

Popular Mechanics 100 1902 2002

Technology

AUDIO

SPEAKERS THAT ROCK

New shapes and cool technology make outdoor speakers a special treat.

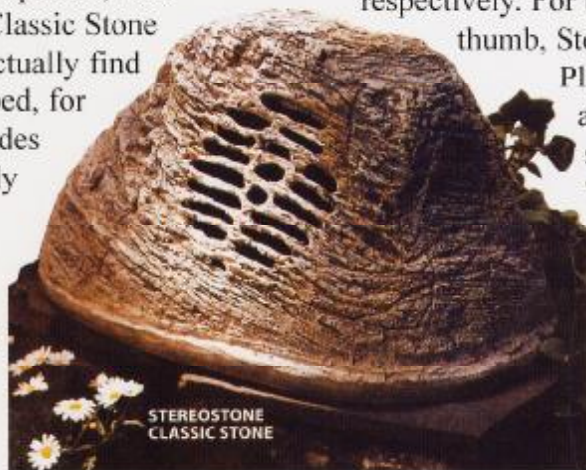
BY TOBEY GRUMET, Photos by Spencer Jones

Tired of the boring barbecue? Chances are, your guests are too. One way to pump up the excitement this season is with weatherproof speakers that not only sound great, but blend in well with the surroundings.

Outdoor speakers are in no way new, but this year companies are finding ways to make more of your garden, deck or pool area with speakers that offer omnidirectional sound, much slimmer enclosures, stainless steel, antirust bodies and, of course, all kinds of fun shapes. Here are our top choices from six speaker companies from high-end to simple.

Stereostone

The best thing about StereoStone's outdoor speakers is the natural, realistic design. That's right. These speakers really look like rocks not plastic, rock-shaped speakers. Of course, the Classic Stone speakers look best where you'd actually find rocks mixed in with your flowerbed, for example. The Classic Stone includes dual spider woofers, which usually are found only in very high-end speakers. A weather resistant surround suspension and poly mica cone materials protect them from the elements. If you're worried about someone walking away with your StereoStones,



rest easy as there are security hooks embedded in the bottom of the speakers. You can buy the Classic Stone speakers in 100-, 125- and 250-watt versions, which will run you \$229.95, \$299.95 and \$359.95,

respectively. For those of you with a green thumb, StereoStone also makes a Hanging Planter speaker that allows you to add live flowers or plants—the speaker is built into the bottom. The loudspeaker in the planter can handle 100 watts and, like the Classic Stone, is completely weatherproof. The planters cost \$159.95 each.

For more information, go to www.stereostone.com.



STEREOSTONE HANGING PLANTER

Singing Rocks
New 'Invisible' Outdoor Speakers Deliver Super Sound