

Klipsch The Sixes | Active Bookshelf Speakers | ₹89,800

Old-school charm with modern-day tricks

FOR Solid build with classic looks, clean and loud sound

AGAINST No Wi-Fi streaming option, blooms at higher volumes

Retro is cool in more ways than one. The best movies, music and indeed some of the most iconic loudspeakers were made back in the 60s and 70s. The Heritage Series from Klipsch tries to capture the essence of this era with a healthy dose of modernity by adding wireless functionality to it. Thus is born, the Heritage Wireless series! If you are aware of the Klipsch line of products, you'd know that their horn-based loudspeaker designs bear a certain look that is unmistakable for any other brand. Even though the Sixes are meant to be shoved in a corner bookshelf or mounted on stands, they resemble the larger, Heritage series in look and feel.

But what really makes them special is the inclusion of on-board power. There isn't a dearth of active speakers out there but setting your eyes on something that's draped in a vintage cloth grille and copper embellishments along with a toggle

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switch for power is love at first sight! The substantial weight and bulk of the speakers comes from what it is behind the heavy grille though. A 6.5in woofer mated to a 1in titanium tweeter which if of course, fires through a Tractrix horn which is a Klipsch trademark. Ported at the back, you will have to be a bit mindful of how close you place it to the wall, but with its wide dispersion, thanks to the horn, it projects far and wide. The horn also makes the design a lot more efficient by boosting the output from the tweeter mechanically and acoustically so the amplifier has to work a lot less, in turn giving you higher SPL capability without distortion. The strips of copper at the bottom add a striking reminder of the house colours and even though the bass driver on the Sixes isn't the usual copper-spun units.

Around the back is where you realise how full-featured this speaker is. In effect, it is an entire hi-fi system barring the source! The 100-watt per channel amplifier is custom-made for these drivers and connectivity from one speaker to another is just a single 4-conductor cable. You only need a single power cable to power the system, easing the requirement for plug points too. USB, RCA (phono pre-amp), 3.5mm and optical

connections ensure that almost everyone is taken care of. Yes, even vinyl disciples. If you're tired of wired, there's also Bluetooth streaming but strangely, no support for WiFi streaming like Apple AirPlay or DTS Play-Fi. Thankfully there's a full-featured remote that will make life easier if you're streaming from a laptop and not a smartphone.

True to Klipsch's Heritage, the high SPL promise remains true, but here, it's combined with a sense of refinement too. The built-in DAC handles signals up to 192kHz/24bit (96/24 on optical) and we started with John Mayer's latest single *New Light* in Hi-Res. The programmed drum beats and polished recording comes across with pristine clarity and a taut, punchy sound that instantly grabs your attention. Turning up the volume doesn't make it any harsher either and the 100watt amplifier does a fine job of controlling the 6.5in bass driver. Sitting about 6ft away from the

speakers and having them 4ft apart did the trick of creating a wide soundstage without having a hole in the centre. Within a couple of minutes of setting up the system, people around the listening room started gathering, asking questions about the speakers, which given the quantum of hi-fi gear we review, was truly a compliment for the Klipsch's. Moving on to something more electronic, we blasted Sofi Tukker's *That's it (I'm Crazy)* and went a step further and simply used an Apple Music file which was a 256kps AAC file. This might be blasphemy in audiophile land but turns out the Sixes didn't care at all. They pumped out the bass in copious amounts but never was it



Toggle switch and copper clad knobs add to the charm

unsettled or lagging in speed or definition. Highs remained crisp but never threatened to take your head off with too much sharpness or brittleness. Delhi-based Peter Cat Recording Co. does ballroom jazz really well and on *Portrait of a Time*, the fast-paced opening with drums and stand-up bass is reproduced with fine rhythm and drive, making foot-taps inevitable. The shimmer in the ride cymbal along with the space of the recording venue itself came through with as much detail as we've ever heard from a bookshelf speaker without ever getting too bright to engage tone controls.

With Hi-Res audio files, the Sixes were just like a freight train, stopping at no genre. From Patricia Barber's smoky vocal excursions to Daft Punk's electro fuzz, the Sixes proved to be entertaining and involving, irrespective of recording quality or origin. The bass, even for a ported design is clean, well defined and tuneful, all hallmarks of a good sealed-design, so clearly Klipsch has got its homework right on this one. For those who want more volume and dig even deeper into the lowest octave in a larger room, there is a subwoofer pre-out too. It's hard to imagine any kind of music genre or listening taste that would need more bass but it's a great inclusion nonetheless.

The Sixes add an aura of old-world charm on your desk or in your room without sounding old-school. It can tango with a turntable if you wish to but we stuck to digital (wired and wireless) and were absolutely smitten by the authority of the Klipsch. It is true that they really bloom only above a certain SPL so you have to give it a little more power than a tube-based system. Its build quality, sound quality and feature set make it an irresistible purchase if you're looking for an easy fix hi-fi system. It has almost no downsides besides being a bit too eager to be played out loud.

WHAT HI-FI? Says

VERDICT A complete stereo system in itself, the Sixes blend look, build and sound quality like few others on the market. Highly recommended!

TECH SPECS

Amplifier power 100W x 2 continuous **Drivers** 1in titanium dome with Tractrix horn, 6.5in woofer **Design** 2-way, ported **Frequency response** 40Hz-20kHz **Max output** 106dB **Inputs** Bluetooth, 3.5mm, RCA analog, USB-B, Optical **Outputs** Subwoofer out **Dimensions** (WHD) 8.6x16.7x11in **Weight** 8kgs (each)



A bass port and all the connectivity on the rear panel means you'll have to leave a few inches off the wall.