

# If you prefer your equipment fuss-free, you'll adore the no-nonsense **SIA 2-150** from ATC – a built-to-last integrated amplifier that favours thrills over frills

INTEGRATED  
AMPLIFIER  
ATC SIA 2-150



£ 2203

## FOR

Clarity, insight and control; clean presentation; plenty of power; solid build

## AGAINST

Basic features; appearance may not appeal to all

## VERDICT

The SIA 2-150 is a great all-rounder. It's one of the best amplifiers at this price level



**TYPE** Integrated  
**POWER OUTPUT** 150W  
**LINE LEVEL INPUTS** 4  
**PHONO STAGE** No  
**TAPE LOOP** 1  
**PREAMP OUTPUT** Yes  
**HEADPHONE OUTPUT** Yes  
**FINISHES** 1  
**DIMENSIONS (HWD)** 14x44x35cm

**THIS INTEGRATED AMPLIFIER**, like ATC's highly rated monitor speakers, is as focused and heavily engineered as they come. Even the name has a functional brutality about it: SIA 2-150 stands for stereo integrated amp Mk 2. It may not come as a surprise to learn the power output is rated at 150 watts per channel.

This amplifier is the first of a new range of electronics from the brand. These have been a long time coming – no surprise considering the magnitude of the undertaking and the small size of the company's engineering team. The new range will include a pre/power combination and a dedicated CD player. ATC has long made electronics, but these have tended to be overshadowed by its speakers. We hope that changes, because if this amp is anything to go by, the new range could be very good indeed.

The SIA 2-150's feature count is basic: four line level inputs, a single tape loop

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and remote control wouldn't be much of a boast for a budget product, let alone one at this price point. Still, we have to admit that it covers the essentials, and should be enough for all but the most complex of stereo systems.

Build quality is as solid as you'd expect from a brand with so much experience in the pro world. Everything feels sturdy, chunky and designed to survive decades worth of abuse. We have no doubt the aesthetics won't be to everybody's taste, but at least it looks distinctive without going over the top.

## Solid performer in every way

The SIA 2-150 proves pleasant enough in use. Apart from the small, hard to read input labels, there's very little to criticise here. However, do be aware that the amplifier is heavy and runs warm, so you'll need to give it a strong shelf to sit on and plenty of ventilation.

Once properly warmed-up, this integrated is as fuss-free as they come. It has plenty of muscle, and will drive most speakers to decent levels. There are cheaper amplifiers that boast a similar

power output, but none of these come close to offering the kind of transparency or dynamic finesse on offer here.

The ATC's tonal balance is neutral: any overt show of character you hear will be down to other parts of your system, not this amp. Yet this isn't the reason we like it so much. Yes, a lack of overt character is a good thing for an amplifier to have, but most that manage this trick also compromise in areas such as timing and dynamics. Not this one. This ATC tracks a rhythm recording like a bloodhound and conveys subtle shifts in dynamics with exceptional skill. It's an articulate and agile performer, and has the kind of speed rarely heard with amplifiers of this type.

The ATC is also invitingly subtle. Listen to something that needs finesse to sound good, say Arvo Part's *Tabula Rasa*, and the SIA 2-150 will respond with a dynamic lightness of touch that

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most other high power one-box amps can't match. Many rivals sound muscle-bound and lack grace in comparison.

## More than a match for most amps

Bass definition is also a highlight: rarely do we come across an integrated amp





that can differentiate bass frequencies with such skill or deliver basslines with such control. You can add a wide and expansive sound stage, punch and clarity to the ATC's plus points, too. Flaws? There's nothing of note to have a dig at here. Sure, the Plinius 9200 – almost three grand, remember – sounds more enthusiastic and Leema's Tucana has greater sonic weight and refinement. But, equally, the ATC has class-leading control and neutrality.

Whatever you end up buying, trust us, it will be good. That's why, talented as the likes of the Plinius and Leema are, we reckon you shouldn't buy either until you've heard the ATC as well. Yes, that's how good we think the SIA 2-150 is.

The sturdy SIA 2-150 bodes well for the new range of ATC products

