

I'm not a bot



I've never owned McIntosh gear, but it seems to command high prices. My question is: does it truly sound better or is it just a prestige thing? I'm sure it's excellent equipment, but why the hefty price tag? Is it nostalgia-driven or something more? It's not just about the name and pride of ownership; it's about buying gear that you can rely on for 30 years down the road. McIntosh Laboratory has maintained its quality since 1949, with gear made to the highest standards of craftsmanship, quality, and sonics. They're the only hi-fi company that can claim this distinction. I own a 1979 era MAC 1900 receiver that still works perfectly after 43 years of daily use. It's been serviced once since then and has had two owners. Many other pieces would struggle to meet or exceed specifications under such heavy usage. Is McIntosh worth it? Yes, and more. Since switching to McIntosh, I've spent less on stereo upgrades because the gear is so reliable. In broadcasting work, I use McIntosh equipment for its dependable nature and easy-to-listen-to sound. Some might argue that other brands, like Fisher or Marantz, can produce great gear without the hefty price tag. But McIntosh's reputation and prestige drive its value. Getting Mac gear at a discount on eBay, Audiogon, or Craigslist is relatively easy and fun. I recently purchased my second model 1700 receiver at almost half the price it usually sells for. My MC300 amp has increased in value significantly since I bought it. It's true that McIntosh equipment can be pricey, but it often comes with excellent documentation on performance from the manufacturer themselves. Additionally, end-of-year sales and trade-ins can significantly reduce the cost of new equipment. However, as far as value is concerned, it ultimately boils down to personal preference and individual listening experiences. The author has their own preferences, mentioning a fondness for Marantz and Kenwood in addition to McIntosh. The main challenge with determining whether McIntosh gear is "worth it" lies in the fact that this is an extremely subjective decision. However, there are certain benefits to choosing McIntosh, including their commitment to meeting or exceeding specifications without fine print or exceptions. The author shares a personal anecdote about needing a part for a 1979 McIntosh amplifier and receiving exceptional service from the factory. While other brands like Krell, Theta, Spectral, Pathos, Manley, etc., offer similar quality of sound, McIntosh is known for its reliability, support, and aesthetic appeal. The author suggests that when purchasing high-end equipment, build quality and support can be just as important as sound quality. Ultimately, the decision to invest in McIntosh gear or something else comes down to personal taste and budget. In a hands-on experience, the author recently acquired an old solid-state McIntosh 250 amplifier, which performed surprisingly well compared to their usual setup. The amp's reliability and stability impressed them enough that they plan on adding a McIntosh tuner/preamp to the system for its wife's use. While McIntosh gear may not be considered the "ultimate," it offers reliability, excellent sound, retains its value well, and looks great - making it a viable option, though still a matter of personal preference. The debate surrounding McIntosh gear's value continues to be a contentious issue among audiophiles. One user expressed their skepticism about the hefty prices of McIntosh equipment, attributing it to name recognition rather than actual sound quality improvements. They questioned whether it was nostalgia or simply a matter of prestige driving these high prices. However, another enthusiast countered this view by highlighting various factors contributing to McIntosh's premium status. These include exceptional customer service, robust build quality, aesthetic appeal, and impressive drive capabilities. The user also touched upon the idea that there is often a specific mindset associated with McIntosh gear, much like other luxury brands such as Krell, Boulder, Spectral, Chord, and others. A personal anecdote from this enthusiast sheds light on their own experience with McIntosh equipment. They shared how using certain pieces, including an MC250 amplifier and a C28 preamplifier, significantly improved the sound quality over previous setups. This led them to appreciate the value of McIntosh gear in their audio journey. The conversation also delved into the resale value of McIntosh equipment, noting that it retains its value well compared to other brands. The enthusiast suggested exploring refurbished options or purchasing new at a discount during end-of-year sales and trade-ins. Ultimately, the discussion centered around whether McIntosh gear is worth the price tag. While some might view it as frivolous spending, others see it as an investment in their passion for high-quality audio. I mean, I think I've spent enough cash on booze alone to cover the cost of Masterlo's system, and I'm pretty sure I could even fund the Greatful Dead's setup if I wanted to. But, I guess there is some prestige that comes