

Finite Elemente Cerabase Classic Reference Audio Footer Review

By: Jack Roberts | September 2016



I've used a lot of different vibration isolation devices over the years, probably since mid-seventies. That first device was a slab of synthetic marble from the Discwasher company, on which I placed my turntable. In the ensuing years I've used spikes, footers, granite, isolation platforms and many more. The one thing I can tell you for certain is that they all change the sound. What I can't tell you is why what a hundred-pound amp sits on matters; but it does. So, I wasn't wondering if the Finite Elemente Cerabase Classics would make a difference but what the difference would sound like. That will be my goal in this review, to tell you just that.

Design and Goals

According to the Aaudio Imports website, the Cera technology used in these Finite Elemente Cerabase Classic footers is based on direct coupling for effective transfer of sound-interfering resonance. The resonance transfer is provided by the use of extremely hard, high-tech ceramic balls, combined with precision machined stainless steel. One of the design goals of the footer was to optimize the damping without overdamping the sound.

Setup and Listening

I received four of the Finite Elemente Cerabase Classic footers. They came in a nice wood box, and they were very heavy for their size. They can be adjusted to level a turntable or speakers, but I used them under the Pass Labs XA30.8 amplifier. I put one directly behind the amp's own front feet and two in the same location in the back.

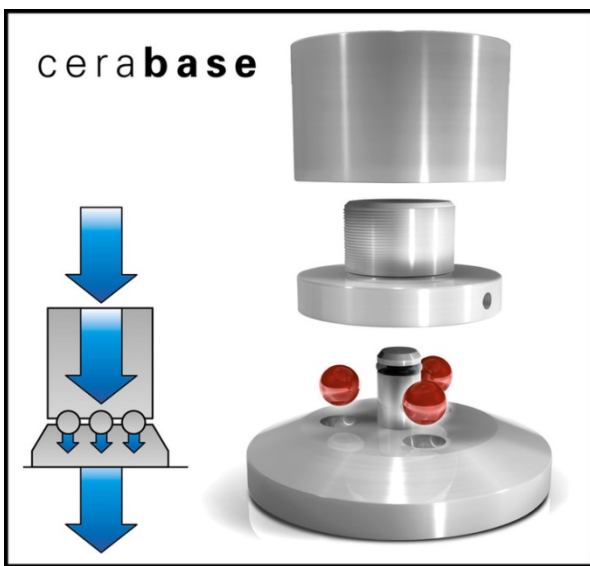


Specifications:

Optimum range of application: 80 - 1,100 pounds of component weight
 Recommended for audio components, speakers and racks
 Stainless steel, hand polished
 Height adjustable, screw on technology
 Includes assembly accessories and packaging

Price: \$820 Set/3 pcs, \$1,060 Set/4 pcs

Unlike most things, footers don't need to break in - at least I don't think anyone claims they do -



but just a little settling in. So, I sat down to listen. It was easy to hear what effect they had on the sound. The differences were discernible and in certain areas it was surprising.

Evaluating things like these footers reminds me why we constantly try so many different things in our hobby. There was no doubt that from the very first LP that the Cerabase footers made a significant difference in focus. Voices locked in, and individual instruments were more easily heard. This increased focus was quite impressive.

The next thing I noticed was the bass. It had more slam, in fact quite a bit more slam. The bass was also quite a bit faster. It wasn't only the bass that was faster, micro-dynamics picked up as well and stood out more than without the footers. The system sounded more detailed, and the imaging was more precise with the Cerabase footers.

Conclusion

I don't pretend to understand why a lot of tweaks work, nor why some of the ones I have tried don't. The sonic effect of the Finite Element Cerabase Classic footers is not difficult to hear. What I have described are the effects they had using them under the Pass Labs XA30.8 in my reference system. If you think your system could benefit from the difference I have described in this review, the Finite Element Cerabase Classic footers might be just what the doctor ordered for your system.