



Owner's Manual

STS
High Output RTL[®] Subwoofer

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DOCUMENT CONVENTIONS

This document contains general safety, installation and operation instructions for the Wisdom Audio STS Subwoofer. It is important to read this document before attempting to use this product. Pay particular attention to:

WARNING: Calls attention to a procedure, practice, condition or the like that, if not correctly performed or adhered to, could result in injury or death.

CAUTION: Calls attention to a procedure, practice, condition or the like that, if not correctly performed or adhered to, could result in damage to or destruction of part of or the entire product.

Note: Calls attention to information that aids in the installation or operation of the product.

Introduction

Congratulations on purchasing your Wisdom Audio subwoofer. The STS's Regenerative Transmission Line™ technology delivers tremendous bass performance in terms of depth, dynamics, and distortion resulting in articulate bass that integrates seamlessly with high-resolution main speakers such as Wisdom Audio's Sage Series.

This manual focuses on the STS subwoofer itself. In order to fully understand the system, we recommend you also review the manual for the SC-2/3 System Controllers.

While we expect your local Wisdom Audio dealer to take care of the setup and calibration of the system, we still recommend that you at least briefly review this and the other manuals (SC-2/3, SA Series amplifiers) to understand the system's full capabilities.

Overview

Your Wisdom Audio STS subwoofer uses a modern implementation of an old idea for high quality, low distortion bass reproduction. While the roots of the Regenerative Transmission Line™ go back to the 1950's, it is the combination of modern computer modeling and the vastly more powerful motors of contemporary driver design that make the RTL™ so special.

There is a class of bass enclosures that has been around since the 1950's, which can be described generically as "low frequency tapped waveguides" or "tapped pipes". It was an idea that was a bit ahead of its time then, since fully optimizing its use required both powerful drivers and computer modeling. But, if you are into such things, check out US Patent 2,765,864 (filed in 1955), and an AES paper published in 1959, "*Analysis of a Low Frequency Loudspeaker System*".

We have utilized sophisticated modeling software in order to fully optimize our enclosures, and have developed drivers that are specifically optimized for this application. We call our unique implementation of this relatively old idea a "Regenerative Transmission Line™" subwoofer, or "RTL" sub for short.

All dynamic drivers develop energy on both sides of the diaphragm, with the rear energy being 180° out of phase with the front energy. If you allow the driver to operate in free space (no enclosure), the front and rear energies largely cancel each other out — especially at low frequencies.

Overview (continued)

In our Regenerative Transmission Line™ subwoofer, the energy from the back side of the driver is sent along a long, folded path in such a way that its lowest frequencies arrive back at the front side of the driver in phase, effectively summing to an increase of 6 dB in output. Thus, the energy from both sides of the woofer cone is used in a productive way, resulting in a substantial reduction in distortion and an effective surface area double compared to what you would otherwise expect. As an example, the effective radiating surface area of the two 15" woofers in the STS is equivalent to *four* 15" woofers in more conventional enclosures.

The results are quite stunning. Low frequencies are strikingly dynamic and responsive, and integrate quite seamlessly with the fast and detailed Sage Series planar magnetic hybrids. As an example, the STS is only -3 dB at 15 Hz and can output in excess of 130 dB at 20 Hz.

Uncrating the STS

The Wisdom Audio STS subwoofer is a substantial piece of equipment. Please exercise caution when unpacking your STS to ensure that you do not strain yourself from its (perhaps unexpected) weight.

CAUTION:

Do not attempt to lift your STS by yourself. Unpacking this subwoofer is clearly a two-person job. It is unwise for a single person to attempt doing so.

Do not attempt to lift your STS while bending or twisting from the waist. Use your legs for lifting, not your back.

Always stand as straight as possible and keep the STS close to your body to reduce strain on your back.

The STS is fully assembled on delivery, and comes in a large wooden crate.

The serial number for the STS can be found on input connector plate on the rear of the speaker. Record this serial number below for easy reference should you need it in the future.

s/n: _____

Subwoofer Placement

Subwoofers offer somewhat greater flexibility in placement, since the frequencies they reproduce are not readily localizable by the human ear. This is due to the fact that the wavelengths they reproduce are more than ten feet (3 meters) long, but our ears are located only about 6-7 inches (17 cm) apart. Thus these extremely long waves do not contribute meaningfully to the imaging that the main speakers create.

However, this fact does not mean that the placement of the subwoofers has no effect on the sound quality in the room. Far from it. The subwoofers are the *most* likely to suffer from the response irregularities introduced by the room itself, operating as they do below approximately 80 Hz in most systems.

