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# Professional Installation Or Sweat Equity?

One of the biggest debates that arises when purchasing a decent surround sound system or home theater is whether or not to handle the installation yourself. For that question the answer is completely relative to the level of complexity of your system and your understanding of physics and electronics. Many of the box kits on the market today are simple to install and could be done fairly quickly (in the course of a couple of hours or an afternoon) even by rank amateurs such as myself.

If you are purchasing a massive home theater or surround sound system that has very rigorous requirements in order to guarantee the type of sound you paid good money to receive it might be in your best interest to make the investment of a professional installation. It is important to remember that home theater kits come in all shapes, sizes, and price ranges. The fact that you could easily install a \$500-\$2,000 kit doesn't mean that a home theater that costs in excess of \$20,000 is as simple of a matter to install (though at that price I firmly believe it should be self installing). The point is if you've paid that kind of money for a home theater or surround sound system you want to make sure that you are absolutely getting your money's worth on the listening end. A professional installation is one way to make sure of that.

Installation is expensive in some cases as everything that has the word professional in front of it. One thing you can do in order to curtail that cost to some degree is shop around and compare prices, you might find one retailer that is willing to throw in free installation in order to make the sale. If the cost of professional installation makes up the difference between the lowest offer elsewhere go for it, you will have saved money and still managed the professional installation that truly is in your best interest.

Another thing you will want to do is find out whether or not self-installation might nullify any warranties. There are occasions where this is the case and you do not want to risk your warranty on a \$20,000 surround sound speaker system in order to save a couple of hundred dollars on installation up front. There is a lot that can be said over the power of saving money, however, there are some risks that simply aren't worth it. For me, this is one of those risks. There is simply too much that could go wrong to operate without a warranty.

While there is some degree of satisfaction that goes along with doing things for yourself there are times when the process is nothing more than an exercise in futility. If you must install yourself (and some of us simply can't resist the urge) then you should take care from the very beginning to closely follow all instructions for installation and operation in order to get the best possible results. The problem is that too many of us never bother reading the instructions until we are stuck and at that point it is sometimes way along in the process to have to start completely over-trust me, I've been there on this one.

If you are one of many people around the world who has purchased a box set of surround sound speakers or a home theater kit you should find that the installation process is simple and straightforward and shouldn't require professional expertise in order to accomplish. Consider yourselves lucky in this and get to work. Pretty soon you will be enjoying theater quality sound from your surround sound system whether you are listening to music, movies, or the latest game. Whether you choose professional installation or not I wish you the best of luck building your new surround sound system and many hours of happy listening to whatever is on the deck for today.

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