

# Cyrus 8a

Available from £1249

Tested at £1200



Another classic Cyrus – everything we've come to expect and love about the brand

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## FOR

- Superb detail, accuracy and control
- dynamic and powerful
- upgrade path

## AGAINST

- Divisive styling
- ideally needs to be partnered with more fluid speakers

There's a welcome familiarity about Cyrus kit such as this **8a amplifier**. The styling, naming convention and sound have been consistent for some time.

So has consistently high quality. A flurry of positive reviews have followed in recent years, meaning a new component is a big deal round these parts.

After a price reshuffle at the start of the year, the 8a integrated amplifier sits above the company's new, more affordable 6 series, and below the **8 DAC** and **8 QX DAC** (amps with built-in DACs).

That instantly recognisable Cyrus design will no doubt continue to divide opinion but we certainly have no issue with the build quality of the aluminium box.

Once again, it's available in textured silver or black. The display could be clearer,

but the volume controls and buttons work well. There's a familiar and not-too-exciting remote control too.



### **Cyrus 8a: Tech specs**

Round the back there are six analogue audio inputs, two analogue preamplifier outputs and a zone 2 output. There's a headphone output at the rear, too – a somewhat odd position.

Cyrus uses slightly different speaker terminals – called BFA connectors – but also supplies adapters for standard banana plugs. Bare wire cable won't work, however.

There are no digital inputs or network options, so set-up remains a refreshingly simple affair. If you want a little more involvement with the sound there is the option to add a DAC module or an outboard power supply.

While the wider AV world and even certain hi-fi products have an ever-increasing host of features, an integrated amplifier remains judged almost entirely on the way it sounds. And that's just fine when it comes to this Cyrus.

### **Cyrus 8a: Sound quality**

Working through test tracks, the familiar Cyrus sound quickly becomes apparent. This amplifier is a music delivery machine in every sense. Radiohead's *15 Step* is a complex and intricate track to keep under control and deliver in one piece.

The accurate, detailed Cyrus has no issue, delivering a clean, punchy sound that manages to be precise yet still dynamic and powerful.



Switch to some high-res classical music and the level of detail revealed really is astonishing. Strings sound natural, drums stop and start on command and there's impressive dynamic reach.

When it's really pushed, you can sometimes hear the Cyrus working a little hard, not sounding quite as effortless, but the level of clarity and transparency continues to wow our collective ears.

Emeli Sandé's natural vocals and powerful backing tracks play to the strengths of the Cyrus, with deep bass notes sounding weighty. But to get across that swing and fluidity we'd recommend you partner the 8a with speakers that are a little looser and more relaxed than the more rigid nature of the amp.

### **Cyrus 8a: Verdict**

A familiar design, a familiar sound and a familiar result: a five-star verdict for a slice of Cyrus hi-fi. The 8a should deliver the goods for Cyrus-lovers new and old, offering a trademark transparent, accurate sound with astonishing detail to comfortably justify the price tag.