

Kali Audio LP-6 2nd Wave £185 each

As Kali revisits its nearfield monitor, **Simon Fellows** finds a near-perfect balance of performance and price

KEY FEATURES AMP CLASS: D HF POWER: 40W LF POWER: 40W TOTAL POWER: 80W HF DRIVER: 1" Textile Dome LF DRIVER: 6.5" Optimized Paper FREQUENCY RESPONSE (-10 DB): 39 Hz - 25 kHz FREQUENCY RANGE (±3 DB): 47 Hz - 21 kHz MAX SPL: 115 dB ENCLOSURE: Front Ported LF HEIGHT: 14.125" (35.9 cm) WIDTH: 8.75" (22.2 cm) DEPTH: 10.25" (26 cm) WEIGHT: 16 lbs (7 kg)





THE PROS & CONS



Uplift in sound quality with no uplift in price

Lower self-noise than the previous version, and more accurate too. Transparent, characterless sound is perfect for mixing on a budget

Versatile placement. Front port and boundary EQ settings enable the LP-6 to be positioned almost anywhere you like



Finish is good for the money but not premium. However, it's well built

DIP switches can be fiddly, but setting the boundary EQ is a one-off job

No matching white sub available for the white LP-6

The first gen LP-6 was easy on the ears yet light on the pocket, making it hard to imagine how Kali's engineers could improve on it without a substantial uplift in price. Well, they did it, the LP-6 2nd Wave boasts some notable upgrades, for below \$199/£199 per unit.

For those not familiar with the original, the LP-6 is a powered, nearfield monitor that's just as at home in a bedroom studio as it is in a multi-channel, immersive setup. It delivers 80W total power via a class D amp, a 1" tweeter and a 6.5" driver. Notable improvements this time around include a 12dB reduction in self-noise, a thinner paper woofer for faster transient response, and a redesigned amp that Kali says enables more robust DSP for smoother, more accurate high frequency tuning.

The development team chose not to mess with the existing 1-inch tweeter, nor the high output, low distortion, dual-layer voice coil. The front port, shaped like a grin, is still there too, smiling generously. Overall, with this iteration, Kali has kept the good stuff intact, while upgrading choice components to increase accuracy and lower noise.

The test unit I have been sent is finished in bright white with a black woofer cone. A more traditional black-on-black finish is also available, which is probably the better choice if you're going to pair them with Kali's 'any colour you like provided it's black' WS-6.2 Sub.

The bulk of the enclosure is made from medium density fibreboard (MDF), wrapped neatly in subtly textured vinyl. The front, save the drivers, is a big slab of plastic and there's a metal backplate securely screwed to the rear. The LP-6 looks tidy, well-made and attractive but judged on appearance alone it's no premium monitor – let's just say the product design team at Focal are unlikely to be choking on their croissants anytime soon. Which is fine, because the LP-6 is unashamedly a budget monitor that ships with an affordable price tag.

Setup, however, is a first-rate experience. First, the LP-6 features a variety of inputs – TRS, XLR and RCA – which is an absolute godsend if, like me, you own a drawer full of cables, but never the right one. Second, and more important, that front port enables close placement to a back wall, a common scenario in most small studios.

Kali has programmed the LP-6 with eight boundary EQ options,

enabling you to compensate for installation on a desk with stands, tight against a back wall, 20"/50cm from a back wall and so on. These EQ settings, together with those for high and low frequency trim, can easily be selected by setting an external array of dip switches.

My test pair were remarkably low on self-noise – you really can work up close to these monitors. Similarly, forward-facing ports often get a bad rap for introducing air turbulence noise but I didn't experience this or marked bass compression. The LP-6's response curve is pretty flat, with a slight dip at 700-900Hz, which is why I heard little character, just accurate, transparent tone. Exactly what I look for in mixing. **FM**

FM VERDICT

9.5

A great choice for mixing on a budget, the LP-6 is a super monitor that's impressively quiet, accurate and characterless