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**Boston Acoustics Solo XT**

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**Stuff says**

Thanks to its no nonsense, sturdy build and a meaty yet mature sound, this Boston radio rocks



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<< Previous 1 Next >>

- **Pros** Feels like a premium radio. Simple, effective interface. Impressive sound
- **Cons** Needs decent signal reception. Prominent bass

Call us spoilt but we found ourselves slightly underwhelmed at the sight of Boston Acoustic latest DAB and FM radio. Yep, the Solo XT is just a radio – no iPod dock, no internet radio, no wireless streaming. Just a radio.

Still, there is undoubtedly a market for such a product and Boston Acoustics has solid pedigree for making smart, sweet-sounding speakers, so we have high hopes.

**Effective in the bedroom**

Sure enough, the Solo XT is a well-made, solid piece of kit. The main unit is available in a choice of two finishes and there's a choice of four coloured grilles, so there's more than a nod to style, too. And if you're really fussy about placement, this radio can sit vertically or horizontally.

Alongside the DAB and FM tuners there are plenty of clock, alarm, sleep and snooze settings – the entire circular trim is a slappable snooze button, in fact – so the Solo XT is perfectly at home in the bedroom. Elsewhere, there are 3.5mm-minijack audio input and outputs, plus a headphone connection for covert listening.

The LCD is clear and easy to read, with the three key control knobs providing efficient guides to the radio's menus as we run through the DAB station scan.

**Strong signal required**

One thing we did notice is that the Solo XT doesn't match the best in terms of tuner strength. The class-leading Pure Evoke-2 XT is capable of picking up strong signals in the most unlikely surroundings, which this radio can't match. But provided you have decent radio reception, this shouldn't be a big issue.

Up and running and the mono speaker design is instantly impressive. While stereo sound would be nice for completeness, we really don't think it's an issue here. The Boston does a good job of proving this fact, delivering full-bodied, open and detailed music.

Listening to the DAB tuner vocals are pleasantly airy, while music has bags of bass weight coupled with decent levels of clarity.

If anything, bass can be a little over-bearing, but it's a slight criticism given how lightweight rival radios can sound by comparison.

**Fine FM**

Switch to FM and we're again greeted by solid, dynamic sound alongside clear, detailed voices, as delivered by Mark Radcliffe and Liza Tarbuck during a spot of afternoon listening on Radio 2.

All told, we find ourselves really rather enamoured with this Boston Acoustics Solo XT radio, and thanks to sterling sound performance, impressive build and decent functionality, it's more than a feeling. Sorry.

<< Previous 1 Next >>



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