

AURAL PLEASURE

Clarion shows us how a few choice car audio units from their impressive HX-Series can transform a barebones Subaru Impreza into a rolling symphonic orchestra.



Now, for the majority of us who are not blessed with 12 speakers and branded sound systems that come right out of the factory, did you know that you won't need to spend your life savings on in-car entertainment just to get something that remotely sounds good?

In fact the audio reproduction is as good as those you hear at sound competitions. The good people at Clarion showed us how any car, regardless of make and model can achieve a stunningly good sound quality without all the bells and whistles.

Our demo car was the Impreza WRX, which of course doesn't rank too highly on comfort in the first place and makes a huge racket whenever it's at full throttle. Clarion's going to have it's work cut out for them – or so we thought.

Selected for this review is the Clarion CX501A headunit, Clarion HX-Series SRD1700R 6.5" Coaxial Speakers and powering them would be a Clarion HX-Series ADP4000 4-Channel Amplifier. Bass will be covered in a later issue.

Clarion HX-Series ADP4000 4-Channel Amplifier and 2X 6.5" Coaxial SRD1700R Speakers

Each amplifier and speaker from Clarion is a culmination of the unrivaled expertise the Japanese electronics maker holds in the field of car audio. That's why many ICE-enthusiasts rely on Clarion to deliver the power, presence and quality that they demand.



Clarion's dynamic HX-Series ADP4000 Amplifier supplies the power to drive a wide variety of in-car entertainment systems. Whether your main interest is ultimate quality, extreme looks, or system

expansion and flexibility, you are sure to find the ideal solution. It features 100W RMS of true power, high sensitivity for maximum SPL, Long excursion suspension and oversized magnet for clean and deep bass, 20mm soft dome and Neodymium magnet tweeter for clarity and fidelity and adjustable tweeter inclination for perfect smooth frequency response

Clarion's full line of speakers will let you



customize your car's soundscape with the exact specs and looks you need. The HX-Series 6.5" Coaxial Speakers has a direct and undeniable effect on the sound you ultimately hear. The speakers offers a broad selection, so you can choose the type of design, power handling capabilities and acoustic characteristics that best suits your taste and automobile.

Verdict: With all three units replacing the stock Subaru ones, the first time I was invited to sample the sound quality and clarity, I was literally blown away. The music was clear and crisp without being too sharp. Even at higher levels, distortion was nil. The team was impressed with the massive improvements in the WRX's audio output thanks to Clarion!

Clarion CX501A Head Unit

The CX501A is a direct replacement for Subaru's stock double-DIN unit. This receiver features a nice, clean design that's not only easy on the eyes, it's also easy to use and install. It has multiple capabilities like USB port, iPod/iPhone connectivity and extra features but most importantly, it sounds great.

One of the neat tricks of this Clarion

system is a nice treat as well: it automatically synchs to your cell phone as soon as you start the engine. If instant and constant communication is your thing then you're set. Could life get any more convenient? It's illegal to be holding a cell phone to your ear while driving. The Clarion car stereo eliminates that with built-in Bluetooth. If you simply have to be on the phone constantly, whether for business or pleasure, the sound quality of calls through the car speakers is pretty great too.

From a purely aesthetic standpoint, it's a pretty good looking piece of equipment.

You can match the faceplate to the interior of your ride with 728 different illumination settings. I like the giant volume control knob that lives large in the center of the console for easy twiddling.

All in all, this is a quality, user friendly device that will have you up to speed with the latest in music and telecommunications technology. You don't have to be a techie to take advantage of the basic components, and additions and upgrades don't get too complicated either. For design, efficiency and ease, there's little to find fault with in the CX501. ✱

