



an acoustic space switch that provides some flexibility when placing these monitors near studio walls. As bass frequencies are boosted by proximity to walls, ceilings and surfaces (the Baffle-Step effect), 'Acoustic Space' compensates by offering regular, half-space and quarter-space settings, which in turn offer greater bass reduction

This combination of options doesn't match the flexibility of a system like Tannoy's ActivAssist, yet it's possible to get a good, representative sound from the M1's under most studio conditions.

**Testing...**

These monitors sound very clean, considering their size. The treble is shiny without being coloured, the mid-range solid and dependable without becoming distorted or cluttered, and while the bass will always be a little compromised on a monitor of this size, the speakers don't lack weight.

These probably aren't the only speakers to test your mixes on if you're a sub-bass junkie, but then you probably knew that anyway. Instead, these are monitors to switch on, listen to all day and kind of forget about. And I mean that as a compliment...

**Performance art**

The Alesis M1 520s are good performers. They don't wear you out, they don't give you a false impression of your mix and they do a good job irrespective of the music you're looking to make, and with very few exceptions.

As ever, for a box this size the bass end isn't too expansive and with a frequency response down to only 56Hz, you'll need other reference monitors if you're doing crazy stuff down there. Otherwise though, I'd certainly suggest you try these bad boys if you're looking at monitors around this price point. **FM**

# Alesis M1 Monitors

Competition at the budget end of the active monitor market is hotting up. Can Alesis get a piece of the action? **Jono Buchanan** thinks so

**DETAILS**

**PRICE** £270

**CONTACT**

**Web:** www.alesis.com

**TECH SPEC**

**Woofers:** 5" lightweight, magnetically-shielded  
**Tweeters:** 1/4" silk dome with magnetic shielding  
**Frequency Response:** 56Hz - 20kHz  
**Crossover Frequency:** 2.8kHz  
**Signal-to-Noise Ratio:** >100dB below full output (unweighted)  
**Inputs:** XLR and 1/4" jack  
**Input Sensitivity:** 85mV noise (pink) produces 90dB(A).  
**Dimensions:** 165 x 267 x 197mm  
**Net Weight:** 6.0kg (per side)

**SIT ME, OR** does it seem that every month we're offered more and more for less and less? Whether it's a new soft synth that offers a replica of an analogue monster, or a convolution reverb that accurately captures the world's greatest acoustic spaces for about the same price as a decent box of plonk, we've never had it so good when looking to spend cash on new kit.

The attractive prices are due to the competition in any given area, and the affordable active monitor market is currently undergoing its own renaissance, with several excellent models available for a fraction of what you might have paid two or three years ago. The latest of these are Alesis' M1 Active range, of which the 520s are on test here. The slightly larger 620s are also available with, among other minor improvements, a slightly wider frequency response.

**Connections**

Alesis have provided both XLR and TRS inputs for convenience, so it's just a question of switching on the power button and dialing in some gain on the back panel to get going. Despite their size, these monitors can be cranked to considerable levels, so getting sound across a little bit of distance won't be too much of a problem, if that's what you need.

Next, the inputs round the back. Alesis provide flexibility in the form of cut/boost switches for bass, mid-range and treble. 'Lo' acts as a high-pass filter, with roll-off offered at 56, 80 or 100Hz, the last of which helps you accommodate a sub-woofer. The mid-range control allows for a 2.5dB boost at 1.8kHz, which again proves useful for those monitoring over greater distances. 'Hi-Boost' engages an optional 2dB shelving filter to brighten or deaden the top end. Finally, Alesis provide

**VERDICT ALESIS MONITORS**

**BUILD QUALITY**

**VALUE FOR MONEY**

**EASE OF USE**

**VERSATILITY**

**QUALITY OF RESULTS**

2 4 6 8 10

**Solid performers with a super-clean, uncluttered sound.**