Recent research into the behavior of rooms as a function of speaker placement has concluded that — if you have the freedom to do so — there are significant advantages to placing several smaller subwoofers around the room, rather than relying on a single large woofer. Moreover, the optimum placement is usually centered on each of the four walls, or deep in the corners of the room. If you have the luxury of doing so, this simple placement strategy can reduce the size of the room's response irregularities from 20 decibels down to perhaps as little as 6-8 decibels—a tremendous improvement.

Reducing the room's inherent problems to this degree provides a huge advantage. It allows the SC-2/3 System Controllers to put its considerable abilities to work on *perfecting* your system's response, rather than on trying to perform major corrective surgery.

Room Treatment

Rectangular rooms have six reflecting surfaces (four walls, ceiling and floor) that reflect sound to the listener, after various delays introduced by the indirect routes the sound take on their way to the listener. These first reflections are particularly damaging to sound quality. Looking at the simplest case of stereo reproduction, you have a minimum of *twelve* first reflection points in your room that deserve some attention.

Unfortunately, it is often difficult to do much about the ceiling and floor reflections, even though they are arguably the most destructive. (The minimization of these reflections is one of the strongest arguments for the tall, line source loud- speakers that Wisdom Audio builds.) This leaves you with eight "first reflections" that you

Room Treatment (*continued*)

should consider minimizing somehow. These points are easily found by having an assistant slide a small mirror along the four walls of the room, while you sit at the listening position. Any place on the wall where you can see a reflection of *any* speaker is a first reflection point. Concentrate on the first reflections for the Left and Right speakers first.

If you can, arrange to apply either absorption or diffusion at these eight points (don't forget the wall behind you). Absorption can be as simple as heavy, insulated drapes; diffusion can be provided by a well-stocked bookcase with books of varied sizes. Alternatively, you can buy purpose-designed room treatments (some sources listed under References, below).

The important things to remember are these: a good room should have a balance of absorption and diffusion; and if you are going to treat only a few areas of the room, the first reflection points are the most important ones to treat.

Professional Acoustic Design

Does this all sound too complicated? For good reason: it *is* complicated.

The difference between the average listening room and one that is professionally designed and implemented is huge. A great listening room will disappear to an astonishing degree, letting the experiences captured in your recordings speak to you directly. A well-designed room is also quieter and more comfortable. It can easily become a favorite retreat for peace and rejuvenation.

If you decide to investigate the possibility of improving your room with the help of a professional, it is important to find someone who focuses on residential spaces. Most acousticians are trained to deal with large spaces — airports, auditoriums, lobbies in commercial buildings, etc. The problems seen in “small” rooms (residential spaces) are quite different, and outside the experience of most acousticians. Find someone who specializes in and has a great deal of experience designing home studios, home theaters, and the like. Your Wisdom Audio dealer may be such a person; failing that, he/she can help you find such a professional.

References

Books on Acoustics:

The Master Handbook of Acoustics, F. Alton Everest, TAB Books

Sound Reproduction: The Acoustics and Psychoacoustics of Loudspeakers and Rooms by Dr. Floyd Toole, Focal Press

Setting up your STS

There is no escaping the fact that the STS is a *large* subwoofer. That being said, it is designed to have remarkable installation flexibility for something so large. It may be used standing upright, or laying down on its broad side, in which case it can be built into a set of risers or as part of a “stage” in front of the screen.

The STS also includes three locations for the exit of the Regenerative Transmission Line™. As shipped from the factory, the vent is located on the end of the STS enclosure. However, if your location would be better served by the vent being on one side or the other, your dealer can easily swap the grille for the solid aluminum plate that covers the desired exit location. There is no difference in performance, but often a great difference in application flexibility.

The STS is a passive subwoofer, meaning that it does not come with a “plate” amplifier or internal crossover. The crossover function is normally provided by the surround preamplifier in the system, or by the SC-2/3 or an MiniDSP-1 (which is a required part of any system that uses an STS). Similarly, the amplifier is one channel of whatever is being used for the rest of the system, or perhaps a dedicated, high power amplifier, depending on your application.

The sensitivity of the STS is quite high, at 101 dB/2.83V/1m (2.83V is one watt at 8Ω). So you do not necessarily have to have a huge, powerful amplifier to drive the STS. However, if you want to fill an unusually large space, the STS can handle 5000 watts of power and deliver in excess of 130 dB at 20 Hz (again, measured at one meter).

