

## Home Theater Checklist

Building a Basement Home Theater is an exciting project! We've got dozens of tips to help you along the way.

Before you begin shopping, determine how large your room will be. This determines the size of the loudspeakers, the size of the video display, and the amount of furniture you need.

Because sound is dependant on the cubic volume of the room, be sure to measure the room height, as well, and then determine the room's cubic volume by multiplying the length times the width times the height.

If you need help determining whether your equipment will be enough for your room, call our toll-free line at 1-866-244-8796 or [email us](#) - our audio experts are happy to help you decide.



**Below, a list of what you'll need when you build a home theater.**



**Five Loudspeakers:** Two front main speakers, one center channel, and two surround speakers. Most modern movies now include 7.1-channel soundtracks, which means there are an extra two surround speakers, two for the side walls and two for the rear wall, making the movie even more realistic. Even if you don't buy four surround speakers now, consider wiring for the extra set - this trend is here to stay.

There are small bookshelf speakers, large floorstanding speakers, and in-wall/on-wall speakers to choose from. If you can't decide what you need to get the effect you're looking for, [contact AxiomAudio](#). We're happy to help.



**One Subwoofer:** This is the loudspeaker that produces all the deep bass effects that make the home theater experience just like the movies. A growing number of customers are using two or more subwoofers to really pressurize their rooms and make the experience even more realistic. For help deciding what you need, read [Do I Need Two Subs?](#)



**Video Display:** Whether you go with a plasma flat panel, an LCD flat panel, a DLP, or a projector and screen, be sure to get the right size for your room. Too small and you'll be disappointed with the effect; too large and you'll see artifacts in the picture that will distract you from enjoying your movies. For more information on video technologies and the pros and cons of each, read [Ten Tips to Getting a Big Screen TV](#).



**One Receiver:** This is the 'brains' of the operation - an electrical box that contains seven amplifiers (for 7.1 channel surround sound) controls which source you are viewing (standard broadcast, High Definition broadcast (cable-TV or satellite), DVD, Blu-Ray, Games, Computer, and in some cases, a turntable or VHS if you're retro), and transmits that information to the corresponding video and audio sources. [Decide what model is right for you after reading our article on Buying a Receiver](#).

If your room is large or if you're after the 'wow' factor, [consider going with a 'separates' system for your electronics](#): a pre-amplifier to handle the direction of the source material, and separate power amplifiers for the sound. This gives you more power and therefore clearer, more realistic sound in larger rooms or at higher volumes. Devotees swear the sound is clearer even at lower volumes.



**Electronics:** DVD player or Blu-Ray player, a gaming console, even a dedicated computer called a media center. Decide how you are going to use the room and determine if you'll need extra equipment, or if you can use electronics that are already parts of other systems. If you are buying new products, read the manuals to ensure they will all 'play nicely' together, or call our toll-free line to check with our experts.



**Cables:** You'll need a lot of them, and if possible it's better to run them before you put up your walls. Spend a little money here but don't get sucked into name-brand advertising hype. Copper is copper! High quality cables will reduce interference and hum but they can't add anything to the sound or picture that isn't already there.

- Speaker wire (12 gauge recommended). The total amount of speaker wire that will be required to connect 5 or more speakers to your receiver
- Termination for speaker wire for both the receiver end and the speaker end (banana plugs, spade

lugs, or bare wire all work)

- Subwoofer coaxial cable – determine the length by measuring the distance from your subwoofer to your receiver
- Additional cables required to connect sources to the receiver and from the receiver to the video display:
  - HDMI cables
  - component video cables
  - digital coaxial cable
  - fiber optic link



**Furniture and Accessories:** For your speakers and video display, decide if you want them hanging on the wall, mounted on stands, or sitting on the floor. You'll need to buy stands or mounts accordingly.

Your electronics will also need a home. Some customers go all-out and build a false wall behind their electronic stack so they can easily switch out components or wiring, but at a minimum you'll want an electronics cabinet to store the stack. Consider all the glowing displays on those electronics - you may want something with a door or you may want to situate it at the back of the room so the lights don't distract you during movies. Remember, **heat is the enemy of electronics**, so make sure there is adequate ventilation.



**Surge protectors:** if you live in an area prone to lightning strikes or frequent power outages, invest in a surge protector.

After you get your system hooked up, be sure to calibrate your loudspeakers. This is the difference between an 'okay' sound and a spectacular sound, and it will make your home theater really blow you away.



**Before you purchase, consider calling or [emailing](#) the AxiomAudio team of consultants.** Expert advice keeps you from getting sucked into marketing gimmicks or too much power (or worse, too little power!) for your area. Our customers are amazed at how often they are able to save substantial amounts of money by speaking with our non-commissioned, experienced staff.