

# Which soundbar or AV receiver is better for your home?

Are you having trouble deciding whether to set up a soundbar or an AV Receiver? Let's talk about both setups and how they compare in terms of sound quality, convenience, and cost!

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## What is a soundbar?

A soundbar is a compact, sleek speaker system designed to enhance sound quality when watching television. It is typically a long, narrow speaker system that can be mounted on a wall or placed in front of a TV. Soundbars often come with a built-in amplifier and sometimes include a subwoofer and separate side speakers for a high-end soundbar setup. They are famous for their simplicity of setup and use, as they usually only require a single connection to the TV.

## What is AV Receiver?

AV Receiver is the center for managing audio and video signals in a home theater system. It receives audio and video from a variety of sources (like Blu-ray players, game consoles, and cable boxes), processes these signals, and outputs them to connected speakers and TVs or projectors.

An AV Receiver setup uses a single AV Receiver and different types of speakers to create different variations of a surround sound system. AV receiver systems are known to deliver a more immersive and customizable surround sound experience but are often complicated to set up.

## Set up Soundbar compared to AV Receiver

Choosing the right sound system can greatly enhance your home entertainment experience. Whether upgrading an existing setup or starting from scratch, it's important to understand the strengths and weaknesses between your soundbar and AV (audio/video) receiver setup.

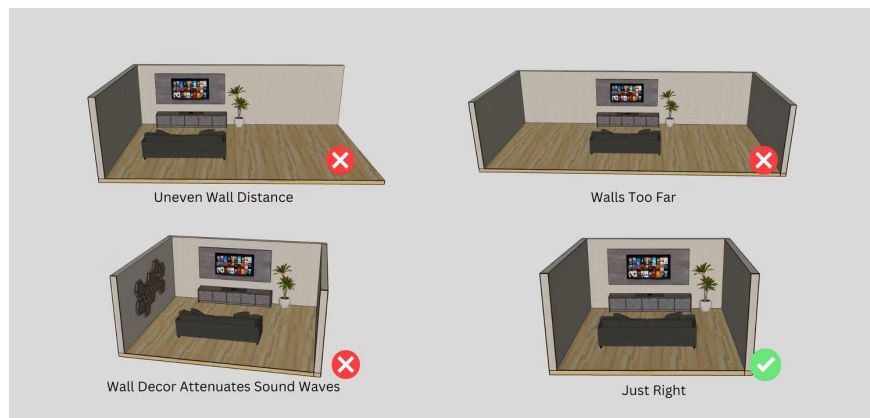
When talking about setting up a soundbar versus an AV Receiver, there are three main considerations: Surround sound, convenience, and cost.

### Surround sound

Most people buy a sound system and AV Receiver setup to enjoy an immersive sound experience and sound quality that is far superior to a standard TV.

The soundbar delivers an immersive audio experience using digital surround processing and multiple speakers to bounce sound waves off the ceiling and walls, creating virtual surround sound.

The problem with virtualized/simulated surround sound is that it only works in ideal spaces and conditions. Uneven wall spacing, wall decorations, high ceilings, and other items in the room can significantly reduce immersion. In addition to an ideal space, one also needs to be in the center of the room to experience a good level of sound immersion.



This makes surround sound in a soundbar unsuitable for 3D audio immersion.

Unlike a soundbar, the AV Receiver provides true surround sound by positioning multiple speakers in the room and processing the appropriate audio channels using the digital surround processor (DSP) in the AV Receiver.

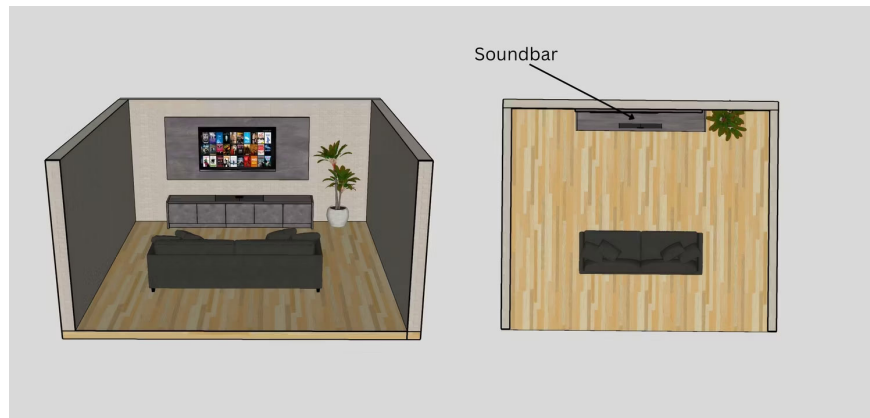
In a standard 5.1 surround sound system, an AV Receiver setup uses two satellite speakers placed in the viewer's front left and front right, two main speakers in the rear left and rear right, a The center speaker is in the middle right in front of the listener, and a subwoofer is anywhere near the setup.

