



AMPLIFIERS, REVIEWS

# AVID Accent integrated amplifier review



January 10, 2025 By **ANDREW SIMPSON**

As we recently heard in our [in-depth interview](#) with company founder and head honcho Conrad Mas, Huntingdon based AVID HiFi doesn't give a hoot about churning out gear to jump on the latest consumer bandwagon. Quite the opposite in fact, as each product is carefully crafted to give its customers maximum shelf life with minimal risk of obsolescence.

That's why the brand has remained proudly analogue-only over its thirty year lifetime, with much of its early kit still being fully operational and relevant in today's market, while leaving the digital hifi products to the digital specialists. And it's a business model that works – borne out by having turntables, amps and speakers that are decades, rather than years in production.



*Marking the entry point into AVID's amp line-up, the Accent's model name is subtly etched into the amp's lid*

At £4,500, The Accent on test here is where the brand's amplifier range begins, being the most affordable of three integrated models. Above it the price doubles for the [Integra](#) at £9,300 followed by the [Sigsum](#) model at £16,000, bringing with them internal improvements and increased power at each step up, trickled down from the brand's hi-end [Celsus and Reference](#) pre/power models, which are priced well into six figures.

And by having substantial price gaps between each model, AVID isn't playing the usual game of competing with itself or tempting customers with small tweaks for the next model up. Instead it's about a limited number of products at clearly defined price points for substantial, rather than incremental upgrades.



*Continuing the branding aesthetic, AVID's iconic 'A' is satisfyingly stamped into the amp's faceplate, highlighting the brand's in-house engineering expertise*

Like the rest of AVID's line-up, each element of the Accent is engineered in house at the company's Cambridgeshire factory, which means you're paying a premium for a hand-built British approach, rather than mass produced fodder from overseas. And for many (including me), who expect their amps to last decades, this is worth every penny.

## Hidden treasures

But before we get to its build quality, let's firstly focus on what's under the Accent's hood, which starts with the all important power supply. And for this model, AVID has specified a custom made substantial 617VA mains transformer with an equally substantial 40,000uF reservoir of smoothing capacitance.



Add to this in-house through hole mil-spec circuit boards that are hand populated, a fully discrete, high current, output stage sporting two sets of high-power bipolar transistors per side and an ALPS volume potentiometer, and you start to get the picture that while the Accent may not be as spec laden as some digitally equipped rivals, what it does boast majors on quality.



Analogue only inputs include four sets of line-level and two phono for MM (far left) and MC equipped turntables all via RCA sockets, with adjustable gain via dip-switches (pale blue square, bottom left)

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And this being AVID, while the amp may be analogue only it majors on making sure the inputs it does offer are well served, including by nestling an award winning [Pellar](#) phono stage within the Accent's internals.

This means that instead of the usual entry level phono stage add-on unit that many integrations host these days just to tick the vinyl box, you get almost a grand's worth of superior phono preamp as part of the Accent package. And this brings with it all of the Pellar's features, including three gain settings for moving-magnet (MM), high and low output moving-coil (MC) cartridges at 48, 60, and 70dB respectively.

And for MC pick-ups there's also adjustable input resistance on offer via a second set of dedicated inputs, with 500Ω loading plugs supplied as standard, and with other values available from AVID dealers.



*Dedicated headphone output is a worthwhile inclusion that underlines the Accent's integrated nature*

Completing the feature list is a dedicated internal Class A headphone amp boasting discrete components and fed from its own power supply.

## **Factory fresh**

Lifting the Accent from its box reveals that its 14.5kg heft feels substantial, but manageable, unlike many mid-to-high end integrations that can require phoning a friend for some extra muscle to shift it. It also reveals that this amp is made by real engineers, not marketing teams working to a budget.

The design language is consistent throughout, I love for example how the signature grippable knurled design of the front panel rotary dials match the design of its four chunky feet (while also having thick rubber o-rings pressed into their undersides to aid grip and vibration damping). And speaking of the amp's underside, that's where the Accent's on/off switch lives. While this may seem a strange location, in reality it's easy to reach being near the front at the middle (around an inch in). It's a better location than the rear panel which many manufacturers now seem to favour (I find reaching around the back panels of my Rotel and Primare gear to switch them on a real pain by comparison).



*A window into the Accent's build quality, showing its bespoke speaker sockets and oversized metal feet for superior stability*

Having visited AVID's factory and seen first hand not just the specialist engineering that it brings to its own products, but also what it makes for other flagship industries including F1, the military and automotive, it's no surprise that the Accent bears the same hallmarks of build quality that are apparent across all of its products.



*Front panel controls are limited to volume, input selection, mute and mono mode. On/off switch? That's hidden underneath...*

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## Performance

Before we get into sound quality, as a seasoned reviewer and hifi consumer I love how this amp looks and operates – and that’s worth saying right off the bat. Why? Because put simply – it looks and works like an amp should and nothing more.

While you may be thinking “of course it does” and that I’ve lost it, let me explain what I mean by this, as many modern amps in this price bracket now operate in a manner somewhere between an amp, smart TV and iPad, but without the refinement of the three combined thanks to a variety of colour displays, apps, remote options and front panel buttons delving into all manner of sub menus.

