidy up your kit & cables, while reducing sound-sapping vibrations, with a new rack. We took our Audiolab 8200CD player and Roksan Caspian M2 amp (feeding ATC SCM11 speakers), sat them on these five racks, and this is what we heard...

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**Stands
Unique
Sound Support**

£330 ★★★★★

This dainty wood and glass rack isn't the easiest in the world to build - there's a fair amount of alignment to be done - but it looks good in a stylish yet traditional way.

Budget rack with bass-taming powers

The Stands Unique endowed our kit with an agile delivery and a good feel for subtlety and detail. Those seeking bass weight won't find it here in spades, though, so this rack would work best with kit with a prominent bottom-end.

However, it offers a lot for the price, and while the sound does get confused at times, there's no walking away from the fact it's £140 cheaper than our current Award-winning Podium. If you're working to a budget, and want something to do a more than adequate job, look no further.

