

# The T Factor



**Chord Company's new Sarum T loudspeaker cables use proprietary insulation to produce a stellar sound, says Jon Myles.**

**M**any things go into making high-performance loudspeaker cables; the conductors used, terminations, quality of connectors, screening and the dielectric all have a significant effect.

Of these, the latter is probably the least well understood – but they play a significant part in the whole equation. In essence their role is to reduce the signal leakage and so aid the accurate flow of information from the amplifier into your loudspeakers.

There are many types in use – from relatively cheap PVC to polyethylene, polypropylene and the more popular PTFE used in many higher grade cables. New variants are rare – so when a company such as Chord Cables with 32 years in the business comes up with one it piques interest.

The material in question is Tylon – which under a different name is used in military applications to secure signal integrity at all operating temperatures. Chord says this dielectric is only available to them and has been implemented across the whole new Sarum T range

– which also includes a digital cable and power lead at the moment.

It first surfaced as a component in the ChordMusic range – where the loudspeaker cables start from £3300. But the Sarum T start from £1800 for a 1.5 metre pair. Other important features are silver-plated oxygen free copper conductors, a heavy braid foil for shielding and a thick outer jacket.

The cables also come in twisted pairs and are hand-built in Chord's own plant in Wiltshire.

## SOUND QUALITY

I first heard the new Sarum T range during a visit to their Wiltshire headquarters. Compared to the previous Sarum cables they were impressive.

But with longer listening through my own system the step-change was dramatic in both dynamics and the extra musical information.

Plugging them into both a Naim Supernait 2 integrated amplifier and a Naim Uniti Atom all-in-one streamer/amp showed just how clear and open these cables are.

What was immediately noticeable is how natural they sound. Music flowed effortlessly

and instruments were given room to breathe. It's an effect that works from top to bottom – so big bass tracks like Led Zeppelin's 'When The Levee Breaks' had increased punch and authority, while gentler pieces such as Arvo Pärt's 'Spiegel im Spiegel' were put across with delicious delicacy.

Many cables impart a particular character on the music but the most impressive thing here is the absence of just that. It means the performance comes to the front with no smear or sense of constriction; I forgot I was listening to electronic components and transducers. Everything seemed improved – from timing to instrumental cohesion.

Only the very best 'speaker cables do that and these warrant a place among that elite group.

## CONCLUSION

£1800 might seem a lot for a loudspeaker cable but the Sarum Ts justify the price. They are easily as good as some much more expensive rivals, being open, uncoloured and superbly natural – letting you hear the sound of your amplifier and loudspeakers as they should be.



**CHORD SARUM T  
£1800 (1.5 METRE  
PAIR)**



**OUTSTANDING - amongst  
the best.**

### VERDICT

Proprietary materials and construction translate into a cable that can bring the best out of any system. Supremely open and unsullied, they can compete with rivals costing many times more.

### FOR

- wide bandwidth
- open, natural sound
- tonally accurate

### AGAINST

- nothing

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