with having high-end gear like McIntosh, right? In my experience, though, McIntosh has its own unique sound that you just can't replicate with other brands. I've only owned solid-state Macs myself, but I've had the chance to check out tubed Macs too, and let me tell you - they're a whole different beast. They have that perfect balance of tube solid-state sound, it's like they've managed to combine the best of both worlds. I'm not saying that McIntosh is inherently better than every other brand, though. It's more about the quality and craftsmanship that goes into their gear. Take Harley Davidson and McIntosh for example - both are made in the US with super high standards of quality, and they're both known for their top-notch customer service. And let's be real, companies like these are a dying breed in today's throwaway culture. They're a reminder of when things were built to last, not just for a quick profit. My two cents is that you get what you pay for, and if you want the best, you've got to be willing to shell out the cash. That being said, I think it's totally possible to get 95% of the McIntosh sound and quality at half the price - it all depends on how much you're willing to spend on that extra 5%. For me personally, though, the cost just isn't worth it. Carl You could say that about anything vintage or new. Compare McIntosh to what is their actual equals, you haven't done your homework either. Another vintage maybe? Check out Marantz 8B vs MC225 and MC240. Mac has mystique, like Cuban cigars. In each case, similar -- or better -- quality is available at significantly less cost. That shouldn't bother any Mac owner, should it? I'd be interested in knowing what I can grab out there of the same quality for significantly less -- let us in on the secret. I've listened to hours of music at various bases and VFWs where Mac was compared to high-level vintage gear from overseas using similar source and transducers. The Mac stuff wasn't discernibly better, let alone appreciably better. Japanese equipment is available at half the price of Mac stuff. That's my focus group. Limited? Perhaps. Factual? Absolutely. To each their own. I don't think you'll find good Japanese stuff cheaper these days, though, not even 1/2 the price -- The Marantz that I sold after buying my first Mac paid for it entirely. I'd make that trade over and over again. It's about personal preference, but if you're looking for quality with a price tag, Mac isn't ideal. Considering some newer equipment is pricey too, Mac gear is worth its prices. If I had to choose between vintage Mac and other newer TOTL stuff of the same price range, I'd go for Mac any day! Back in the day, I had a Mac C26 preamp. It was beautiful, but I couldn't love it, so I sold it. Mac gear isn't my thing, and I'm willing to pay double the price for 5% improvement when upgrading. That's the nature of the hobby. Don't put on blinders and only choose equipment that is Mac. Have fun with it - you can also listen to music on a clock radio. The Harley comparison hit me as funny. As someone who rides, I've got experience with Japanese bikes being their competition. Would I buy an HD? No, not just because it was better, but if it was a vintage bike that didn't look like everyone else's. I've got a bike that outperforms many high-end bikes at half the price, trust me, been there done it... You should see the looks on people's faces when they pull up beside me. Did I get a better deal than them? It depends, my bike gives me similar performance, and in some areas, even more reliability. However, in other areas, my bike is under-engineered compared to theirs. I've spent a lot of money fixing those issues. Like with an amp, you'd do the same thing. When it comes to name brands, people who look down on others because of what they own aren't the kind of people I like being around. You'll find that with any brand loyal people. They often have a need to "belong" and tend to put more miles on their bikes than others. I've been riding since I was a kid, whereas some only started when their kids grew up. It's all personal preference; sometimes money spent is just as good as money saved. You just need to figure out what matters most to you... I find the questions about the Harley/Mac comparison to be a waste of time. Both hold their value well, but I hope it's easier to get repair parts for Mac than for an old Harley. If you're considering buying a Mac, I'd take over your Kenwood 700s set. For me, it was the amplifier Power Guard circuit that prevents clipping and tweeter blowouts on my Thiel speakers. It was a tipping point for me. Coupled with quality build and sound, Macs were a good fit. And I haven't had to replace a tweeter in two years! I have power guard too...my ear to the sound, and my hand on the volume control. For myself, the best alternative brand to McIntosh is Briston. Both have superb customer service and parts support, excellent sound, conservative engineering, and superb durability. Many high-end pieces wouldn't stand up to recording or broadcast studio use without repairs. Briston can do that all day and drive difficult loads. Both