

SVS Prime Pinnacle Review (Floorstanding Loudspeaker)

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SVS Prime Pinnacle

PROS

Excellent build quality

Can go pretty low

Powerful performance

Ideal for both movies and music

CONS

No magnetic grilles

Only 2 color variations

No bi-wire capabilities

If you ask any home theater fanatic about what subwoofer brand they prefer there is a high chance that the name [SVS](#) will pop up and even if they use a different brand there is almost a universal respect and praise for this

manufacturer and their quality releases. And while their subwoofer lineups draw most of the attention of consumers SVS is also making other speakers that include the Prime and Ultra series with the Prime being their most cost friendly one and the later being their more premium offering. In today's [SVS Prime Pinnacle](#) review we will test a set of floorstanding speakers that were created to bridge the gap that existed between the two series.



The Prime Pinnacle floorstanders belong in the Prime series but are a step up from the Prime speakers and thus can be considered a major release for SVS. If you considered the Ultra series but the price was a bit too spicy for you the Prime Pinnacle may be the perfect release as they combine many of SVS qualities but at a more reasonable price. It certainly shows that SVS paid attention to what fans were asking for and made a speaker that costs within the Prime series limit but performs almost above that.

And while SVS themselves almost directly admit that the Ultras are the better speakers in the world we live in certain alterations were necessary in order to make a speaker that could satisfy specific needs. Gone are the sideways drivers and with their smaller footprint the Prime Pinnacle towers are less space restricted than the Ultras are. If you were drooling over them but your space limitations were posing a problem then SVS really got you the solution you were hoping for in the face of their new release. With a cost that sits exactly between the Prime and Ultra floorstanders do the Prime Pinnacle offer the kind of performance that sits between these two or did SVS managed to surprise us once again? Let's find out...

Design, Inputs and Features

Exterior

Upon first look the Prime Pinnacle towers certainly feature a more compact footprint when compared to the all out design of the Ultra towers while looking beefier than the Prime speakers giving you a clear indication of SVS intention was to create a design that would bridge these two. Measuring 41.1" X 8" X 13.9" including the grille and feet and with a weight of 57.1 lbs (25.9 kg) these speakers come with a seriously designed cabinet and internals that may not have the same space requirements as their flagship model but still ask for certain breathing space in order to perform accordingly.

SVS has designed two color variations with Piano Gloss Black and Premium Black Ash, as they call them, being the only two available options. In all honesty the gloss black finish is the one that feels more premium and along with the very posing look of the cabinet makes the towers look like a serious deal. The cabinet has an almost obelisk like design with the grilles on hiding the front drivers while the front face feature chamfered corners giving you the illusion of greater height. Overall design has a certain SVS look and while the only black variations were to be expected by this manufacturer we would like a few more colors to choose from.

Looking at the cabinet construction we see that SVS paid a lot of attention in order to create a design that seems unique in a lot of ways in this category. First of all the material used is the usual MDF with 1" front baffle and 3/4" side walls. The internals are covered with a special damping material but the interesting part is how each bass driver has been placed in it's own separated compartment and with it's own rear facing port.



This special internal construction has two purposes. First of all the sealed enclosures that come with angled bracings diffuses and shifts standing waves beyond the driver pass band, improving sound quality. Each enclosure has it's own optimized port tuning frequency which means that we get better and more accurate bass response. With three separate enclosures it means that we get three different bass ports which we don't see very often in this price. Premium speakers usually do use different compartments for their drivers but the Prime Pinnacle speakers don't exactly fit in this premium priced category making this a very impressive feature we find here.

The angled bracing also gives the cabinet a more rigid design. Along with the FEA-optimized cabinet, chamfered front baffle and flush-mounted drivers SVS managed to eliminate resonances using proven techniques without letting the cost skyrocket as we very often see in the premium category.

As for it's feet the Prime Pinnacle is using some rubber cones positioned underneath the cabinet. You may think that a plinth may have been better for stability but these cones keep the speakers very stable and you really shouldn't be afraid of them falling over. Also these help to keep the footprint as small as possible while keeping it's ominous look intact. With the speakers you also get a set of threaded metal spikes if you plan on placing them on some carpet.

Keeping a constrained design seems like a major design decision and that's why they went for such feet in this one.



The relatively thick grille frames cover almost the entire front face when on with only the SVS logo sticking out at the bottom of them while they feature a pin/cup retention system. If there is one thing we disliked is that the grilles are not magnetic and the 8 holes in the front face look a bit awkward since many will definitely like to use them with the drivers exposed. But this is not a major deal in an overall great looking speaker. At the back of the unit we get a pair of high quality speaker terminals at the bottom with three 2" wide-flared rear-firing ports giving each chamber it's own individual flow control.

