

toneAudio.

The e-journal of analog
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What Are You Listening On?

**CANADIAN
IMPORTS**
THE TETRA 506s

**FUN FUN WITH
MANLEY'S
MAHI MAHI**

**CROSS
POLLINATION**
Two Generations
Reflect Musically

**BE A STAR
WITH
GUITAR HERO**

**New Digital From
ModWright**

**REVIEWS, MUSIC &
SO MUCH MORE**



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In Search of the Ultimate Listening Chair

— Jeff Dorgay

I'll bet you have more than a few sets of great interconnects and power cords, but I'll bet you don't have a great chair. For the guys in the audience, this might be a good bonding experience for your wife or girlfriend. They will never see it coming when you say, "Hey, let's go furniture shopping!" Seriously though, a great chair will not only make your listening environment more stylish, it will eliminate listener fatigue, which will lead to more musical enjoyment! *(continued)*

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I must admit right now, I'm a little snooty when it comes to this kind of thing. Many years ago, I dated a Herman Miller sales rep and while she never acquired a taste for KISS, I really dug all the cool furniture. Now I'm doomed and have yet another spendy thing to be obsessed with and I want to drag you down with me.

I tend to focus on the classics, from the '30s to the '90s, but we also threw one new chair in the mix. There is really only one rule when doing this, don't buy a knockoff chair. While you can get one of the fakes for half price or less, they won't hold up and are consequently worth nothing on the used market. A quick check of EBay revealed the real chairs selling for about 60-80% of their sticker price and some of the really old ones (just like McIntosh tuners...) are going for more than what a new one is worth.

Are you sitting down? Sorry, I couldn't resist that one.

If you are uninitiated to the designer furniture world, don't worry. It's just like music, find something you like and go for it. However, get ready to spend some money. We are talking \$2-4000 big ones for a great chair. The good news is that if you choose wisely, you will still have it 10 years from now (or longer), after many expensive power cords have come and gone. *(continued)*

NAGRA

swiss made
www.nagraaudio.com

I've picked a few of my favorites and you can get any one of these chairs at **Design Within Reach** (www.dwr.com) Fortunately, we have a showroom here in Portland, so they were kind enough to let us mull around and take pictures. If you aren't comfortable buying something like this out of a catalog, they may have a showroom near you, and if you live in a major city, chances are good that Herman Miller, Knoll and the other manufacturers have an office near you. The great thing about shopping with DWR is that they have this stuff in stock and ready to go. Should you have to go right to a Herman Miller or Knoll dealer, be prepared to wait as long as 12 weeks, which is typical in the contract furniture world. (And you thought waiting a week or two for that new amplifier sucked?)

So, as my evil ex-girlfriend used to say, let's go shopping!

EAMES LOUNGE CHAIR AND OTTOMAN \$3125

This is probably the most recognizable piece of designer furniture on Earth and quite possibly the most copied. Originally designed by Charles Eames and his wife Ray in 1956, this is one that will never go out of style. This is the chair I'm buying before there are any more expensive power cords in my studio. If you are feeling really loose with the Master Card, you can pick up the 50th Anniversary Eames Chair that features a Santos Palsander veneer.

What is that you ask? Well, back in the old days, the Eames chair used to use a bit more exotic veneer, which made each chair completely unique. But as HM is a very environmentally friendly company, they switched to walnut veneer quite a while ago, however this made the chairs slightly more uniform. The Santos Palsander veneer is somewhat exotic, but is a harvested wood, so you can sit in the height of coolness and not worry about destroying the rainforests. *(continued)*



Measurements
 H 33" D 33" W 33" Seat H 15" D 20.5" Arm H 20.5"
 Ottoman, H 17.5" W 26" D 21.5"



BARCELONA CHAIR \$3499
MATCHING BARCELONA STOOL \$1654

Designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe for the 1929 International Exhibition in Barcelona, (hence the name) this is another chair that looks like a million bucks in your living room or listening room. A good friend of mine that used to work with John DeLorean at GM in the '60s told me that they had so many of these in the GM design department, they used to use them as saw horses!

For my money, they should have sent DeLorean to jail just for that! But seriously, this is a mega stylish chair that photos do not do justice to. The cushion is hand made from a single Spinneyback hide and feels fantastic. A pair of these together makes a great, albeit expensive love seat that will look fantastic in front of your MAXX 2s.

Available in black or white, avoid the white one like the plague. It gets dirty immediately, and should you decide to make a seating change, no one will buy a used white Barcelona chair. Besides, black goes with everything! *(continued)*

Measurements

H 30" W 29.5" D 30" Seat H 17" Seat W 29.5"
 Stool, H 16" W 24.5" D 22"

Womb Chair and Ottoman

WOMB CHAIR \$2380
MATCHING OTTOMAN \$697

Another Knoll classic, created by Finnish architect and designer Eero Saarinen in 1948, was part of a design challenge to make a chair to curl up in. I can personally vouch for this as I used to fall asleep in my neighbor's Womb Chair all the time. This one does not offer the best positioning to listen to your system in, but it's a great headphone chair! Add a cool table from the DWR catalog or your favorite equipment rack and you can look forward to hours of headphone bliss.

The Womb Chair is available in Crimson or Pumpnickel and is fairly large, so it will require a good amount of space around itself not to feel crowded. The base is multiple layer chrome plating and is very rich. This one would look right at home next to some vintage McIntosh gear.

(continued)



Measurements
H 35.5" W 40" D 34" Seat H 16"
Ottoman, H 16" W 20.5" D 20"

Le Courbusier

**LC2 GRAND COMFORT PETITE
MODEL ARMCHAIR \$2695**



Measurements
H 26.4" W 30" D 27.6"

When they say Petite, they mean it. If you are larger than about 5'10" and weigh more than 200 pounds, you will start to feel cramped in this one, even though it is really gorgeous. These were originally designed to be used on cruise ships in their clubs, hence the compact size. Another design from the '20s, The Le Courbusier chair and sofa have probably been knocked off more than any other. The sofa is about 6k, and looks just like the chair, but with three cushions instead of one.

The height of modern design in its day, you will see this chair in a number of museums around the world as well as being part of the permanent collection in the Museum of Modern Art in NYC. One of my fanatical car collector buddies has a set of these in his listening room with his Bugatti parked behind them! *(continued)*



Bugatti T35 Courtesy of
Mr. Bruce Hannay

The Flight Recliner

FLIGHT RECLINER \$2698

Even if your taste is still more towards the traditional Barcalounger, you can probably use a bit of a style update. The Flight Recliner is a contemporary chair, designed exclusively for DWR in 2005 by Jeffrey Bennett, so this is the only one in the group that you can only purchase there.

The bonus feature here is that it is a recliner, so it can be a hi-fi chair or a TV chair! It doesn't get any better than this and it is available in four leather colors as well as fabric in 2 color choices at \$1998. Unlike your Lexus or favorite preamp, the Flight Recliner's frame and suspension feature a lifetime warranty.

There you have it. We all like to upgrade things, so I respectfully submit these five chairs, as they are my favorites. No matter which way you go, a good chair or couch will really make your listening sessions more enjoyable. Just don't spend too much cash on this stuff, or you won't be able to buy any more power cords! ●



Measurements
H 37.5" W 28" D 29.5-57"
Arm H 22" Seat H 18"