

# Velodyne DB-8

**Richard Stevenson** welcomes the accommodating form and fast, tight performance of the smallest, most affordable subwoofer in Velodyne's Deep Blue range

A flush-fit grille adds to the DB-8's discreet look



**WHILE VELODYNE IS** probably most famous for its alarmingly large LFE air-moving devices, the brand does 'small' rather well too. Several incarnations of its little MicroVee series included some of the smallest, fastest and, dare I say, cutest subwoofers I ever had the pleasure to clap eyes and ears on.

Having recently evicted a pair of Velodyne DD18+ subwoofers (with dustbin lid-sized 18in drivers) from my cinema room (see p26), the DB-8 looks absolutely minuscule. The smallest unit in Velodyne's four-strong Deep Blue lineup, launched in 2021 (see *HCC* #325) this hasn't got a main dimension over 29cm, and some deeply radiused curves on the front-to-back edges make it look even more *bijou*.

Facing front is an 8in 'high-excursion' bass driver with four-layer voice coil that's almost the same size as the cabinet, and neatly recessed into the ludicrously thick (2in)

MDF baffle.

Black textured vinyl wrap completes the look rather than a pricier veneer or deep lacquered paint, yet this element is immaculately finished. You simply can't see the wrap join between the baffle and sides, and the seamless all-round wrap has

a single join underneath. The main cabinet is sealed and propped up on four fixed rubber feet that should stop it sliding around on hard floors when the action hots up.

Neat design touches continue with an understated Velodyne badge and a round grille that pushes into the driver recess for a completely flush fit to the baffle. There is a small cloth tag to aid removal that upsets the sleek lines a little, but nothing a pair of scissors won't cure if you are brave enough. It's a weighty little blighter too, tipping the scales at 9kg and giving it one of the highest mass to volume ratios of any sub we've tested (although KEF's dinky KC62 triumphs in that regard).

## Simple setup

Power comes from a 300W-rated Class A/B amplifier with an 800W peak reserve, running through a classic 12dB/octave analogue filter with a user-controlled knob to set the roll-off somewhere between 50Hz and 180Hz. Adjacent dials cover 0-180 degree variable phase control and gain. Connections are L/R analogue inputs and LFE input RCAs, alongside an LFE loop output for daisy-chaining multiple subs, plus stereo high-level hookup. The latter is on spring-clip terminals.

At under £800, it's no surprise that this subwoofer is short of fancy features. An onboard EQ system, wireless connectivity, remote control, or anything that involves an app – all are conspicuous by their absence. No matter, though, as the DB-8 is supremely

## SPECIFICATIONS

**DRIVE UNITS:** 1 x 8in 'high-excursion' woofer with four-layer voice coil **ONBOARD POWER (CLAIMED):** 300W Class A/B amp **ENCLOSURE:** Sealed **FREQUENCY RESPONSE (CLAIMED):** 32Hz-180Hz (-3dB) **REMOTE CONTROL:** No **DIMENSIONS:** 280(w) x 260(h) x 290(d)mm **WEIGHT:** 9kg

**FEATURES:** RCA LFE input/output; stereo RCA input; speaker-level input; variable phase; gain control; 50Hz-180Hz crossover; on/off/auto power

easy to get dialled into the room. Its sealed enclosure keeps LF output taut and easier to integrate, while the small form factor makes it very easy to experiment with different positions.

Not that relative room position made a great deal of difference to the DB-8's performance, as it rocked hard wherever it was placed. Fed an LFE diet, it delivered a sizeable thud that wholly belied its proportions, a bit like a Velociraptor creating a T-Rex-sized thump. That sealed cabinet helps to keep Velodyne's subwoofer super fast and super-tight too, with dynamic effects like gunshots coming out crisp and hard-hitting.

Yet it's not just slam-ability that makes the DB-8 a micro star. There is a pervasive deep beat that comes in and out of the soundmix to Netflix's *The Gray Man*, often underpinning the tail end of an action sequence. It's moody, subtle and completely lost if you are watching the film without a sub hanging off your TV or soundbar. The DB-8 brings the effect to life with a richness and scale, if not plumbing the (Deep Blue...) depths as a more capacious cabinet and larger driver would bring. Think more of a fast and feisty puncher rather than a heavyweight bruiser, and that is the DB-8 nailed right there.

## 8in diva

Arguably you can get deeper bass and higher SPL bang for your buck if you are happy to accommodate any of the plethora of 10in or 12in subs available under a grand – including, presumably, Velodyne's own DB-10 model at £995. Yet that is missing the key point of this small-form subwoofer. Hidden away, almost invisible and punching like a welterweight pro, the DB-8 shows how much of a good thing you can have wrapped up in a very small parcel ■

## AV INFO

**PRODUCT:** Compact, sealed subwoofer with 8in driver

**POSITION:** Entry point of Velodyne's new Deep Blue series

**PEERS:** REL T5x; SVS PB-1000 Pro

## HCC VERDICT



**Velodyne Deep Blue 8**

→ £795 → [www.velodyneacoustics.com](http://www.velodyneacoustics.com)

**WE SAY:** Not the last word in absolute depth, but the DB-8 is all about fast and furious fun from a super-compact package.