



Ion Case
for iPhone 6
ELEMENTCASE

Review: Audioengine B2 Speaker



Introduction

Audioengine is a well-regarded company in the world of audio known for their classic design and using very few off-the-shelf parts in their products. Formed in 2002, Audioengine is the brainchild of former employees of companies like Harman/Kardon, Gibson Guitar, and Apple who wanted to provide high quality audio at affordable prices. As someone who believes in intentional purchasing of products that will last many years due to their quality and design, I was intrigued with the B2: three beautiful classic finishes, Bluetooth capability, and purported beautiful audio quality. Frankly, the B2 is the epitome of consumer audio perfection in 2015, and I've surely never heard a better consumer desktop speaker.

Design

When I discovered Audioengine's products, I was immediately taken aback by their design: minimal, subtle, and timeless. The B2 is positively each one of those things.



I received the Walnut-encased B2, and the quality of the wood is impeccable. The cabinet of the B2 is built by hand, and the craftsmanship certainly shows when you examine it closely. The cabinet itself has high-resin MDF walls with internal sound dampening material to ensure that there isn't any destructive interference between the two internal speakers. To further prevent interference, each speaker inside the cabinet has its own enclosure. The B2 also comes in [Black Ash](#) and [Zebrawood](#).





The front of the B2 is customizable, but you wouldn't know that from just looking at it. The grey mesh covering the front of the speaker can be removed to reveal the tweeters and subwoofers. The mesh piece is held in place by magnets, which makes taking it on and off incredibly easy since there aren't any clips keeping it in place. The magnets are very strong and aligns the mesh piece for you.

Audioengine used silk dome tweeters with neodymium magnets to provide stability under high power, along with Kevlar woven glass composite with rubber surrounds for the subwoofers. Kevlar is an incredibly strong material that allows stability when the B2 is operating at loud volumes (and it can get *incredibly* loud, relative to its size). Audioengine didn't include a speaker grill with the B2 solely on the fact that they used materials that are sure to last years.

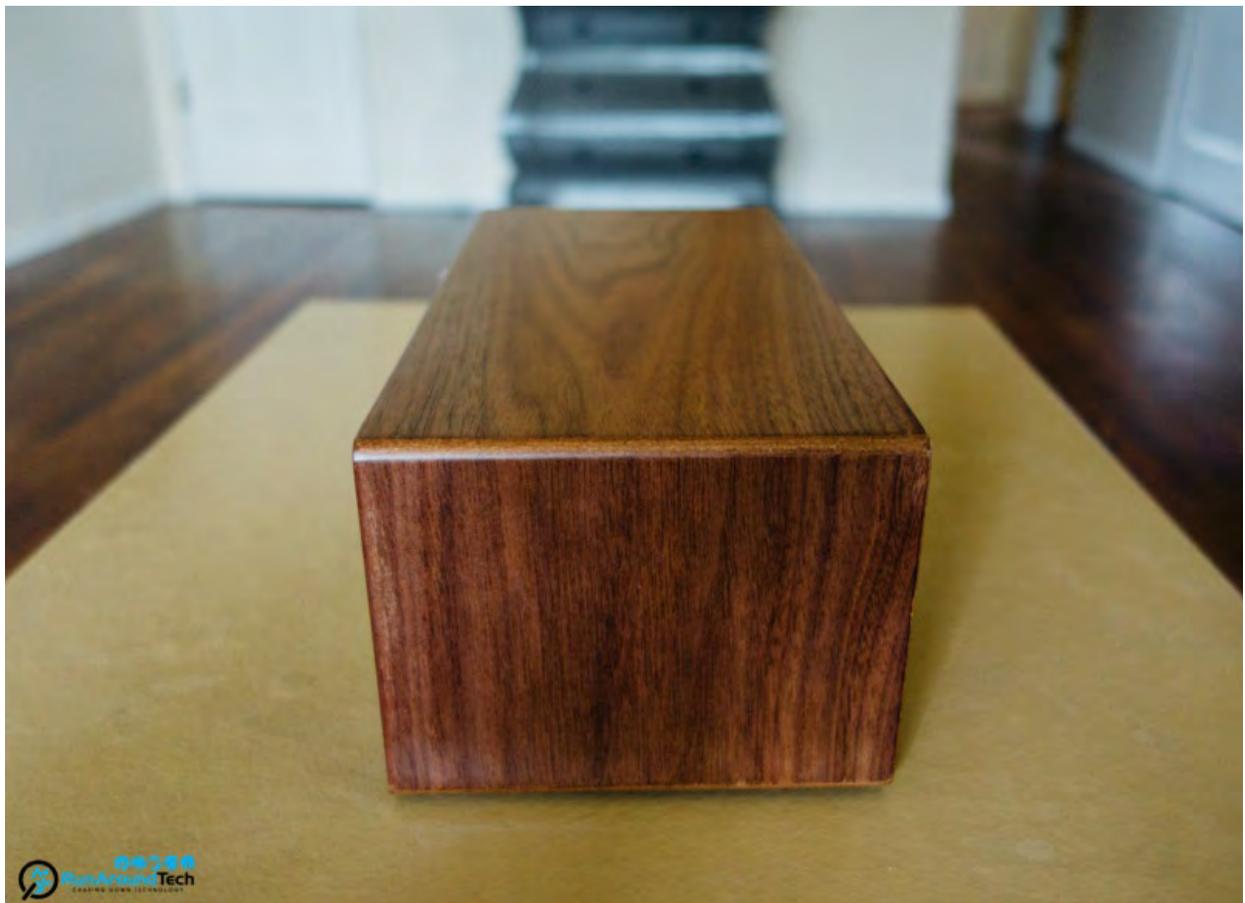


The back of the B2 features controls for the volume, inputs, power, and Bluetooth connectivity. The B2 connects via a 3.5mm cable or Bluetooth only. The volume knob is easy to reach from the front of the B2, and even it oozes of quality. The Bluetooth connectivity range is greatly increased thanks to an included antenna that screws into the connector on the back.

Overall, the design of the B2 is really great: better than any Bluetooth speaker I've ever tested, thanks in part to the customizable front and wood cabinet.

Function

Not only does Audioengine pride itself on great-looking products, but perhaps more importantly, they aim to provide users with high fidelity audio traditionally used in professional markets. That being said, the B2 sounds absolutely fantastic through both the included 3.5mm headphone jack and Bluetooth.



The B2 uses the [aptX Bluetooth codec](#) that extends the range of Bluetooth connectivity, as well as provides CD-like quality. I've been able to stream music at consistent quality without dropping the Bluetooth signal at the other end of my house (about 50 feet away).



The sound profile of the B2 is best described as slightly warm with present bass. Overall, the B2 excels at bass-heavy genres such as electronic music, but also shines during indie and folk music. Moreover, it sounds great with jazz, and can be a *little* muddy at high volume with complex mids (think alternative rock). At low volume, however, the B2 presents incredibly clear music that rivals or beats other Bluetooth speakers I've reviewed.

The B2 can get uncomfortably loud if you're in the same room with it at maximum volume. However, the built-in amplifier makes playing music at house parties or other get-togethers really great.

Summary

The B2 is everything I want in a modern day speaker in 2015: attractive design, truly great Bluetooth functionality, and a soundstage that bests it's competitors. The customizable look allows users to match their particular setup, and the built-in amplifier ensures that you'll be able to hear the B2 from great distances. You can purchase the Audioengine B2 on their [website](#) for a retail price of \$299.