are easy to listen to long periods of time. Both also sound superb on most music and recordings. I have some studio installations powered by Briston. Some staff even buy Bristons themselves. I've had more than my share of good Cuban cigars, but they're not any finer than what's available from the "free" islands. In fact, I suspect that much of the talent, knowledge, and resources have fled to where the real money is. You seem only interested in prices...obviously haven't done your homework. You could be trolling. There are quite a few Marantz and Sansui vintage SS units that are worth more than McIntosh. Shop for new hi-end Marantz and see what they sell quality for. Given article text here just depends on where your priorities and preferences lie. Those with a preference for good sound quality will pay top dollar for it, while those who are more budget-conscious may look for alternatives. For myself, the best alternative brand to McIntosh is Briston. Both offer superb customer service and parts support, excellent sound, conservative engineering, and superb durability in common. Many high-end pieces wouldn't stand up to recording or broadcast studio use without mucho repairs. Briston can handle difficult loads and are easy to listen to for long periods of time. Sound quality is also superb on most music and recordings. I've seen some of my studio installations powered by Bristons, and they're a great investment. Briston's staff even end up buying the equipment themselves - it's clear they know what they're doing. While Bristons aren't cheap, with prices starting at around \$4k for an amp and another \$3k or so for a preamp, you can find good deals on the used market. I've picked up some great amps for a fraction of the price. I'm looking at getting a new amplifier, but I don't want to break the bank with an outrageous price tag. Most of my initial investment should be covered by the product's value retention over time. As for sound quality, maybe Briston is the way to go, but I'm not sure - it's hard to judge. What I do know is that their products hold their value and look sleek. However, if you're worried about maintenance and repairs, McIntosh might be a better option since they offer direct access to parts and support. I personally prefer McIntosh due to their reliability, aesthetics, and stable market worth. But hey, what do I know? On the used market, Briston amps are an absolute steal - I got my 4b NRB for \$1K with eight years of warranty left. It's one of the best amps I've ever had. Regarding Briston's 20-year warranty, it seems to be transferable and a significant selling point for their products. However, I'm not sure if all Briston models come with this warranty or if the circuit is simple enough for easy repairs after the initial warranty period expires. I appreciate a variety of brands for different reasons and have mostly stuck with vintage McIntosh equipment due to its exceptional build quality and unique sound characteristics. Recently, I acquired a direct-coupled MC-502 amplifier that pairs perfectly with my MX-117 Tuner-Preamp and Yamaha NS-20T speakers. While Briston isn't the cheapest option, it's worth considering in the long run since their products tend to appreciate over time and offer excellent support from the manufacturer. It's great to know that Briston's 20-year warranty extends to subsequent owners, making it a godsend for those buying used equipment. McIntosh Equipment: A Brand Worth Consideration for Audio Enthusiasts Many high-end audio enthusiasts swear by McIntosh equipment, citing its superior sound quality, conservative engineering, and superb durability. While some may prefer alternatives like Briston, Krell, or Levinson, McIntosh's reputation for building exceptional products has earned it a loyal following. The brand's commitment to customer support and parts availability also sets it apart from competitors. For those who value high-performance audio equipment, McIntosh is definitely worth considering. However, some enthusiasts question the brand's pricing strategy, citing that "you get what you pay for." Others may prefer more affordable options, such as Briston or Krell, which offer similar sound quality at a lower price point. Nevertheless, McIntosh's reputation and build quality make it an attractive option for those seeking exceptional audio equipment. In the world of audio equipment, there are alternatives that can provide top-notch performance without breaking the bank. The owner of the largest retailer/wholesaler in the world has often said that there are plenty of excellent cigars rolled outside of Cuba, and similarly, he believes that some non-Cuban cigars outshine today's Cuban ones. This statement holds true for audio equipment as well. When it comes to high-end brands like McIntosh, while they deliver outstanding sound quality, their products might not be the best value for money, especially considering the limited functionality of some of their components. For instance, a \$6,500 music server from McIntosh can only store 750GB, cannot connect to other servers or PCs, and requires music to be burned onto it using a