

# QED

## XT40 speaker cable

**WHEN IT COMES** to cost-effective speaker cables, QED is one of the brands most likely to come to mind for many hi-fi fans. The cable maker has been around since 1973 and was among the first to challenge our understanding of the influence cables have in our setup with the introduction of its 79-strand speaker cable in 1978.

The XT40 looks like a viable challenger to any entry-level speaker cable offering, and will enable hi fans with conventional speaker placement to cable up a system for around £100 using a 3m pair of wires fitted with 4mm gold-plated plugs and sturdy Airloc ABS outer barrels. Posher 4mm Airloc plugs with metal outers (as shown) can also be fitted, but push the price up by around £20.

Part of QED's Reference Series, the XT40 uses a pure 'Five Nines' (99.999%) oxygen-free copper woven braid around a hollow polyethylene

core that QED calls Aircore. Housed inside a soft PVC outer jacket, the cable has a 4mm<sup>2</sup> cross section and boasts low resistance for longer runs.

### Ear for detail

There's plenty of zing and upper detail to make listening easy, and London Grammar's *Strong* has tremendous presence with the expansive soundstage extending wide of the speaker's footprint. It doesn't quite manage to pull out high levels of detail at the very top end, and lacks the absolute sparkle of cables further up QED's range, but there is still bags of detail on offer.

Bass is gutsy and fulsome, and has terrific energy and pacey rhythm on Laura Mvula's *That's Alright*. It's not as forward sounding as some in the way it presents her vocals, but its laidback copper cable characteristic makes it only marginally less easy to hear into the layers of the recording.

There's no standout characteristic in this well balanced cable other than the way it handles all elements of the music so evenly. Everything about the XT40 is clear and engaging; from its packaging to cable construction and, most important of all, its superb performance at the price. **LD**



### DETAILS

**PRICE**  
£10 per metre,  
unterminated

**TELEPHONE**  
01279 501111

**WEBSITE**  
qed.co.uk

### OUR VERDICT

