

Long arguments have raged over whether high frequency or low frequency reproduction in car audio systems is more important. FOUR MASTERS are not drawn into such discussions as for them and most other serious music fans, all frequencies carry equal importance. For them, if the artist recorded it in the first place, it must play an important part in the enjoyment of the music and therefore, heaven and earth must be moved in order to reproduce it.



However, all systems in the real world will include some compromise and depending on your budget, such compromise may require music lovers to make difficult choices. In order to do this of course, it is necessary to have an appreciation of what frequency range each instrument is capable of reproducing. For instance, if you prefer heavy bass and choose to spend a larger portion of your

budget ensuring you hear the full richness of a double bass, or bass synthesiser then it may be that you can do so only by sacrificing the ringing sustain of a triangle or cymbal or the pure tone of a flute or high strings.

The table below is produced as a guide to both the main frequency of a selection of instruments and the incidental overtones or harmonic frequencies, which gives each

instrument its unique character or timbre.

But, middle and high frequencies are not only about the ability to hear and identify an instrument. This important area of the audio spectrum also contains positional information known as the 'sound stage', vital for the authentic reproduction of acoustic and orchestral music in particular.

Lovers of live orchestral music will want to hear the first violins on their left and Cellos to their right they will also want to experience depth and therefore to hear the flutes playing from behind the Viola's for instance. These elements are also extremely important when listening to authentically recorded live Jazz, acoustic folk and much rock pop and electronic music, which reveals astonishing hidden depths when listened to on a good system as opposed to a poorly balanced pair of speakers with limited frequency response and dynamic range.

Every element of an audio system will affect the attributes talked about above but none quite so dramatically as the choice of middle and high frequency speakers. This is why FOUR MASTERS advocate building a system piece-meal from the speakers back towards the source unit if you are working on a very limited budget. Even upgrading your factory fitted speakers to a pair of aftermarket ones will make a substantial difference to your listening experience. Two caveats however, always make sure your source unit produces enough power to drive the speakers you choose and always have your doors treated with sound deadening material to save time and effort later.

