



OUTLAW AUDIO LFM-1

"Deep Bass for Shallow Pockets"



For some companies, certain product announcements seem so inevitable excited consumers wail, "What took so long?" For example, people have long been asking, "Why can't I buy vanilla Oreos®?" (Or is that just me?) A slightly more relevant question might be, "Why doesn't Outlaw, a company renowned for attention to sound quality and bass management, offer a subwoofer?" Well, like the folks at Nabisco, the cowboys at Outlaw have heard your cries. As I down my new Golden Oreos®, allow me to introduce the LFM-1 subwoofer from Outlaw Audio. Using an Internet-only storefront, Outlaw designs and sells high quality, high-value amplifiers, surround sound processors and receivers direct to consumers. They do not manufacture the gear themselves, so overhead is minimal, which results in better prices. With design help from sub guru Dr. Poh Ser Hsu, the LFM-1 sub is Outlaw's first foray into the speaker market. I suspect it will not be their last.

Unique Features

Looking like a set piece from *2001*, the LFM-1 is a large, black monolith with an inset Plexiglas panel on top. It looks rather unassuming in a dark corner and doesn't draw unwanted attention. Unlike children, a good subwoofer should be heard but not seen. (Yes dear, of course I'm kidding.) Black, heavy-duty carpet spikes keep the sub off the floor. If you're not a carpet lover, Outlaw was kind enough to include four metal discs that the spikes can rest in to prevent scratches to your wood floors.

The carpet spikes serve a dual purpose. The heart and soul of the LFM-1 is a downward-firing, 12-inch long throw woofer. The underside of this sub is also home to its dual, downward-firing ports. Some claim that a downward-firing port minimizes port "whistling," but as I have never been able to duplicate such noise on a properly calibrated sub, I'm not sure if we're gaining anything here. The spikes give the subwoofer the necessary clearance for optimum performance, so be sure to use them.

The back panel offers a fair amount of connection and customization options. As expected, you have a choice of using a Sub In



▲ The Outlaw Audio LFM-1 downward-firing subwoofer features a 12-inch long throw and inset Plexiglas panel on top.

line-level input or the high-level speaker inputs. I suspect most installations use the gold-plated line-level input. The LFM-1 provides a continuously variable crossover knob, ranging from 40-180Hz, with a switch to bypass this internal crossover. Two more switches are available for controlling the sub's Auto On feature and setting the phase. Phase can be set to 0 or 180; it would have been nice to see a continuously variable phase knob, but having the switch at all in this price bracket is welcome enough.

Installation/Setup/Ease of Use

Getting the 58-pound LFM-1 downstairs was quite a treat. Outlaw packs the unit very carefully and provides instructions so one person can install it without much ordeal. I put the Outlaw in my Wharfedale PC-12DX's place and made my line-level connection using a Monster THX subwoofer cable.


After a quick white noise test using *Digital Video Essentials*, the LFM-1 was ready to roll. I set the sub's volume knob at "4" and used my Atlantic Technology P2000 processor to fine-tune the sub's level. Crossover from my Canton Ergo speaker ensemble was set at 80Hz.

Final Take

Before running through my favorite bass tests, I first did the "Buzz and Rattle Test" on *Digital*

Video Essentials. The LFM-1 claims a frequency response of 25-180Hz (+/- 2dB), but I detected audible subwoofer volume as low as 20Hz. When bypassing the internal crossover, the LFM-1 seemed to hold on a while longer than necessary. However, when using the sub's internal crossover, output from the LFM-1 seemed to roll off much closer to the selected frequency.

After the boring stuff, I moved on to one of my favorite bass tests, *Blade*. This fun vampire flick has tons of low-frequency bass that will tax even the most well-built woofer. I immediately skipped to a bass-rich explosion. More impressive than my Wharfedale, the LFM-1 gave me a solid kick in the gut as the debris began to fall. The opening logo of *Mask of Zorro*, which goes as low as 25Hz, explored the LFM-1's lower limits. Though not as gut-wrenching as my (twice as expensive) SVS PC-Ultra, the LFM-1 exhibited excellent mid-bass and tremendous punch for the money. Watching the rest of *Zorro*, bass was detailed and never muddy.

Outlaw has another winner on its hands. Well-built, attractive and capable of deep, detailed bass, the LFM-1 is an outright bargain at \$579. Since Outlaw offers two for \$999, I suggest you stack them in a corner with a slab of white marble between them. You'll have made yourself an Outlaw Oreo®. Now, if you could only buy a white subwoofer... 

— By Greg Robinson



Outlaw Audio LFM-1

325-watt BASH® amplifier

12-inch long throw woofer

Adjustable crossover (40Hz-180Hz)

Variable phase (0 or 180)

Freq Response: 25Hz-180Hz (+/- 2dB)

Weight: 58 lbs.

Price: \$579

Outlaw Audio

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