We recommend using a Wisdom Series SA Amplifier for the best results, since the STS sounds so good that you will be inclined to turn it up. You cannot go wrong by having too much power.

Making the STS Connections

As with any system, you should make changes to the connections only when the power is turned off to avoid any chance of inadvertently causing a problem (such as a short-circuit).

We recommend using heavy-gauge speaker wire, particularly when the installation forces you to use longer wires than you might otherwise. A good rule of thumb is to keep the “loop resistance” below 0.1 ohms.

The loop resistance can be easily measured with an inexpensive volt-ohm meter. Simply twist the two conductors at one end of the cable together, and then measure the DC resistance across the two conductors at the other end of the speaker wire. Doing this measures the total resistance going down one side and back the other, hence the term “loop resistance.” If this figure is at or below 0.1 ohms, you are in good shape.

For the purposes of this manual, we will assume that you have already connected the SC-2/3 System Controller as per the instructions found in its manual. As such, you should have signal coming from your source component(s) to a preamp/processor that provides bass management (to create the subwoofer channel(s), and then on to the SC-2/3; following the SC-2/3, the signal for the subwoofer is sent to a high quality amplifier such as the Wisdom Audio SA Series amplifiers.

Connect the outputs of your amplifier to the subwoofer, taking care to get the polarity correct. Connect the positive (+) terminals on your amplifier to the positive (+) terminals on the STS; likewise, connect the negative (-) terminals on the amplifier to the negative (-) terminals on the STS.

North American Warranty

Standard Warranty

When purchased from and installed by an authorized Wisdom Audio dealer, Wisdom Audio loudspeakers are warranted to be free from defects in material and workmanship under normal use for a period of ten years from the original date of purchase.

Important

Wisdom Audio loudspeakers are designed for installation and operation in environmentally controlled conditions, such as are found in normal residential environments. When used in harsh conditions such as outdoors or in marine applications, the warranty is three years from the original date of purchase.

During the warranty period, any Wisdom Audio products exhibiting defects in materials and/or workmanship will be repaired or replaced, at our option, without charge for either parts or labor, at our factory. The warranty will not apply to any Wisdom Audio products that has been misused, abused, altered, or installed and calibrated by anyone other than an authorized Wisdom Audio dealer.

Any Wisdom Audio product not performing satisfactorily may be returned to the factory for evaluation. Return authorization must first be obtained by either calling or writing the factory prior to shipping the component. The factory will pay for return shipping charges only in the event that the component is found to be defective as mentioned above. There are other stipulations that may apply to shipping charges.

There is no other express warranty on Wisdom Audio products. Neither this warranty nor any other warranty, express or implied, including any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness, shall extend beyond the warranty period. No responsibility is assumed for any incidental or consequential damages. Some states do not allow limitations on how long an implied warranty lasts and other states do not allow the exclusion or limitation of incidental or consequential damages, so the above limitation or exclusion may not apply to you.

This warranty gives you specific legal rights, and you may also have other rights, which vary from state to state. This warranty is applicable in the United States and Canada only. Outside of the U.S. and Canada, please contact your local, authorized Wisdom Audio distributor for warranty and service information.

Obtaining Service

We take great pride in our dealers. Experience, dedication, and integrity make these professionals ideally suited to assist with our customers' service needs.

If your Wisdom Audio loudspeaker must be serviced, please contact your dealer. Your dealer will then decide whether the problem can be remedied locally, or whether to contact Wisdom Audio for further service information or parts, or to obtain a Return Authorization. The Wisdom Audio Service Department works closely with your dealer to solve your service needs expediently.

IMPORTANT: Return authorization must be obtained from Wisdom Audio's Service Department BEFORE a unit is shipped for service.

It is extremely important that information about a problem be explicit and complete. A specific, comprehensive description of the problem helps your dealer and the Wisdom Audio Service Department locate and repair the difficulty as quickly as possible.

A copy of the original bill of sale will serve to verify warranty status. Please include it with the unit when it is brought in for warranty service.

WARNING: All returned units must be packaged in their original packaging, and the proper return authorization numbers must be marked on the outer carton for identification. Shipping the unit in improper packaging may void the warranty, as Wisdom Audio cannot be responsible for the resulting shipping damage.

Your dealer can order a new set of shipping materials for you if you need to ship your loudspeaker and no longer have the original materials. There will be a charge for this service. We strongly recommend saving all packing materials in case you need to ship your unit some day.

