

Audioengine D1 24-bit DAC Review

<http://www.connectreviews.com/2012/03/29/audioengine-d1-24-bit-dac-review/>

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I had just purchased a set of Audioengine A5+ powered speakers and it really was obvious that the analog out of the iMac was far from perfect. Any classical music sounded muddy, pop and rock was flat, and the electronica had no kick. The perfect match for the A5+'s would be the D1 from the same company, or that was my assumption. This was definitely the case.



Installation couldn't be easier. A simple USB powered connection from the iMac into the D1, then a RCA cable pair into the A5+'s, and you're off to the races. No drivers needed. I tested this on my Windows 7 laptop and the experience was the same, but this device was bound for my home setup. And a tip for the Mac users out there, you should dive into the built-in MIDI setup and set the D1 as your output, and set it to 24-bit mode.

If you really want to notice the change the most, try to do a back to back test. Listen to your favorite track at least once, maybe twice then switch to the D1. You'll notice that the highs are brighter, than the lows are cleaner, and through the range everything will just seem cleaner. Pulling the audio processing outside the noisy interior of a computer, electrically speaking, does wonders for the sound. Beyond that, the components that Audioengine uses inside are much better than what any onboard soundcard will be using.

Another perk from this little device is that it is a great interface for your headphones. Did you know you are likely not getting the most out of your headphones if you are running them straight off the sound card? The [D1](#) will give your headphones the same experience it gives your speakers, cleaner and brighter sound. My AKG 240 studio headphones always sounded very quiet and restrained on the Logitech audio out, or even an iPhone. On the D1 they come alive and let you hear things that you never noticed before. The first night with this combo, I turned on some Deadmau5 and was blown away at the things I didn't hear going on in the background of the songs just because these headphones were never adequately driven.

For \$169, the [Audioengine D1](#) will put you on the road toward becoming a little more appreciative of your music or any sound coming from your computer. It does not change your music but gives it a cleaner path from the bits on your computer to the nerves in your ears. The one downside, you will start noticing that those MP3's you ripped from your first CD, Sir Mix-A-Lot – Mack Daddy, just doesn't cut it anymore. At least those MP3's from Amazon are in super high quality...or you will be learning what the

term FLAC means.