SVS had never disappointed us when it comes to design and build quality of it's speakers and they continue this trend with the Prime Pinnacle. The towers may not feature the most exotic of materials but the above average quality design along with the individual driver compartments and angled bracing that is usually found in more premium categories give these towers the necessary rigidity and the least possible resonance.

Internal Hardware

Let's see now what makes these towers tick. The speakers feature a 3-way design by incorporating a single 5.25" mid-range driver at the top with a 1" aluminum dome tweeter below and three 6.5" woofers at the bottom which is a first for any speaker from SVS. Placing the high frequency tweeter below the mid-range driver may seem odd to some but there is a lot of research behind

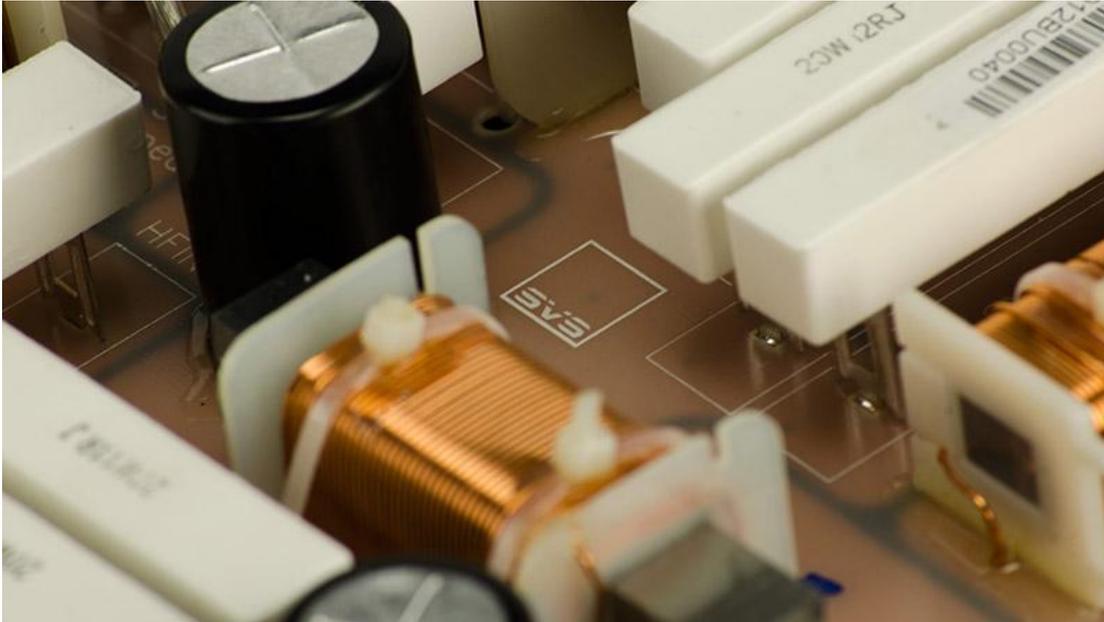
this and to keep things simple we will just say that the SVS engineers decided this to be the most optimal way.



The trio of 6.5" woofers use polypropylene cones and cast ABS-fiberglass composite baskets. Along with the aluminum shorting rings, long stroke motors and suspensions and vented voice coil formers these drivers give the Prime Pinnacle better piston behavior, less compression artifacts, lower distortion and increased output. If you also take into account the separate chamber each of these woofers are placed in with it's own 2" port you can understand the level of engineering we are talking about.

The 5.25" mid-range driver is made out of composite glass-fiber similar to what is used in the Ultra series. Similarly to the low frequency woofers this driver comes with cast ABS-fiberglass composite basket for better thermal transfer, aluminum shorting ring in order to improve high frequency response and reduce distortion and a vented voice coil former in order to minimize air compression artifacts. Mid-range plays a pivotal role to any kind of speaker performance and SVS made sure to create a driver that is up to the task.

Lastly the 1" aluminum dome tweeter is placed under a metal lattice for better protection and uses a FEA-optimized diffuser that ensures broad dispersion and excellent on- and off-axis frequency response in order for everyone in the room to enjoy the best audio experience possible no matter their listening position.



