

The Chord Company ShawCan

The Chord Company's has been around since 1984. An interesting story: The company was founded following a dinner meeting between NAIM Audio USA retailers and NAIM Audio UK. The USA representatives needed a DIN-to-RCA interconnect. Sally Gibb (the company's lead designer) attended the dinner with her husband, then a NAIM Audio executive. He suggested that Sally make the cables for the USA reps and launch her own business. As a result, The Chord Company was born and has built a growing reputation for producing sonically superior cables ever since.

The ShawCan headphone cable is the newest addition to Chord Company's Shawline range. The cable features "high-quality" silver-plated conductors and the firm's own "Super ARAY conductor geometry". It uses a PTFE dielectric and a carbon composite shield that "minimizes unwanted mechanical noise". It's all too easy for headphone cables to produce noise from rubbing against desks, clothes, or equipment, so it's important for cables to minimize mechanical artefacts where possible. The conductors are housed in a black outer-jacket that feels like techflex. Chord Company states it's "more than just a braid to tidy the conductors," but also is "designed to assist with acoustic damping." ShawCan cables are extremely light, making them ideal for use with heavier headphones.

Chord Company's focus on mechanical details is matched by their attention to musical detail retrieval. The ShawCan cable is strikingly resolute, especially considering its comparatively modest price. The ShawCan is neutral leaning, with a slight tilt towards darker harmonics. The overall sound isn't dark however; perhaps saying it's the antithesis of bright might work. Its handling of percussive elements is tight and hard-hitting. Guitars and strings are colorful and airy. Vocals are lifelike and very realistic in tonality and scale. In short, ShawCan offers more performance than it has a right to at its price. **Michael Mercer**

Price: £275 - 1.5 meter

MANUFACTURER INFORMATION

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