

Audioengine 5+ (A5+) Speakers and D1 DAC Review

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3

Navigation: **9. Conclusion (Audioengine D1)**

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Audioengine D1 Conclusions

With the Audioengine 5+ Speakers out of the way, let's talk about the Audioengine D1 DAC for a moment. Performance here was fairly good. Audio sounded a tad bit more rich and lifelike, but most importantly, the DAC was able to much better isolate electrical noise, which is what most people will immediately notice here. There really isn't anything more annoying than a load of electrical noise when hooking up sensitive headphones to a computer. One thing I'd like to mention about the DAC though is that if you're planning on using a pair of headphones with the D1, you'll definitely want a higher end pair of headphones with higher resistance to take full advantage of the D1. Just for giggles I plugged in a pair of those famous headphones that come bundled with the iPhone 4S to both the Audioengine D1 and my desktop's onboard sound and I found zero difference. In fact, I thought they

sounded slightly worse for some reason and the hissing was more pronounced as well. Definitely get a quality 50 ohm+ or even better 250 ohm+ high end pair of headphones to go with the D1.

Appearance and formfactor here was great as well and the device is definitely small enough for those who want to take it on the go. Without something like this, your high end 250 ohm+ headphones would be pretty useless when plugged into a laptop, but with the D1, you can now take your favorite pair of headphones on the go. For people looking for a DAC + headphone amp for this purpose, I think the Audioengine D1 is going to be worth every penny. Additionally, like what we saw with the Audioengine 5+, Audioengine includes a small cloth pouch with the Audioengine D1 for protection on the go. Just a little bit more.

In terms of connectivity and features, you're getting optical in, and usb for the inputs while you'll also get RCA and 3.5mm out for the outputs. For a device that fits into the palm of my hand, this is amazing. Additionally, you'll also be getting 24 bit 192kHz audio as well, so those who purchase ultra high end Blu-Rays will be able to enjoy ultra high quality audio. Personally, I can't really tell the difference between 16 bit 44kHz audio and 24 bit 96kHz audio let alone 24 bit 192kHz audio, but the feature is there nonetheless, so if you can, more power to you.

Pricing on the [Audioengine D1](#) is currently \$169.00 on Amazon, so it's actually not too expensive for a high quality DAC. That said, those looking for an audio upgrade should definitely upgrade their speakers or headphones prior to making an upgrade on the DAC. However, if you already have some high end headphones or you specifically want the optical input on the Audioengine D1, the Audioengine D1 is an excellent choice for the price.

Bottom Line

Those looking for a portable DAC + amp combo will find the Audioengine D1 an excellent performer with tons of connectivity at a reasonable price.

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