The towers feature a 2-piece PCB design which means that there are two individual circuit boards in order to reduce component interference. These two boards are placed one inside the mid-range driver/tweeter chamber and the other on the middle bass driver chamber. These heavy-trace printed circuit boards feature premium-grade capacitors and air-core inductors showing how much attention to detail has been put into them. Tweeter to mid-range crossover has been set at 2.1kHz (12 dB/octave slopes) while the mid-range to woofer crossover frequency at 300Hz (12 dB/octave slopes).

In total the tweeter, mid-range driver and triple bass woofers offer the Prime Pinnacle towers a rated bandwidth of 29 Hz-25 kHz (± 3 dB) with 88 dB of sensitivity and 8 ohms of nominal impedance. The recommended amplifier power according to SVS has been set to 20-300 watts.

Connectivity

The speakers come with high quality terminals positioned at the bottom of the back face exactly under the third bass port and surprisingly they are not bi-wire capable. Now this may disappoint some while others will definitely like it but in our case we had no problem being so. The plastic handles were of good quality while the gold-plated terminals can accept various connections from bare wires to banana plugs or pin connectors.



Performance

As with all speakers that feature rear bass ports the general consensus is that the closer you place them to the back walls this will increase the bass response. Also certain toe-in is recommended in order to improve imaging and even slight deviations can change the audio outcome. In our case we placed the towers about 9 feet apart as we do with most of our floorstanders and let about 2 feet of breathing space behind them.

We did some toe-in on them in order to get them to face directly our listening position while the pair already had a few good hours under their belt which is what is needed in order to the speakers to reach their peak performance. If you get a new set of speakers make sure you give them some break-in time before you judge their audio performance.

We make two types of connections during our testing, one in a 4.0.2 setup without a center channel or a subwoofer as we pair them with only a set of surround and Atmos speakers for movie testing while for music we prefer to go for a pure stereo setup. So after making the necessary connections to our Onkyo receiver and finishing with the necessary calibrations we are set to go.

Movies

For our first film we wanted to go loud so our choice was the 4K UHD of Kong: Skull Island with it's excellent Dolby Atmos track. The film begins with a World War 2 dogfight and the SVS towers immediately throw us into the action. The front soundstage filled with audio effects as the fighter plane engines were roaring desperately in order to handle all the brutal punishing. Keep in mind that we are without a subwoofer here but even still we were getting plenty of low bass action with the machine guns blazing and the characteristic deep machine engine noises.

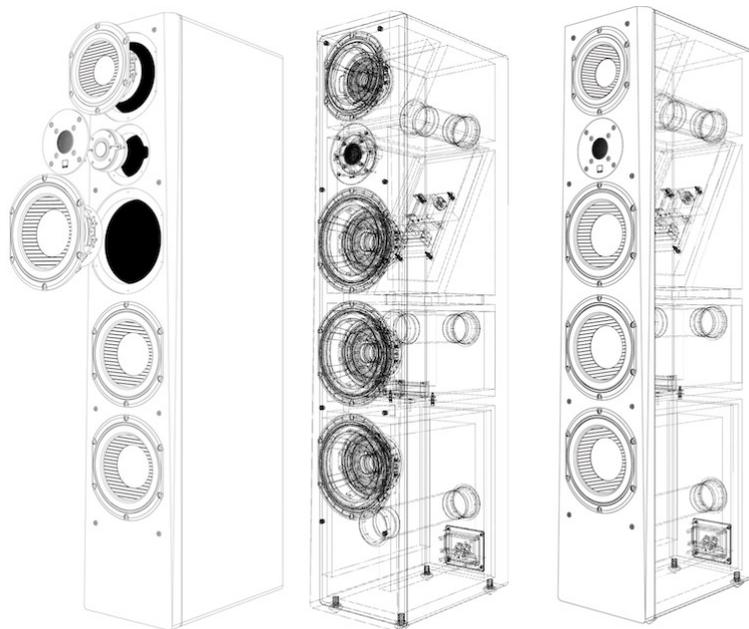


Another scene we tried was when the helicopter armada was trying to get through the storm and here the speakers showed us how good imaging they have and how capable of creating a multi-dimensional space around us. Obviously the surrounds play their part in this but the Prime Pinnacle towers were able to push the front action closer to our listening position making immersion even higher.

Clarity and sound resolution was exceptionally high with even the tinniest of details making them easy to discern. The rain had breathtaking volume while you could hear every cracking of the metal bodies of the helicopters as they were struggling to punch through the extreme weather. Very impressive was also how clear the dialogue felt as we didn't feel like we were particularly missing a center speaker. Dialogue gave you the sense of coming from the center space showing how good the front towers were handling spatial awareness.

