

GoldenEar Technology ForceField 4 Subwoofer Reviewed

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GoldenEar made a splash earlier in the year with the release of their [flagship Triton Two Loudspeakers](#), which I reviewed and found to be one of the best loudspeaker bargains of all time. Of course there are other products in [GoldenEar's](#) stable beyond just a pair of flagship floorstanding speakers; they offer a variety of smaller, lifestyle oriented on-wall loudspeakers as well as two powered subwoofers-the ForceField 3 and 4.



Additional Resources

- Read [more subwoofer reviews](#) from the staff at HomeTheaterReview.com.
- Find a [pair of floorstanding speakers](#) to pair with the ForceField4.

The ForceField 4, reviewed here, retails for \$699 and features a single 10-inch long-throw High-Output Bass Driver complimented by an 11 by 13 inch Quadratic Planar Radiator, which gives the ForceField 4 not only its impressive frequency response of 14Hz to 250Hz but also its shape. The ForceField 4 has a trapezoidal shape that is wider at the bottom than at the top, measuring 13 inches wide by nearly 18 inches deep and 12 and three quarter inches tall with the large, rubber, feet installed. The subwoofer itself weighs 32 pounds though it feels heavier than that when removing it from its packing materials. The ForceField 4 has an internal 1,200-Watt digital amplifier that powers its sole 10-inch driver.

In terms of connection options the ForceField 4 has four pairs of High-Level or speaker wire inputs or binding posts, two pairs in and two pairs out, as well as a single Sub/LFE input. There is also a wireless input for GoldenEar's wireless accessory, which in turn makes the ForceField 4 a wireless subwoofer, though it is sold separately. There are two large dials located at the rear of the sub one for the ForceField 4's Lowpass Crossover (variable from 40 - 150Hz) and the second controlling its Output Level. Lastly, the ForceField 4 features a 120-volt detachable power cord, which once plugged in activates the subwoofer's auto on/off feature.

Performance

Out of the box and after a bit of warm up and break in the ForceField 4 is a remarkably agile subwoofer especially considering its asking price. I mated mine with a complete Noble Fidelity L-85 LCR in-ceiling speaker system in my master bedroom and found the pairing to be sublime, not to mention wholly enjoyable be it music or movies. The ForceField 4 is musical with two-channel fare, offering up plenty of low-end heft without sounding boomy or sluggish. Kick drums and bass lines throughout Michael Jackson's *Dangerous* (Sony), especially during the opening of "Black and White," were palpable with an organic flare that made the pounding on the door feel real versus simply sounding real. With films, especially high-octane action films on Blu-ray disc, the ForceField 4 is near perfect in my opinion providing ample slam, impact and low-end texture to many of Hollywood's most bombastic and destructive action sequences-such as *Resident Evil: Afterlife* (Sony).

In my master bedroom system the ForceField 4 proved to be all the subwoofer I required and even in [my larger, reference system](#), it had the legs to fill my room with copious amounts of bass-though if your room is on the larger side, say in excess of 500 square feet, you may want to add a second ForceField 4 to the mix. Adding a second subwoofer be it a ForceField 4 or the like is not a bad idea regardless of your room size for the addition of a second sub will help combat standing waves giving you a much smoother and more refined bass performance.

Competition and Comparison

The ForceField 4 is a newcomer to the space and it's one that is rife with competition. For instance one must also look at the [Outlaw LFM-1 EX subwoofer](#), which retails for \$599 and is also a capable performer, if not a bit on the larger side in comparison to the ForceField 4. Another fine, affordable subwoofer to consider is [Aperion Audio's Bravus II 10D Powered Subwoofer](#), which costs \$100 more and features two finish options, gloss black or cherry, not to mention remote control capability and built-in parametric EQs. Lastly, for a sub a bit more up market in terms of overall performance and cache there is [Revel's B12 Subwoofer](#) at \$999.

All of the before mentioned subwoofers are exceptional performers for the money and compete favorably with subwoofers costing twice as much, a category the ForceField 4 also fits into, though pound-for-pound it may lead the charge now that I've had the opportunity to hear it in my own system.

High Points

- The ForceField 4 is a rather compact, understated powerhouse of a subwoofer that mates well with a wide variety of loudspeakers from in-ceiling to large floorstanding speakers.
- Thanks to its internal 1,200-Watt amplifier, driver compliment and internal construction the ForceField 4 is capable of producing room-filling bass at reference levels without distortion. Truthfully, your walls, floorboards and ceiling may crap out on you before the ForceField 4 does.
- The ForceField 4 can be connected to virtually any two channel or home theater system thanks to its myriad of input options.

Low Points

- The ForceField 4 isn't the most compact subwoofer available today, though I maintain that for true to life bass performance one has to be willing to live with a larger enclosure for there is only so much air some of these shoebox sized subs can move before physics simply says enough.
- Because of its unique shape the ForceField 4 isn't the easiest subwoofer to ignore visually. Almost every guest to my home in the past few weeks has asked what the hell it (the ForceField 4) was at some point.
- Many subwoofers at or around the ForceField 4's price offer a variety of finish options which include wood veneers such as Cherry or Maple-not the case with the ForceField 4 for it comes in every color so long as its black.

Conclusion

For its retail price of \$699, the ForceField 4 Subwoofer from GoldenEar is a tour de force among its peers and even costlier competition, providing rich, full, taut, deep and dynamic bass whatever the occasion or source material. While it may only come in matte black and have a shape that is bound to attract attention there is no getting around its performance, which is among the best I've encountered-a feat that is turning out to be a trend for GoldenEar.