



Search:

Today on CNET | **Reviews** | News | Downloads | Tips & Tricks | CNET TV | Compare Prices

[Cell phones](#) | [Desktops](#) | [Digital cameras](#) | [Laptops](#) | [MP3 players](#) | [TVs](#) | [All Categories](#)

advertisement

SEPARATE SPEAKERS



BUYING ADVICE

[Find all home-audio reviews](#)

[Editors' top home-audio products](#)

[Surround-sound buying guide](#)

[Home entertainment videos](#)

PRODUCT FINDER

[By price](#)

[By manufacturer](#)

[By product type](#)

[See all home audio products](#)

Zvox 325

[REVIEW](#) | [USER OPINIONS](#) | [COMPARE](#) | [SHOP](#) | [TIPS & TRICKS](#)

CNET video and photos

CNET editors' review

Very good
7.7
out of 10

The good: sound; solid TV/PC/iPod; remote volume

The bad: No digital inputs for some buyers.

The bottom line: Capable of competing with the Zvox 315 and other speakers for movies.

[Read editors' review below](#)

Buying choices

for **Zvox 325** from only

This product is currently not available at our online merchants.

[Find Zvox 325 from our merchants](#)

[Email me when this product is available](#)



Special sponsor stores

[Bose](#)

[Sonos](#)

CNET editors' review

Reviewed by: Steve Guttenberg

Edited by: Matthew Moskovciak

Reviewed on 10/10/06 Release date: 6/15/06

Over the past few years, the market for single-speaker music and home-theater systems has grown by leaps and bounds, and it now includes offerings from Yamaha, Cambridge SoundWorks, and Polk. One of the first speakers to catch our fancy, the [Zvox 315](#), is still available and priced at \$199, which makes it a remarkable value. The Zvox 325 reviewed here is similar but offers more power, a bigger internal subwoofer, and a remote control--which makes it a little easier to hook

up and use. It retails for \$350.

The Zvox 325 measures 5 inches high and 17 inches wide and deep, which is about the size of a typical five-disc carousel-style DVD changer. The solidly constructed medium-density fiberboard cabinet feels strong enough to easily support the weight of a modest-size flat screen or direct view TV--although we'd probably recommend against it. The 325 comes in suedelike black or silver finishes. Peering through its curved, perforated metal grille, we spotted three 3.25-inch full-range drivers, and inside the cabinet is a 4-by-6-inch subwoofer.

The 325 was designed to hook up to the headphone jack on, say, an iPod, or the stereo audio outputs of your TV, PC, radio, CD player, and so on. There are three total inputs; the rear panel houses two minijacks, including one dedicated input and one that can either be used as an input or an output to a powered subwoofer (Zvox includes all of the necessary cables to hook up standard red-and-white audio outputs to its minijacks). A third minijack input on the front is available for quick hookup to an iPod, an MP3 player, or a game console. The front panel input, when active, automatically mutes the rear panel inputs, so it doesn't lend itself to keeping components permanently connected.

The little 3.4-by-1.6-inch remote has just three buttons: volume up, volume down, and mute. It ramps the volume up and down a little too quickly for us, but we eventually got the hang of it. The previous Zvox model, the 315, didn't come with a remote, so it's nice to be able to make adjustments from the couch--especially the emergency mute. Other controls on the unit itself include a master power switch and a woofer volume control for the internal woofer. The large wall-wart power supply looks like it means business.

After we set it up in our listening room, the Zvox 325 spread the sound of the phantom left and right "speakers" two to three feet to the sides when we were watching DVDs. The believability of the illusion was superior to those of most single-speaker virtual surround systems we've tested. Surround effects weren't evident from the rear of the room but were projected toward us. All in all, that's impressive performance from a single speaker. Dialogue was natural sounding, without the hollow processing effects we sometimes experience with other virtual surround speakers. The PhaseCue knob on the front panel is adjustable and controls the surround effect--turned all the way down, you just hear the sound of the Zvox 325's three speakers without any processing, but as you turn the PhaseCue up, the apparent soundstage width increases.

Listening to Pat Metheny's brand-new *The Way Up-Live* DVD in the dark, you'd be hard-pressed to guess all that sound was coming from one speaker. Metheny's unique fusion of acoustic and electric jazz had ample dynamic impact; his nimble guitar textures were vivid, and Steve Rodby's bass was tautly defined. The music is best enjoyed at a healthy volume, and we discovered the Zvox 325 can definitely play loud enough to fill a moderately sized room. As with almost every virtual surround speaker we've tested, the surround is at its best only for listeners seated directly in line with the speaker. Move over to the right or left, and the soundstage collapses into the speaker.

Next we hammered the Zvox 325 with *The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift* DVD, and marveled at the stamina of the speaker. The whine of high-rpm "rice rocket" cars weren't as audibly powerful as we would experience from a separates-based system, but the Zvox 325 never distorted or broke the spell of the film. And the bass? As far as single-speaker systems go, it's bigger and all around more powerful than any of the other systems we've heard, including the far more expensive Yamaha YSP-series speakers. That said, the Zvox 325 won't fool you into thinking there's a subwoofer lurking in the corner of your room.

Primal Scream's *Riot Squad Blues* CD blasts off with a Rolling Stones-influenced rocker, "Country Girl." The Zvox 325 kicked pretty hard for just one speaker, although the music sounded noticeably smaller and less expansive than it does over a stereo music or home-theater system. The performance was definitely serviceable--just not as impressive as the Zvox 325 sounded with DVDs.

The Zvox 325 can generate a big sound from a single-box surround speaker system, but if you can accommodate two boxes, the [Sharp SD-SP10](#) virtual surround home-theater system might be an even better alternative for the same price as the Zvox 325 (they're both \$350). The SD-SP10 is a two-part speaker/subwoofer system and features Dolby Virtual Speaker technology used in conjunction with Dolby Digital, DTS, and Dolby Pro Logic II [surround processing](#), along with six inputs (three stereo RCA analog inputs, and three digital audio inputs--two opticals and one coaxial). For DVDs, the SD-SP10's subwoofer will exceed the bass capabilities of the Zvox's, and the Sharp's CD sound was also above par. We didn't have the Sharp on hand for direct comparison, so we can't say for sure, but it's at least right up there with the Zvox 325.

People who looked at this product also looked at

[Sony PlayStation 3 \(60GB\)](#)

[Sharp SD-SP10](#)

[Motorola Krzr K1m \(Verizon Wireless\)](#)

[2007 Mercedes-Benz E550](#)

[T-Mobile Dash \(a.k.a. HTC Excalibur\)](#)

[Thundering Home Theatre](#)

Small spheres shaking up the big boys. Discreet Pro 5.1 System.

www.soundimage.com.au

[Speaker-of-the-Year](#)

The Award-Winning Speakers Everyone's Raving About.

roundsound.com

[Bose Speakers Australia](#)

Latest Bose stock, Quality stock Buy on ebay and save!

www-ebay.com.au

[Awesome bass speakers](#)

Acme Low B speakers Built in the USA. Now in Australia.

acmebass.com.au

[Speaker Review Reviews](#)

Speaker News and Reviews T3.co.uk Reviews Gadgets You Want!

www.t3.co.uk

▼ advertisement

[Dell Home PCs](#)

[Dell](#) • [Home](#) • [Systems](#)