



70 BK ELECTRONICS P12-300SB-DF → £475 approx

Black box with brawn

Southend-on-Sea is home to the world's longest pier – and some of its greatest-value subwoofers. **Adam Rayner** gets to grips with a sub-£500 12-incher from BK Electronics

I'VE REVIEWED A few high-end subwoofers recently, but this is a simple and affordable offering that is, in its own way, equally impressive.

The latest model from Essex-based bass stalwart BK Electronics, the P12-300SB is a sealed box, available in two flavours – either with its driver pointing out into your room from under a grille (the P12-300SB-FF) or, like the one on test, down-firing (P12-300SB-DF), with the enclosure stood up on small feet. This latter approach adds a layer of acoustic loading to the transducer's output.

The driver is a 12in paper pulp composite, with a heavy-duty chassis and monstrous magnet system on the back to give it a serious in/out excursion. It's driven by a healthy 300W of continual muscle and, according to BK's specs, should play to under 10Hz and still be audible.

The sealed box, hewn from 1in-thick MDF and with internal bracing, gives the driver good grounding. That lack of port air-bounce means that sealed bass systems play tighter. Also, there's no 'tuned' frequency to drop away from. Connections include both high and low-level inputs. The brief manual explains the benefits of using both simultaneously.

Back to the stars

I'm still returning to *Elysium* to give subwoofers a work out. I love it for its daftness and the deep, emotive basso drops and swells in

the soundtrack, particularly during the initial scene where we see the young protagonist form a lifelong urge to reach the utopian habitat. My resident speakers are truly muscular and the sub-bass setup I normally employ has way more power and driver area than this BK Electronics model.

AV INFO

PRODUCT: Affordable 12 subwoofer

POSITION: Mid-range for BK Electronics, below the Monolith but above the Gemini

PEERS: Tannoy TS2.12; Velodyne Impact 12; REL T-5



A front-firing version is also available

However, my speaker array was not let down one jot by P12-300. The speed of this woofer is startling – it's like a fast car with a big engine and yet terrifying brakes. The 12in driver's magnet stack helps it stop as well as go.

In the Matt Damon sci-fi there's plenty of rocketry, explosions and fights that let the subwoofer impress. But some of the more intense moments showed me that I had over-set the gain and found the woofer's limit. The P12-300 is fine until suddenly tipping into being over-driven. So be careful.

The film also has a tremendous score, large in scale and detailed, and bass is very much a part of it. This cubed brute makes astonishingly effective use of 'merely' 300W and handles it with texture and visceral grip.

Simply put, this is another BK Electronics benchmark product. It's quick, agile, usefully-connected and rich in output. My sample, in the gloss black finish, sells for £475, but if you're prepared to accept a less-glam wood finish (in various flavours) you can pick one up for £380. That makes the P12-300SB-DF even more of a no-brainer bargain ■

SPECIFICATIONS

DRIVE UNIT: 1 x 12in down-firing long-throw woofer

ENCLOSURE: Sealed

FREQUENCY RESPONSE: 'Lower than 20Hz' at -3dB

ON BOARD POWER: 300 Watts RMS

REMOTE CONTROL: No

DIMENSIONS: 450(w) x 400(h) x 400(d)mm

WEIGHT: 30kg

CONNECTIONS: Twin phono input; single Neutrik Speakon connector for high-level (simultaneous) connection

HCC VERDICT

BK Electronics P12-300SB-DF
→ £475 approx → www.bkelec.com
→ Tel: 01702 527 572

HIGHS: Has the grip and control of a way more costly woofer; musicality and visceral muscle on offer; nice price

LOWS: Easy to over-set gain and activate overdrive circuitry; not the last word in style

Performance ★★★★★

Design ★★★★★

Features ★★★★★

Overall ★★★★★