These can be hard work to decipher based on who’s designed it and what compromises had to be factored in along the way. But with the Accent it’s oh so easy (easier in fact than my second system’s [Alchemist](#) of thirty years ago). So if you’re after a user-experience that is just about choosing your input and volume level to get the music flowing, then the AVID is a delight to use.



*While only offering volume level and mute operation, the Accent’s solid aluminium remote is as well made as the amp, meaning it will last just as long, unlike many rivals’ plastic inclusions.*

Partnering kit is Primare NP30/[NP5 Prisma MK2](#) digital gear, SME 20/2 deck and [AVID Nexus tonearm](#), and Dynaudio Evoke 50 loudspeakers, with [Nordost cabling](#) throughout.

Moving from a Rotel Michi X5 amp and its arc welding 350W into 8 ohms, the Accent’s 70W may seem meagre in principle, but in practice it’s nothing of the sort. With their 4 ohm impedance and 87dB sensitivity, it takes an amp with serious grip to get my Dynaudio Evoke 50 properly moving, and the AVID does not disappoint.

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With music that really drives a listening room such as Sharon Van Etten's *Southern Life (What It Must Be Like)* at 24-bit/96kHz via Qobuz and the AVID is in full control of my 30sqm room with a soundstage as wide as it is deep, and just as richly populated – all without needing its wick wound past a quarter of its range – that's quite impressive.

Make no mistake, this is a powerful sounding amp in real world terms, more so than many rivals boasting twice the claimed power, which have run out of steam trying to control my room in a similar manner. It also times superbly with a lovely sense of energy and verve. On tracks such as Sacred Skin's *Surrender* (24-bit/48kHz) and Dark Tropics' *I Bet You Can* (16-bit/44kHz) it's a foot tapping/head nodding performance that makes you want to just keep listening for hours, which is what quality hifi is all about.



*Accent's looks are refreshingly more in the industrial than smartphone age, with screwheads and solid metal all on show, and this amp looks all the better for it in my opinion*

And these attributes are brought perhaps more to the fore via the Accent's vinyl inputs. With a MoFi MasterTracker MM pick-up aboard the Nexus arm, Ásgeir Trausti's excellent 2012 album *Dýrð í dauðapögn* is delivered with a sense of mesmerising rhythm via the AVID. Bass sounds punchy and warm, yet reassuringly well articulated. On tracks such as *Leyndarmál* for example the combination of how it's able to punch hard while remaining tight without sounding sterile is a nod to how well this amp has been voiced for accuracy, combined with sheer musical enjoyment.

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The MoFi is an excellent allrounder of a cartridge and one of the best sounding MM's under a grand in my opinion, that does everything well. That said on some material it can also be a bit of a bruiser and sensing the Accent's phono stage is more than capable of playing host to something a little more refined, I reach for AVID's own [Ionic](#) low output MC (that's worthy of its own review, coming soon). At £2,500 it's a significant step up, which the Accent relishes.

Hearing how the Accent breathers new life into longstanding favourite LPs including Edie Brickell & New Bohemians' *Shooting Rubber Bands At The Stars* highlights what a class recording this is, and how the Accent can get so much out of it. The album's unashamedly pop-rich textures and arrangements are delivered with layers of detail, dynamic swings and delicacy that makes it such a rewarding listen. And this underlines the appeal of this amp, it just makes you want to rediscover and enjoy you music collection for days rather than hours on end, which is ultimately what quality hifi is all about.

## In summary

Deceptively simple or perhaps just the right ingredients done well, AVID's Accent consciously forgoes the bells and whistles of many rivals to instead focus on being an absolute honey of an analogue amplifier.

I can think of loads of amps with more features to offer for under five grand. I can think of few that sound this good. A true thoroughbred amp that I could easily live with everyday which comes highly recommended without any hesitation.



## Ideal for...

*Analogue enthusiasts that place build and sound quality above lavish feature sets for longterm enjoyment*

## Consider...

*Limited spec sheet (ie no balanced inputs) means many rivals at the price may offer more on paper, but will they sound like an AVID?*



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## Specifications

**Product:** Class AB integrated amplifier with remote control

**Analogue inputs (line-level):** Four sets of single ended (RCA)

**Phono inputs:** Moving-magnet and moving-coil

**Phono inputs resistance:** 47K and custom (with 500Ω loading plugs supplied)

**Phono input capacitance:** 100pF

**Phono gain settings:** 48/60/70dB

**Outputs:** One set of loudspeaker 4mm multi-way sockets, 6.35mm headphone jack

**Headphone output:** 9V (RMS)

**Headphone range:** 20 — 600Ω

**Power output:** 70W (8Ω)

**Harmonic distortion (claimed):** 0.03% (80% power, 8Ω 1KHz)

**Dimensions (WDH):** 470 x 410 x 110mm

**Weight:** 14.5kg

**Available finishes:** Silver, black

## Price

£4,500

## Where to buy

**AVID HiFi**

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