If the packaging to protect the unit is, in our opinion or that of our dealer, inadequate to protect the unit, we reserve the right to repackage it for return shipment at the owner's expense. Neither Wisdom Audio nor your dealer can be responsible for shipping damage due to improper (that is, non-original) packaging.

Specifications

All specifications are subject to change at any time, in order to improve the product.

- **Number of required amplifier channels:** 1
- **Frequency response:** 20Hz – 80 Hz \pm 2dB relative to the target curve
- **Impedance:** 4 Ω
- **Sensitivity:** 101 dB/2.83V/1m
- **Power handling, peak:** 5000w
- **Maximum SPL:** 130dB / 20 Hz /1m
- **Dimensions:** see appropriate dimensions drawings on next page
- **Shipping weight, each:** 350 lbs. (159 kg)

For more information, see your Wisdom Audio dealer, or contact:

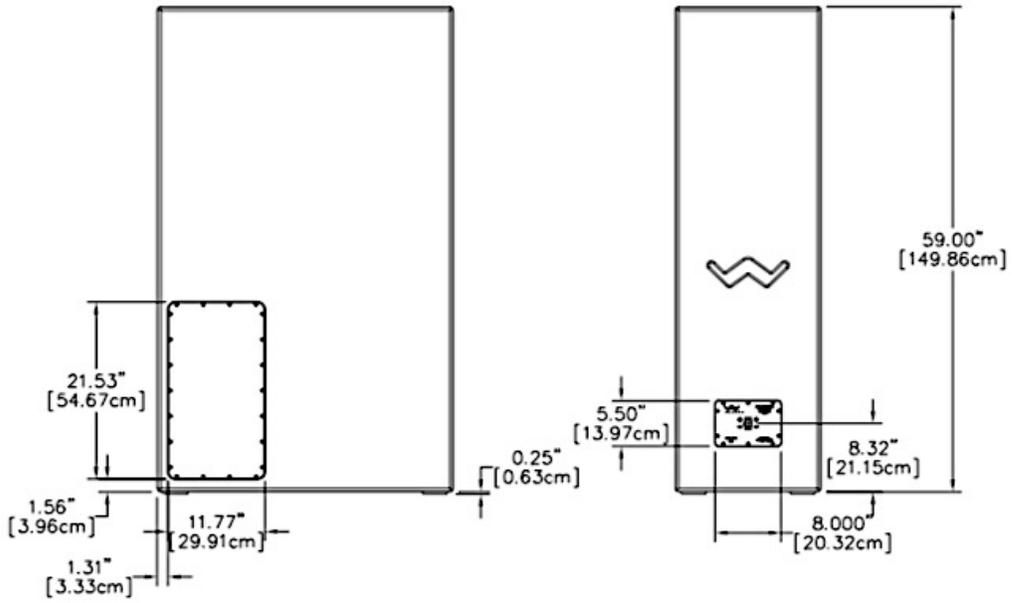
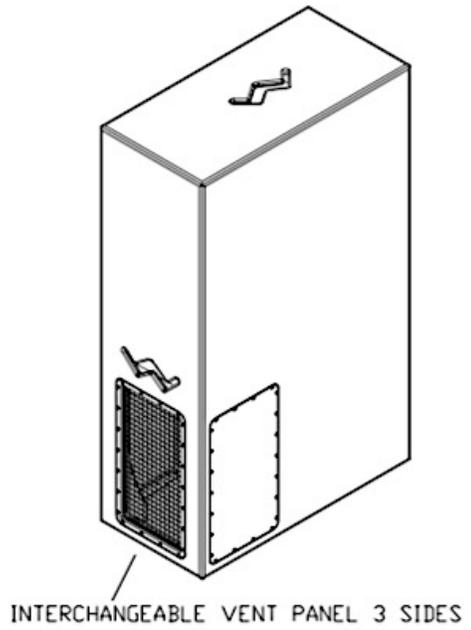
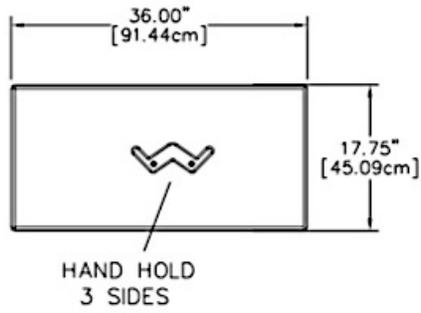
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Accessories

Extension Port

The STS's port can be extended up to 30" (76 cm). This is a custom ordered kit, if needed, please consult with your approved Wisdom Audio dealer for more information and pricing.

STS Dimensions





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