

Episode®  
**ES-SUB-IW-DUAL8 Subwoofer  
& E-2100 Power Amplifier**  
**REVIEW**

by Gary Altunian

**About.com**



One of the more time-consuming aspects of setting up a stereo or home theater system is placing the subwoofer. Correct subwoofer placement affects the sound quality and appearance of the system. Most homeowners would probably prefer to stash a sub behind or beneath a piece of furniture to conceal it from view, but since most subwoofers are cube-shaped they are difficult to hide. The most practical solution is an in-wall subwoofer, which can be installed out-of-view and the grille painted to match the room décor. I tested the Episode® Dual 8 in-wall passive subwoofer, powered by the Episode® E-2100 amplifier.

## Overview

Episode® Speakers is one of the product lines offered by SnapAV, founded in 2005 by Jay Faison, owner of a custom electronics integration company in Charlotte, North Carolina. His business model focuses on providing high-value, high-performance products for AV installers and consumers. As a result, you'll find Episode offered exclusively through custom installation dealers and system integrators, not at your local electronics store.

## Subwoofer & Amplifier Features

The Episode® in-wall subwoofer is a sealed enclosure housing dual 8-inch woofers with woven fiberglass cones and 1.5-inch high temperature Nomex voice coils. Its 3.75-inch mounting depth is suitable for installing in a standard wall. The Dual 8 can be used for new construction or retrofit and includes a paintable grille. For new homes, Episode® offers new construction brackets. Installation is similar to an in-wall speaker with six dog-leg clamps that secure the sub to the wall. The Episode® sub has a solid, well built enclosure that seems highly unlikely to rattle or vibrate when properly installed.

The Dual 8 sub is designed to be used with an active outboard equalizer (supplied) that connects between the SUB OUT or LFE OUT of a receiver and the amplifier used to power the subwoofer.



The Episode® sub is a passive model that requires an external amplifier such as the Episode E-2100, although other amps with suitable power could be used. The E-2100 is a two-channel amp with 100 watts x 2, suitable for a multi-zone music amp, or bridgeable to 300-watts mono to power a subwoofer. When used in a whole house music system the amp should be used with a speaker selector or speaker switch with impedance matching.

The E-2100 has rear panel controls including level and crossover controls (50 Hz – 150 Hz) and a switch to enable or disable the crossover. A stereo/bridged switch determines if the amp is used for two-channel or mono applications. A three-way power switch (On, Auto-on, or +12V trigger) selects how the amp is powered on. Optional rack mounts are available for the E-2100.



## Performance

I tested the Episode® subwoofer and amplifier in my two-channel system with various main speakers. The amp was in bridged mode (300-watts mono) for all testing. When played with bookshelf speakers (5" woofers), the Dual 8 sub sounded well controlled and tight and particularly with bass guitar - not surprising because smaller woofers move more quickly and because of the stiff rubber surround material used in the drivers. The sub also blended very naturally with the Episode® 500 Series compact speakers I wrote about in a previous review.

Bass sounded full without sounding boomy or heavy and bass depth was good with music and movie sources in two-channel. The Dual 8 easily filled my 23' x 16' listening room, although two subwoofers would be better for filling larger rooms and when used in a home theater system. Multiple subwoofers help distribute bass energy more evenly throughout a room.

## Conclusions

The Episode® Dual 8 Subwoofer is a great way to get solid bass performance from a subwoofer that virtually disappears in the wall. It can be used in new construction or retrofit installations and provides tight, well-controlled bass for movies and music. Its magnetically attached grille can be painted to match room décor.

Almost any amp can power the Dual 8, but Episode® recommends 300 watts, such as the E-2100 with 300 watts mono in bridged mode.

Episode® speakers are available exclusively through custom installation resellers. Use the dealer locator to find a dealer nearest you.

## Specifications

### **Episode® ES-SUB-IW-DUAL8 Subwoofer**

Woofers: Dual 8" Woven Fiberglass Sandwich Cone,  
High Temp 1.5" diameter Voice Coil

Power Handling: 380W RMS, 1000W Peak

Recommended Power: 300 watts RMS

Impedance: 8 ohms

Frequency Response (-6dB): 30 Hz - 600 Hz

Sensitivity (2.83 V / 1 Meter): 84 dB

Connector Type: Gold plated spring-loaded Binding Posts

Grill: Aluminum Micro-Perf Mesh - paintable

Wall cutout dimensions: 12.2" x 22.2"

Mounting Depth: 3.75"

Dimensions: (W x H x D): 13.7" x 23.7" x 4.25"

Price: \$599 each

### **Episode® E-2100 Stereo Amplifier**

Power Output: 100 watts x 2 (8 ohms), 150 watts x 2 (4 ohms)  
or 300 watts x 1 bridged mode (8 ohms)

Frequency response: 5 Hz - 110 kHz

Distortion: Unbridged: .05% THD 20 Hz - 20 kHz (8 ohms)  
Bridged: .1% THD 20 Hz - 20 kHz (8 ohms)

Variable gain and crossover

Three turn on modes

Optional rack mounts

Dimensions (W x H x D): 16.5" x 4" x 15"

Weight: 21 lbs.

Price: \$699