



Exposure 2010S2 £650

Some manufacturers offer tuners in their range to make up the numbers, others don't. What of this, then?

DETAILS

PRODUCT
Exposure 2010S2

ORIGIN
UK

TYPE
Tuner

WEIGHT
5kg

DIMENSIONS
(WxHxD)
440 x 90 x 300mm

FEATURES
• FM only
• Brushed alloy fascia
• Signal strength indicator
• VF display

DISTRIBUTOR
Exposure

TELEPHONE
01273 423877

WEBSITE
exposurehifi.com

Exposure is another name that harks back to the past, this time the early eighties. It made a great reputation for itself with excellent, expensive pre and power amplifiers – stripped down and devoid of almost all facilities.

That theme continues to this day, but where do hi-fi tuners sit in Exposure's affections? This 2010S2 radio rounds off the company's contemporary and very good entry-level range. Like most here, it's available in a choice of black or silver finishes, and follows the formula of a fairly thin case, topped off with a brushed alloy fascia.

It's decently finished, but struggles against the super standard set by the Arcam; even the Yamaha feels classier. No prizes for ease of use either – the Exposure uses eighties-style up/down tuning buttons, rather than a nice rotary knob. Still, most will use the presets, I guess. The display isn't exactly lavish either – a blue fluorescent affair that could have come from a tuner two or three decades ago. It does have a handy percentage signal strength read out, but you'll have to fiddle with the menu button to get it. But such austerity all fits in with the minimalist theme – this is an FM tuner that doesn't even have RDS on FM, let alone AM or DAB! In some ways that's good, as the designer can better optimise it for good sound. You don't even get a piece of 'wet-string' to use as an antenna – such is the paired-down nature of the package!

Sound quality

The Exposure's sonic character is far more lavish than its looks! As it transpires, this tuner impresses with its subtlety and fine detail and shows a nice, smooth tonal balance with plenty of space to the recorded acoustic. Tuning in to Classic FM, *Prelude* from JS Bach's *Prelude and Fugue No. 1* is a pleasure to listen to. There is a gentle grace to the way the 2010S2 makes music; it isn't showy or overly impressive, but rather sucks you into the recording and keeps you there in a beguiling way. I find it quite like the Myryad in this respect, and quite a contrast to the measured, analytical sounding Audiolab or the big, wide Yamaha with its slightly processed feel. The Arcam gives a larger, richer and more 'hi-fi' sound, but impressively the Exposure is just as much fun – maybe even more – to listen to.

Move a little uptempo to the strains of night-time BBC Radio 2, and Omar's *There's Nothing Like This* continues the laid-back, gently detailed theme. This tuner isn't quite show-stopping in its sound, but it is nevertheless very pleasant to sit in front of. Tonally, it's nicely rounded, without perhaps the brightness of the Audiolab, Yamaha or Sansui, although the bass isn't as visceral as the Myryad or Arcam. The midband is really good; vocals are even without a hint of nasality, and there's very little tendency for it to harden up even on loud, heavily compressed programme

ON TEST

Specifications for the 2010S2 tuner are almost nonexistent, but it has much to shout about. Buried in the menu is a very useful signal level display that reads '100' with a massive 80dBµV RF input (100% modulation) where the maximum analogue output is just 540mV, but the ultimate A-wtd S/N ratio is the best in our test at a huge 74.5dB. Clearly, the 2010S2's RF front-end is not crushed, but over-modulated inputs. THD is low at 0.12%.

The display reads '56' at 41.5dBµV where the 2010S2 achieves a creditable 50dB stereo A-wtd S/N ratio, only fractionally behind the Audiolab 8200T, and shows '33' as the tuner comes out of muting in Antenna mode (around 45dBµV in cable mode), equivalent to just 28dBµV (25µV RF) at 60% modulation. The FM response shows a +0.5dB boost through the presence band, rolling gently away to -1dB/10kHz and -4dB/18kHz, but stereo separation is poor at just 20dB. **PM**

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Output level & impedance

-30

Ultimate S/N ratio

+50

Sensitivity

+10

Distortion

-20

Frequency response

+30

KEY: ■ Group average
◀ % below average ▶ % above average

material. On speech, courtesy of the Beeb's *Today* programme on Radio 4, voices have a natural texture to them, with just the slightest hint of upper midband sparkle to remind us we're not listening to a £2,000 model. *The Archers* is a real treat, allowing this tuner to show off its impressive stereo width and depth; I discover that the Exposure is able to hang stereo images forward or behind the plane of the speakers with great ease – in marked contrast to some others here, which seems perhaps a little too close to mono for comfort. Overall then, it's certainly a most pleasant listening companion, without quite ever being the star of the show. ▶



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OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY

★★★★★

LIKE: Smooth, open, spacious sound

VALUE FOR MONEY

★★★★☆

DISLIKE: Fiddly tuning buttons; mediocre display; limited facilities

BUILD QUALITY

★★★★☆

WE SAY: Charming sounding tuner, but it faces some pretty stiff price competition

FEATURES

★★★★☆

OVERALL

★★★★☆