built-in CD player. This is far behind the capabilities offered by devices like Sonos, Slimdevices, Control4, Net Streams, or Roku/Firefly, which provide much more functionality at a lower price point. In terms of alternative brands, Briston stands out for its superb customer service and parts support, excellent sound quality, conservative engineering, and durability. Many high-end audio pieces wouldn't last long in recording or broadcast studio use without needing repairs, but Briston can handle demanding loads with ease. Both McIntosh and Briston offer superb sound quality on most music and recordings, making them viable options for those seeking top-notch performance. Ultimately, whether to choose McIntosh or an alternative brand like Briston depends on individual preferences and priorities. While McIntosh delivers outstanding sound quality, its high price point and limited functionality might not be the best value for everyone. I've had a similar experience with repairing parts for my old Harley-Davidson, compared to finding replacement parts for my Mac equipment. Recently, a friend was complaining about not being able to find the necessary throttle cables for his 2002 Road King at any local H-D dealerships within a 75-mile radius. In contrast, I've been fortunate with getting parts for my 77 FXE Harley-Davidson over the years. When I needed a carburetor rebuild kit or a replacement rubber grommet, the local H-D dealer was always able to provide them quickly, usually within three days. It's great to hear that McIntosh Laboratory has maintained its high standards of quality and craftsmanship since 1949. A fellow enthusiast shared his experience with owning a 1979-era MAC 1900 receiver, which still receives factory support and meets demanding specifications after heavy usage over the years. The reliability and dependability of McIntosh equipment are evident in this individual's account, as he uses it extensively for broadcasting work due to its easy-to-listen-to sound. While other brands may have produced great gear initially but eventually declined in quality, McIntosh has managed to maintain a high level of performance over the years. Ultimately, the decision to invest in McIntosh equipment or any brand depends on individual preferences and needs. However, as this enthusiast suggests, enjoying good music is the most important aspect, regardless of which brand you choose. A fraction of the original price is what most people pay when working with a mid-70s Harman Kardon A-402. It has been well-maintained over its 30+ year lifespan and has had only two minor cleanings and one replacement of some caps, still testing within acceptable ranges. This may not be as high as the '79 Mac receiver's specifications but is probably close to its maximum capabilities. With a total investment of \$500 in repairs over the years, it produces surprisingly good sound quality. Buying a well-regarded brand like McIntosh often comes with added insurance, which can sometimes outweigh the actual audio benefits. For those who cannot afford the premium, doing research and potentially settling for lesser equipment is advisable. Some enthusiasts may still be able to find deals on used gear or have successful negotiations with dealers. The author has had experience with such discounts but has also encountered instances where the offered price was too good to pass up. The value equation in buying stereo equipment can vary depending on whether it's new at MSRP or used at a lower market value. It's amusing how some people view McIntosh equipment as an investment, rather than just a product. The fact that they've managed to charge full MSRP for decades speaks volumes about their marketing efforts and customer loyalty. However, from a purely technical standpoint, it's hard to justify the extra cost. Some users have shared their experiences with switching from mid-range brands like Marantz or Denon to McIntosh processors or receivers. While everyone agrees that McIntosh equipment looks stunning, opinions on sound quality are mixed. A few users claim they can't hear any significant differences, while others praise McIntosh's unique sonic signature. One user even mentioned buying a McIntosh amp for nostalgic reasons, despite not being able to tell the difference in sound quality. Another pointed out that companies like Briston and ATI offer similar build quality at a lower price point, making McIntosh a bit of an extravagance. For most people, the high cost of McIntosh equipment is simply not worth it. However, for those who value aesthetics and status symbols, McIntosh might be the way to go. Some users have even suggested that traditional manufacturers should take a cue from McIntosh's design approach to make their products more visually appealing. Looking at some high-end equipment, sure they work well but are very pricey. If I find a good deal, I might get one for my office to enhance decor and hobbies. However, I'm uncertain whether it will sound better than what's currently in use. It would be interesting to try. The manufacturing company could improve the appearance of their receivers by adding new