

# Core values

**Mark Craven** gets down with the latest Klipsch soundbar as he wonders just how much its lack of wi-fi will hold it back

**A**s the bigger of two new Klipsch soundbars, the Flexus Core 200 can be paired with additional rear surround speakers and/or a subwoofer. Even if you don't add the Flexus 100 sub (£330) or Flexus 100 surround speakers (£280), the Core 200 has audio envelopment in mind.

The channel count here is 3.1.2 Dolby Atmos, delivered by nine drivers. Left and right channels are handled by 60mm full-range units, while the centre channel gets an array of two 60mm bass/mid drivers and a 19mm horn-loaded tweeter. Rounding out the Core 200 are two full-range Dolby Atmos drivers and two 102mm woofers, mounted into its top surface.

Build quality is superb, the Core 200 feeling hefty at 8.5kg, and wall-mount brackets come supplied.

Connections are middling considering the price. There's no AirPlay, Google Cast or Spotify Connect, nor any scope to connect an external source via HDMI – the Core 200 is limited to an HDMI eARC input for hook up to a TV, plus optical, USB and Bluetooth. The last of those will be some people's choice for music playback and it also enables control of the soundbar via Klipsch's Connect Plus app in addition to the backlit remote. You can use either to adjust Bass and Surround levels, switch between Movie and Music presets, but only the app offers custom EQ settings.

The Flexus range is the first from Klipsch to benefit from electronics and tuning from sibling Onkyo – both companies part of the Premium Audio

Company since 2021. "American sound with Japanese precision" is the Flexus marketing line...

## Sound quality

The dynamic, attacking nature of the Core 200, and its impressive bass weight, is reminiscent of Klipsch's hi-fi speakers. It's an exciting listen, particularly with dramatic film material and music of an upbeat, punchy nature. A little more top-end nuance and sweetness wouldn't go amiss, but for the most part it sounds highly accomplished.

As hoped for from a Dolby Atmos design, the soundstage is large and well separated from the cabinet. A run-through of Atmos scenes from *Sonic The Hedgehog 2* and *The Batman* confirms a spacious presentation with impressive steering and effects placement – albeit without the wraparound immersion of a discrete multichannel system. Michael Giacchino's score for the caped crusader movie, with its thundering brass and percussion, is well handled.

For music, selecting the Core 200's Music preset doesn't mean conventional stereo or 2.1. The full nine-driver layout is still in play, but Klipsch's virtualisation processing (to expand the soundstage in Movie mode) is off the menu. This results in a slightly more focused presentation. Christina Aguilera's *Genie In A Bottle* is tight and punchy, and the bassline on Jennifer Paige's *Crush* is fluid and detailed.

The staccato rhythms and stadium-sized production of Def Leppard's *Pour Some Sugar On Me* are right in

## DETAILS

**PRODUCT**  
Klipsch Flexus Core 200

**ORIGIN**  
US/China

**TYPE**  
Dolby Atmos soundbar

**WEIGHT**  
8.5kg

**DIMENSIONS**  
(WxHxD)  
1,118x 78 x 126mm

**FEATURES**  
• 3.1.2-channel Dolby Atmos driver array including dual 102mm bass drivers and 19mm horn-loaded tweeter  
• Connections: USB; HDMI eARC; optical; Bluetooth  
• User EQ and preset listening modes

**DISTRIBUTOR**  
Henley Audio

**WEBSITE**  
klipsch.com  
henleyaudio.co.uk

the Core 200's wheelhouse. Vocals are strong, while the slam of the drum track is a reminder of the soundbar's twin bass drivers. The acoustic guitars on The Stone Roses' *Your Star Will Shine* sound a little congested, however, although a nudge upwards on the treble EQ on the app yields a slighter crisper overall balance. A little experimentation is worth it.

## Conclusion

The Flexus Core 200 has plenty of rivals at the price, many with wi-fi streaming for a much slicker user experience, including the more compact Sonos Beam (HFC 487). But in pure performance terms it channels Klipsch's audio heritage with a dynamic, authoritative sound that gets a lot of immersive mileage from the Dolby Atmos driver array. And only the most bass-hungry will be desperate to add the optional sub ●

## Hi-Fi Choice

### OUR VERDICT

**SOUND QUALITY**  
★★★★★ **LIKE:** Dynamic and immersive sound; design and build

**VALUE FOR MONEY**  
★★★★★ **DISLIKE:** Lacks wi-fi streaming; more affordable rivals

**BUILD QUALITY**  
★★★★★ **WE SAY:** Klipsch's latest Atmos soundbar majors on its big, muscular performance

**FEATURES**  
★★★★★

### OVERALL

★★★★★