

iFi Presents Zen DAC

Written by Alice Marshall
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British hifi specialist iFi Audio follows on the [Zen Blue high-resolution streamer](#) with the Zen DAC, a USB DAC/headphone amp designed for home use customers can connect to PCs, Macs or any smart devices with a USB port.



It carries high-resolution digital-to-analog conversion technology the company says can process all forms of digital audio to a super-high standard, while the integrated analog headphone amplifier delivers quality sound to all headphone types, from in-ear monitors to larger on- and over-ear designs. Customers can also use it with a home audio system, and whether hooked with headphones, external amp or active speakers, they get a choice of a single-ended or balanced connection.

The DAC section is based on a Burr-Brown DAC chip and an XMOS chip used for input processing. The result allows it deliver sound quality across a range of digital audio formats, including high-res PCM, "bit-perfect" DSD and MQA. PCM and DXD audio data support clocks at up to 24-bit/384kHz, while DSD sampling rates reach from 2.8M to 12.4MHz (DSD256). The True Native design of the Burr-Brown chip allows PCM and DSD to take separate pathways, allowing DSD data to remain in native form right through to analog conversion.

Meanwhile the XMOS chip is based on bespoke firmware, further boosting audio processing power. Continuous development allows features to be added or optimised via firmware updates, enabling the tailoring of the Zen DAC to user playback priorities. Users can even download and install previous versions of the iFi firmware to experiment with different digital filters.

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The iFi Zen DAC should be shipping now.

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