



live it love it outdoor sound systems

## sounds of summer

Seán van Doornum says the latest sound systems allow you to bring all the comforts of your loungeroom to your outdoor area, even inside your pool.

Summer entertaining over the festive season means it's time to clean out the barbecue and set up the umbrella – but what about the musical entertainment? You could just bring out the old portable stereo on an extension cord, but that's hardly satisfactory. Installing an outdoor sound system makes sense and the good news is that it doesn't have to bust your budget (but if you want the works, get set for some big numbers).

### internal link-ups

Leading garden designer Jim Fogarty recommends looking at your outdoor

sound requirements when you are buying a new sound system for your indoor area. "Incorporate some outdoor speakers mounted under eaves or near your outdoor living zone that are part of the system inside your house. These can be installed at the same time as your internal set-up and you simply select the outdoor speakers when you're entertaining in the garden," says Jim.

### expert advice

If the task of installing an outdoor system seems daunting, consider asking a sound expert to pay a visit to your house and give you a quote on the

options. You might be pleasantly surprised and solve all your problems in one hit. We spoke to sound expert Vince Di Bartolo of Pacific Hi-Fi in Sydney. Vince says: "People often think that a professionally installed system is out of their reach, when it's really quite simple. The key is it's all in the planning."

Professionally installed outdoor systems start at around \$1500 to \$2000. Investing in expert advice can save you a lot of bother and ensure years of seamless operation, so it's a great investment. Some systems can even be installed in rented homes and easily moved to your next place.





## SOUND & SHADE

How about an awning that provides shade and shelter AND can belt out your favourite tunes? It's not cheap, but what a great way to impress your friends! The Markilux 6000 awning is fitted with Concertronic technology and starts from \$6775. Now, \$5440 of that is for the awning and the technology is an additional \$1335. They do however have a promotion running until the end of December that if you buy a 6000 awning with spotlights you get the Concertronic technology free. Markilux, phone 1300 654 469 or visit [www.markilux.com.au](http://www.markilux.com.au)

## wired systems

Whether you do it DIY or call in the professionals one of the first things to consider is whether you want your system to be wired or wireless.

A wired system consists of speakers that are hooked up via cables to a main audio system such as the stereo in the living room. A wired system reduces interference and ensures sound quality as good as your living room sound.

Things to consider with this kind of installation are accessibility to a power source, the best way to run cables considering the size of the area, and ensuring that the cables themselves are rated for outdoor use.

## wireless options

Wireless speakers on the other hand don't require cabling from a main source. Instead, the signal is received via either infrared connection, which requires a direct line of sight to the main source up to 10m, or via radio

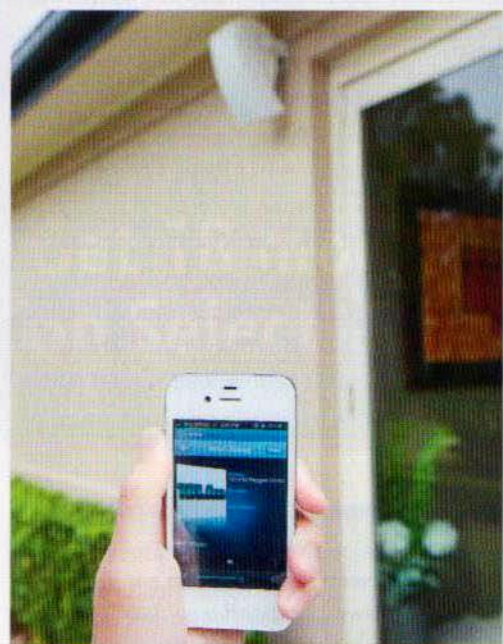
frequency, so speakers can be placed anywhere within about 100m.

Although wireless speakers might sound more easy to live with due to the lack of bothersome cables, one setback of this type of speaker is that because they aren't connected to a main power source they run on batteries.

Another thing to consider is whether you want them to be integrated into your indoor sound system or to run independently, which will require a separate amplifier, which is an additional cost.

## speakers

Speakers are vitally important and they will determine how big your sound is going to be, or how small. Some people just want quiet background music so they can enjoy the conversations – and so their speaker needs will be modest. On the other hand, others like to turn it up when the crowd feels like dancing or celebrating – and for these party people good quality speakers are essential.



**controllers** The Bose Outdoor Environmental Speakers, Model 251, \$699 a pair, resist the elements well and can be controlled from your Smartphone, android or tablet; find out more at [www.bose.com.au](http://www.bose.com.au) Pacific Hi-Fi offer a \$250 in-home consultation to explain your options.



## live it love it technology



**weatherproof** The Bose Free Space 51 Environmental Speakers (above) can be installed in or on the ground and can withstand snow, ice and salt water. These are classed as a 'passive speaker', ie, they only work when connected via cable to an amplifier. Check them out at [www.bose.com.au](http://www.bose.com.au)

### CABLE-FREE

If you want to go for a cable-free speaker, the OutCast wireless, multi-directional speaker, \$1450 from Soundcast, is worth a look. It boasts a broadcast range of up to 100m and can receive interference-free transmission through walls and floors. It is portable and comes with an inbuilt, rechargeable battery. Check them out at [www.leisuretech.com.au](http://www.leisuretech.com.au)



**rock music** Fully rated for outdoor use, TruAudio Rock Speakers come in 6-inch, \$720 a pair, and 8-inch, \$499 each, at [www.leisuretech.com.au](http://www.leisuretech.com.au)

### swim songs

If you're one of those people that must listen to music at all times, even while underwater, then have a look at the amazing Oceanears SP8 from Underwater Sound, [www.underwatersound.com.au](http://www.underwatersound.com.au) The Oceanears SP8 is installed at the time of construction so that you can enjoy your summer sounds even while practising your synchronised swimming routine! It's not cheap at \$9800 but emits 400 watts of underwater enjoyment and will neither rust or corrode as it has been

designed to withstand both chlorine and saltwater pools. The speakers are passive and non-magnetic too, so there's no risk of electrical interference.

### cheaper options

JB Hi-Fi has DIY indoor/outdoor wireless speakers ranging from \$68-\$210. Check models for weather-proof standards; online, visit [www.jbhifionline.com.au](http://www.jbhifionline.com.au) AV Australia has DIY and professional outdoor speakers ranging from \$77 to \$1000, available for delivery nationally. Phone them on 1800 818 360 or visit the website at [www.avaustralia.com.au](http://www.avaustralia.com.au)

### CONTACTS

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