An AV Receiver setup delivers a superior and more consistent surround sound experience than a soundbar system by strategically placing the speakers around the listener.

## Convenience

Soundbars don't have surround sound as good as AV Receiver setups because they're designed for more convenience.

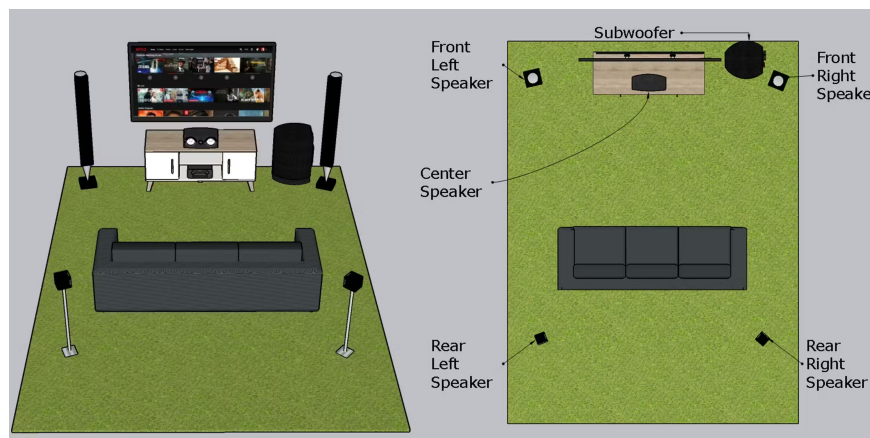
The default soundbar setup includes several small speakers in the soundbar. Because these speakers are small and interconnected, the soundbar only requires one cable. This makes the soundbar a great solution for those looking for a plug-and-play solution for their audio setup.



You can also add a subwoofer to handle the bass and even a few rear speakers for better surround sound. Of course, this means having to set up the speakers, which reduces the convenience factor of setting up the soundbar.

In contrast to the plug-and-play nature of the soundbar, the AV Receiver system is the exact opposite.

Because an AV Receiver setup uses multiple speakers along with the AV Receiver, a standard 5.1 surround sound setup means setting up 6 devices, each with different wires, locations, and mounting options. This complicates setting up AV Receivers, making them more inconvenient than soundbars, even with subwoofers and rear speakers.



## Expense

There are many options for sound systems that are less expensive than AV receivers. However, this does not automatically make the soundbar cheaper than an AV Receiver setup.

When comparing a soundbar and an AV Receiver with similar sound quality and sound stage, an AV Receiver system will be the more cost-effective solution.

This is because the AV Receiver setup prioritizes sound quality and audio playback capabilities but takes longer to set up and requires larger space.

With no limitations on space, style, and convenience, manufacturers can easily design speakers and AV Receivers at a price significantly lower than a comparable soundbar setup. Furthermore, the AV Receiver setup

can work with almost any speaker brand using all types of connectors and interfaces, making the setup cheaper to maintain, repair and upgrade.

In contrast, soundbar setups with a subwoofer and rear speakers often use proprietary technology and are sometimes only sold in bundles. So there's no guarantee that you'll be able to upgrade your soundbar system in the future.

If your home setup has great sound quality and a full surround sound experience then an AV Receiver setup will be a less expensive solution. But if you just need a better audio experience than your TV already provides, a soundbar is the cheaper option.

## **Why should you use Soundbar?**



For many users, a soundbar is the ideal choice because of its simplicity and effectiveness. It's especially suitable for casual viewers who want an audio upgrade without the hassles of a full surround sound system. Soundbars can dramatically improve dialogue clarity in TV shows and movies, enhance the overall soundscape, and do it without overwhelming a living space with too much equipment. .

## **When should I upgrade to an AV Receiver setup?**



If you're an audiophile or have a large room that could benefit from a more immersive audio experience, upgrading to an AV Receiver setup could be the right move. This is especially suitable for those who appreciate good audio fidelity and a realistic surround sound experience. An AV Receiver setup is also a better choice for those looking to build a dedicated home theater room.

Ultimately, the decision between a soundbar and an AV Receiver will depend on your specific needs, room size and configuration, time, and budget. While soundbars provide a simple and straightforward way to improve TV sound, AV Receivers offer a richer, more immersive experience that can be customized to your liking. Consider what's most important for your home entertainment and choose accordingly.

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