When we got to see the big boy in action the speakers were able to pump out all the necessary low sounds with bass feeling strong and fulfilling. Obviously with a good dedicated subwoofer you will be able to get more low action but we were pretty impressed how low these floorstanders were able to go even without one and still keep the sound uncluttered or muddled.

Skull island provided us with many scenes where the speakers were able to show us that not only they can go loud and punchy but also give us extremely detailed ambient and environmental sounds in more silent and action-less scenes. You could hear bugs flying around, the wind blowing and the water running with so grand clarity and precision making the scenery truly alive.



But the towers didn't just impress us with their thundering bass and punchy performance. The mid-range felt very well balanced and even when we pushed the volume to higher levels it never felt like losing its composition. The highs were energetic, clear and playful and definitely bind perfectly with the rest of the frequency spectrum.

The Prime Pinnacle is the kind of speakers that you enjoy to listen and you don't want to stop. They have the power, the quality and the acoustic fidelity that will touch the mind and souls of all home theater and cinema fans. They may not be perfect or able to create an immersive audio environment just by themselves but having tried them in a setup that is missing both a subwoofer and a center channel showed us how much better a full Dolby Atmos setup will perform with these speakers at the forefront of the action. If you plan to use these mostly for movies you definitely cannot go wrong with them.

Music

For our music test we turned our system to a pure stereo 2.0 setup and as we usually do we selected a few FLAC files that we streamed through the USB port of our AV receiver.

These towers are really a pleasure hearing to be completely honest with you. Tonal balance was spot on, imaging was impressive and overall we were getting a sense of great control. The Prime Pinnacle towers could push the lows pretty hard but still keep the bass clean and well defined. Another impressive feat was how clear they could reproduce the scale and scope of the performance. Either being an orchestrated track or a concert the volume was just right and this was making it easier for the listener to feel immersed in the music and able to distinguish the source position of each sound.



The towers made the various melodies fly through our testing area and they certainly had a cinematic touch to them while sudden dynamic shifts never made the towers buckle or lose their tempo as there were no audible distortions that could distract from a great performance.

Are you a music lover and you are considering these towers for your music setup? Don't make any second thoughts as we are sure you will adore them the same way we did if not more. There are speakers that perform great and speakers that you truly fall in love with and the SVS Prime Pinnacle certainly belong to the second group. They have the ability, power and prowess to deliver all kinds of music either it be orchestra, electronic, rock or jazz. And if you

combine them with a good amplifier then they will make sure to reward you for your investment.

Final Thoughts

Wrapping up our review what we can say is that SVS did a lot of things right with these towers. In essence they created a speaker that combines the affordability and ease of use and placement of the Prime towers and the premium qualities and performance of the Ultra series. The end result is a combination of both worlds with the Prime Pinnacle towers being an excellent choice for those looking for great performance without the need to go all out both on budget as well as space requirements.

The towers feature excellent design and build quality and it shows how much engineering went onto the cabinet itself while the combination of the 1" tweeter, 5.25" mid-range driver and the trio of 6.5" bass woofers allows them to flex their muscles across the whole dynamic range without particularly lacking anywhere.



These speakers managed to perform as they did mostly because of the careful design SVS used and not so much of the materials that these consist from as we have seen is some other more crazy priced premium speakers. As a result the towers were able to dig deep yet feel refined enough to deliver musical details

with convincing realism. Along with a rock solid mid-range and energetic highs the Prime Pinnacle towers offer great flexibility when it comes to their use.

What minuses can we talk about with such fine speakers. Well, obviously while they sound great and perform amazingly there are speakers that can perform better than these so it's not like you get a miracle speaker or anything. But to get better performance than these you will have to go much higher in price. No magnetic grilles is a bummer as we have seen other speakers in this price offering them.

Also having no bi-wire capabilities may disappoint some fans that prefer this kind of connection for their speakers. Lastly the limited color variations may turn some away as SVS seems very much stuck in the black. We have seen them playing with a few other colors in some of their other speaker models so we do hope at some point they will extend their color options in their floorstanders also.

Closing we will just say that the [SVS Prime Pinnacle](#) is the kind of speakers you cannot go wrong with. With excellent quality, amazing performance and just the right price these are good for almost everyone. Either you are a home cinema fanatic or music audiophile these towers will make sure to blow your mind and fill your room with quality sound that SVS is so famous about. And this are the kind of speakers that will start to make us think of SVS not just as a subwoofer company but as a very capable speakers company as a whole. Highly recommended.