features. The Anthems took advantage of this with their updated design, which might help stand out from others. They also used auto-transformers at the output, but I think that's a bad idea as it compromises sound quality in speakers with large impedance swings. In today's market, high-end equipment should be compatible with 19" racks to meet current standards. While the amplifiers are great, the processors can often be rebadged from other OEMs, such as Marantz's AVP line. McIntosh products are known for their durability, but technology advances over time, making older models obsolete within a few years. The only reason I'd consider investing in an AVP like this is if aesthetics match my existing equipment. For instance, the one shown seems to be a previous-generation Marantz AVP: to determine its authenticity, it's essential to verify the corresponding model number. In comparison, considering an older MX132 for my office might be a better option since I don't need HDMI support and it looks pleasing. If SQ isn't going to exceed higher-end D&M products, paying for design elements can be acceptable at a used price level. Alternatively, using an existing Sony ES unit in the same setup might yield similar results, making some upgrades unnecessary. Another alternative is opting for a McIntosh pre-amp, such as the C47/49 or C53/C55 models, which would provide solid-state solutions. I have an unusual setup in my office with three speakers, and I often run them in all-channel stereo mode. Two channels are positioned in front of me, while the third one is placed in a corner behind me, creating a nice immersive sound experience. This is why I prefer having a 5-channel receiver or pre-amp for this setup instead of a traditional 2-channel system. I was considering purchasing an older MX132 unit for my office, but it's an older model and doesn't have HDMI capabilities. The main reason I want to get one is its stylish design, which looks very nice in the room. Does anyone know what kind of compatibility issues I might face with this particular unit? The Sony ES receiver I currently use in that room seems to play back audio content just as well as any other high-end system, so it's possible that upgrading to a more expensive system won't make a significant difference in sound quality. It's almost like comparing the looks of different fashion models on the red carpet - aesthetics can be important, but they shouldn't overshadow the actual performance. I recall browsing through high-end AV equipment a few years ago and being drawn to McIntosh products. However, I was deterred by concerns over their manufacturing process and frequent changes in corporate ownership. It's surprising how much importance some people place on the visual appeal of audio equipment, almost as if it's a status symbol. The prices of these high-end systems are certainly steep, but if I were to find a good deal, I might consider purchasing one for my office, not just for its performance but also for the aesthetic value it would bring. It's interesting to think about why some traditional manufacturers haven't focused more on designing visually appealing equipment - perhaps it's because they're prioritizing sound quality over looks. On the other hand, companies like Anthem have taken steps to enhance their products' appearance, which could be a way to differentiate themselves from competitors and push the industry forward. However, this approach might introduce unnecessary complexity that doesn't necessarily translate to improved performance or return on investment. Regarding McIntosh's software development process, it's reported that around 80% of their pre-processor work involves software development. As a relatively smaller company, they may not have the resources or expertise in-house to handle complex coding tasks like C programming. This could be another reason why some people view high-end audio equipment as more about aesthetics than actual performance. In conclusion, while sound quality is crucial for an optimal listening experience, aesthetics can also play a significant role, especially when equipment is visible and becomes part of the room's decor. McIntosh is clinging onto its reputation as an older brand, built on respect and accolades from the 1960s when it competed against other prominent brands like Kenwood and Fischer. Although I used to sell these products during my college days, their inability to invest in in-house research and development alongside having stable corporate ownership ultimately sets them back in today's market. The majority of their pre-processing work is software-driven, but they lack the necessary resources, specifically a substantial team of skilled developers writing C code, which hampers their progress. Interestingly, audio equipment can be likened to high-end fashion, with some speakers being priced exorbitantly due to their elaborate designs, often transforming them into decorative pieces rather than solely functional items.

Is mcintosh the best. Is macna a good brand. Is mcintosh overrated. Is mcintosh audio worth it. Is mcintosh worth it reddit. Is mcintosh worth the money.