

Audient iD4 Audio Interface £138

Audiophile design on a budget is a tricky goal. **Jon Musgrave** sizes up this popular and newly updated interface

CONTACT WHO: Audient **WEB:** audient.com **KEY FEATURES** I/O: Class A mic preamp 1 JFET instrument input **INSTRUMENT INPUT GAIN RANGE:** 40dB **MIC PREAMP GAIN:** 58dB **MAIN OUTPUT DYNAMIC RANGE:** 125.5dB-A **HEADPHONE OUTPUT DYNAMIC RANGE:** 125.5dB-A **POWER:** Min 0.9mA @ 5V (USB 3.0) **DIMENSIONS:** 133 x 120 x 60 mm **WEIGHT:** 0.62kg



For truly compact audio interfacing on the move, Audient's recent EVO series has much to offer and I was really impressed by the slickness of the design. However, if you're after a more audiophile experience their iD desktop range has always been a good bet. Up for review I have the new iD4, which, alongside its sibling iD14, has been given a mk2 upgrade, and now features better dynamic range, improved signal to noise ratio and a beefed up headphone output.

The iD4 is a 2-in 2-out 24-bit / 96kHz compact desktop design with one rear-mounted mic/line input and one front-mounted instrument input. The mic pre is Audient's long established 8024 Class A circuit and the instrument input is a JFET design. On the back is the 48V phantom switch alongside a pair of ¼" balanced monitor outputs. On the front edge is the instrument input and both ¼" and ⅛" headphone outputs. Both headphone sockets receive the same signal and can be used simultaneously, which is very handy.

On the top panel, in addition to two preamp gain controls, you get hardware monitoring via a simple balance control (Input/DAW) and output level is set via the large push button volume encoder. The push action dims both headphones and main outputs and you can also mute just the speaker outputs using the speaker button. Meanwhile using the speaker button and the iD button together allows you to adjust the left/right balance of the zero latency monitoring. Alone, said iD button activates the encoder mode so you can use the main knob to adjust DAW plugin parameters. Finally, the top panel includes a five-step output meter that temporarily doubles as a level indicator when you adjust one of the controls.

The iD4 mk2 is exclusively USB bus powered, however unlike for its predecessor, connectivity is now via the latest USB-C style port. The iD4 also takes advantage of the higher power supplied via the USB 3.0 protocol to deliver an improved headphone output and provide true 48V phantom power to the mic pre. To that end, a USB 3.0 connection is required, and although I did get the unit to function on a USB 2.0 connection, this is not supported and



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would likely be unreliable. Connection to iOS devices is also possible, though unless you're using a new USB-C equipped iPad Pro you'll need the Camera Connection Kit and a PSU. The iD4 is solidly made with all-metal casework, and with chunky controls and decent connectors, it definitely has a quality feel.

How does it sound? Well we already know the mic pre is very transparent and you've got 58dB of clean quiet gain. But for me it's the instrument input that's the star. The JFET design is quiet and punchy with plenty of headroom and if you do happen to clip the input, the distortion is natural and pleasing.

This mk2 release builds on the iD4's audiophile credentials whilst

keeping things simple and compact. Yes, you'll need a USB 3.0 connection to power it, but this is still a very solid upgrade. **FM**

FM VERDICT

9.0

The iD4 provides a solid uplift on its predecessor and although the feature set is pretty basic, there's quality where it counts

THE PROS & CONS

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Good amount of clean gain from tried and tested Audient preamp

Tasty JFET instrument input

Robust stylish construction

Simple hardware monitoring with panning option

Useful additional encoder features

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Requires USB 3.0 connection for correct operation