

Slinkylinks cables

Slinkylinks cables, as reviewed:
RS175 interconnect, \$700. SSP1300
3 metre single wire speaker cable,
\$790. IBW1200 2 metre bi-wire
speaker cable, \$1095

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Testing cables can be a right pain in butt so why did I put my hand up to try the new Slinkylinks range? Well, I've been a Slinkylinks user for a few years now and I rate the cable highly, so when I heard there were improvements to be had I was interested.

Take the time to know me

The original Slinkylinks sounded great (see our earlier review for a back-grounder) so what's changed? In short it's the connections. The standard range of interconnects has the original Eichmann Bullet Plug which has gold-plated tellurium copper pins. On the new RS range the bullet plugs, also by Eichmann, have 99.99% silver pins, which are pre-treated with Caig Preservit. With the speaker cables

it's a similar story with SLs having gone from gold plated copper banana pins to a proprietary silver pin which due to

its size and shape will end up being attached via the bare-wire connection on your binding posts.

Just a note here about silver. There's a rumour going around that silver cables sound bright. Just like most rumours this one is untrue. I'm sure that some systems that have silver cables do sound bright, just as there are systems with copper cabling that sound bright but you can't lay it all at the feet of the cable. As in most things in hi-fi it's not the technology that can be the problem but the implementation. Slinkylinks do not have an implementation problem.

Don't mess up my happy home

The courier delivered a box to my house which meant that it was all on, cables everywhere. I'm not a fan of repeated transitory A/B testing with hi-fi so I installed the new interconnect and bi-wire speaker cables and then spent time getting used to the sound. The main thing that I noticed initially was an increase in purpose to the music, as if the notes were happening more for a reason. Anyhow, I left it like that for a good six weeks or so and then came the time to put the original cables back in the system.

To be honest I was dreading changing back and then trying to hear (imagine?) some differences but this wasn't a close run thing in the context of my system (Meridian G08, Krell KAV400xi, Magneplaner 1.6QR). The new cables brought more clarity, an airier top end, greater textural detail at the bottom end, increased separation, slightly expanded soundstage, while maintaining musicality.

The real surprise for me was that when I removed the bi-wire speaker cables and replaced them with the single wire options the sound improved again. Slight changes it must be said, but I heard an increase in pace, dynamics and soundstage. (Hint - try both bi and single wiring to see what suits your system best.)

I never asked for a heavenly promise

I don't ascribe magical powers to cables and I don't think that a good cable adds bass, or treble or whatever - they just let more through. A lot of people spend too much time trying to



“fix” component or room problems by repeatedly changing the dangly stuff. Alas I don't think that Slinkylinks will help anybody with those problems, as they don't really have much of a sonic signature that I can detect.

The more Slinkylinks cabling I use (interconnects, speaker cable and now internal wiring of my crossover) the more transparent my system sounds so the more I hear of my gear. This means that good recordings sound great, great recordings sound stunning, but you'll know when a bad one comes your way. The music will still flow but don't expect Slinkylinks to cover up hardware or software problems.

This fools advice

What does all this mean in the long run? When I initially went from some considerably more expensive copper cabling to the original Slinkylinks I was happiness filled and I haven't worried about cables since. The small refinements in the Slinkylinks range has indeed brought more performance for a price that is considerably less than you can pay for cutting edge cabling. If I were starting out with Slinkylinks I'd have no hesitation in going for the new range. As for upgrading, the new cables just bring more of what you already like with your current Slinkylinks so try them and see, you too may well be impressed. To my ears these are high performing cables at a good price. Buy local and enjoy.—*Craig Fenemor*

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