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Home Theater Receiver: What It Can Do For Your Home Theater

With so many common components like the LCD flat panel TV and a surround sound home audio system, it can sometimes be confusing when additional equipment such as an A/V receiver is needed to tie home theater equipment together. A good A/V receiver is essential to having a good home theater system since it is literally the piece of equipment that serves as the command center for the entire system and gets all of the audio and video components working together in sync.

The functionality of an A/V receiver relies on everything being connected together properly. Once you've properly set up your receiver, home theater problems will generally vanish. In order to make sure that you can connect your various home theater components to your A/V receiver properly, here is some basic information on how the receivers work and what sort of components can be connected to one.

Function of an A/V Receiver

An A/V receiver is what could be considered the "command center" of your home theater system. This means that it receives input from some of your home theater devices, organizes that input, and sends it as output to other devices that are attached to your home theater system. This allows you to use your home audio system with surround sound in conjunction with your HD-DVD or Blu-Ray player and your LCD flat panel TV, all while controlling only a single home theater component. An A/V receiver sorts through all of the audio and visual signals that are sent by your devices, organizing them so that the appropriate output devices receive only the signals that they need and eliminating the mass of wires that can be required to try and manually connect all of these components without the use of a central receiver.

Perhaps more important is that A/V receivers generally work as a digital amplifier for your audio system. This means that you'll be able to watch movies, play games, and listen to music in digital surround sound. To further improve your listening pleasure, many modern A/V receivers have built-in wireless service or USB ports so that you can stream music wirelessly from your home computer or plug in an external hard drive so that you can enjoy saved music and movies in their digital format without having to burn them to a CD or DVD.

Home Theater Components that Attach to an A/V Receiver

A variety of home theater components can be attached to an A/V receiver. In addition to your television, DVD player, and advanced disc formats such as HD-DVD and Blu-Ray players, you can include a stereo CD player, satellite television receivers, a digital video recorder (DVR) or similar device, and in many cases some older components such as an analog record player. Popular gaming systems such as the Nintendo Wii, the Sony PS3, and the X-Box 360 can also be connected to your receiver with ease so that you can enjoy surround sound to enhance your gaming experience. If your computer is nearby to your home audio system then you can attach the sound outputs to the receiver as well so as to take advantage of your existing surround sound system instead of having to rely on smaller computer speakers.

Using Your A/V Receiver

Once you're ready to make use of your A/V receiver, setting it up is relatively easy. Using standard A/V cables, connect the outputs on your DVD player, stereo, satellite decoder, DVR, or similar components to the corresponding inputs on the back of your receiver. From there you simply need to attach your TV and speakers to the receiver's outputs. Once everything has been properly plugged in and set up, you should be able to control many if not all of the functions of your home theater system directly from your A/V receiver.

If you are uncertain about installing your home theater A/V receiver and the corresponding components yourself, consult a professional to make the job simpler. They can get you on your way to enjoying your new home theater system in a hurry.

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