



# ROTEL RSX-1056



**ROTEL RSX-1056**  
**PRICE** £1195  
**SUPPLIER** B&W Loudspeakers Ltd  
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**WEBSITE** www.rotel.com

The idea of a 'minimalist' AV receiver might seem a contradiction in terms, but by concentrating on rugged, high quality amplification rather than superfluous surround modes, Rotel's new RSX-1056 is putting all its eggs in the audiophile basket. Sharing the same chassis design and fascia as its predecessor, the RSX-1055, even though real changes are afoot under the bonnet.

Key changes include the upgrade from Crystal's 300-series to the latest 400-series processor which handles all 6.1 channel decode modes, including Dolby EX, PLIIx, DTS ES and Neo:6. Video up-conversion from composite and S-video to its component video outputs is also added. Meanwhile, the five power amplifiers are culled from the older RSX-1055 but benefit from many of the enhancements developed for the RA-1062 integrated amplifier.

**ON THE BENCH**

As expected, the RSX-1056 demolishes its 5x75W specification with a real-world

5x100W/8ohm, a dynamic output of 170W and a maximum current of 18.6A. This is a very speaker-tolerant design. Otherwise, as the Dolby response graph illustrates, the RSX-1056 is unusual, although not unreasonable, in offering a reduced +5dB boost to the LFE channel (purple trace).

For strict comparison with almost all other AV receivers, the sub channel should be increased by another 5dB to +10dB to account for the reduced -10dB mastering of Dolby LFE tracks. You should also avoid one particular speaker configuration (large front/centre, small surrounds and no sub), for here distortion jumps to 4.5%

**LIGHTS OUT**

If you are looking to be transported to the heart of the action, then the RSX-1056 will get you closer than any amplifier at this price. During the opening action of *Master and Commander*, we were aloft and amidstships, listening to the shouts of men appearing from the mist, feeling the impact of those volleys and flinching as the shards and splinters flew past.

Never caught napping, the amplifier seems to have bags of headroom, conveying subtle detail while handling the grandest of impacts. The short chase sequence with the Trainman in *Matrix Revolutions* had a real sense of pace and urgency, the reach of the trombone and

thrill of the strings finding us perched on the edge of the sofa. The metallic ricochet of the bullets rang across the room just as the pressure wave ahead of the subway train was almost palpable.

Switching to DVD-A, Donald Fagen's vocals sounded very crisp and purposeful through *Godwhacker* while the backing guitar was strummed with a convincing energy. For the first and only time we had a entire chorus of backing singers, individually identifiable but performing as a rhythmic whole. Similarly, there was now a real weight and solidity to Crow's *Globe Sessions*, building a foundation on which the lilt to her voice, the swell of the guitar and ring of the muted triangle could develop to potent effect.

Confident, but not to the point of arrogance, the RSX-1056 takes up where the RSX-1055 left off. Ease of operation, tolerance of tricky speakers and a rip-roaring sound come as standard.

As the only receiver in our test equipped with five rather than seven power amplifiers, the RSX-1056 might seem at a disadvantage. Fortunately, it's not, because all EX and ES modes are supported through the eight-channel pre-amp outputs. Just add an RB-1070 stereo power amp to complete a six or 7.1 channel system.

**AVTech's Recommended Settings for a 5.1 channel system**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Main Menu</li> <li>&gt; Sub Setup</li> <li>&gt; Contour</li> <li>&gt; Speaker</li> <li>&gt; Test Tone</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Crossover: 80Hz</li> <li>&gt; Dolby Digital: 0dB</li> <li>&gt; Speaker: All</li> <li>&gt; Defeat: On</li> <li>&gt; Front: Large</li> <li>&gt; Center: Large</li> <li>&gt; Surround: Large</li> <li>&gt; Centre Back: None</li> <li>&gt; Subwoofer: Yes</li> <li>&gt; Advanced</li> <li>&gt; Left/Center/Right/R Surr/L Surr: 0dB</li> <li>&gt; Subwoofer: +5dB</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Speaker: Front</li> <li>&gt; Crossover: 80Hz</li> <li>&gt; Dolby: Master</li> </ul> |
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