

Different Kinds of Electronics (The classes)

In every electronic class of products, there are different levels of quality. The manufacturers know this, and some customers know this. There are different markets, for different types of goods. Some people can afford the best, and some people can't. So in every field of Electronics you have different quality of goods. This is probably one of the most important things you will learn on this site. Because it affects everything you do. How good a product is, will affect how much you spend on a product, and how long a product will last, as well as how well a certain product will perform.

There are 3 different types of Electronic Categories, and within those 3 categories, there are 3 more. Making a total of 9 different categories in every type of electronic item classification. Let me explain. The 3 basic categories of electronics are

#1 Low End Electronics

#2 Middle of the road Electronics (Called Mid-Fi or General consumer)

#3 High End Electronics

These are the three basic categories that all electronics fall into. Now within these 3 categories are 3 more categories within each. Here are the main categories with the sub categories listed also.

#1 Low End Electronics

A Cheap Electronics & Super Low End

B General Low End Products

C Best of the Low End Products

#2 General Consumer Electronics

A Entry Level Products

B Average products purchased

C Top of the line General Consumer Electronics

#3 High End Electronics

A Higher Line than General Electronics but same Brand

B Super High End, Rarely seen except in specialty stores

C The best of the best. Money is no object.

I will explain each of these categories in detail, so you will have a good grip on what category you want to be in. Throughout this entire book, every product that I list will have a number next to it, to tell you what category and sub category it belongs to. This will make it very easy for you to figure out what category you will want to purchase in. For example a Kenwood Car CD Player will have a (2b) next to it meaning that this is a General Consumer Electronic Item in the Average category. This will help you in your buying decisions.

Here we go with the explanations of every category.

NOTE...Before I start explaining these categories, many companies have different products for these different categories to establish a different market. For instance Kenwood has many different products to fit into many of the categories. Kenwood has products that cover 2A, 2B, 2C & 3A. They have chosen to make products that cover these areas, as you will see with many companies that I talk about. Each company will make different products that fall into different classifications.

#1A Low End Electronics (Super Low End)

These products are the bottom of the barrel. These are the items that you will see advertised as lost leaders. They will be sold at cost just to get you in the door. \$4 speakers, \$18 tape decks, \$49 CD Players etc. All of this stuff is made in the cheapest companies overseas, and has basically no warranty on it what so ever. These items will have prices on them that sound too good to be true. 15" woofers for \$29. All of this stuff comes from China, Taiwan, and Korea and will have crazy names on them that you have never heard of. This stuff has a huge market, because it looks as though you are getting something really nice for a little bit of money. These items are sold heavily through flea markets, on the sides of roads, and will usually be sold at stores just to get you in. Some of these brands are Pyramid, Combat, Rockwood, Legacy, Kraco, etc. If you are selling a car, and need to fill a hole before you sell it, this is what you would buy because you don't care how it performs, or looks, and don't care if it breaks in 3 weeks..

#1B Low End Electronics (General Low End)

These products are one notch from the bottom. They serve a certain need. They are for the person who does not know much about electronics. You will see these products at Kmart, Wal-Mart, and other mass merchants. They include brands such as Audiovox, Kraco, Dual, Jensen, and many others. Usually these items will be very low priced, and you will rarely see these items in a store like Outrageous Audio. We carry some of this stuff, but we tell you that it will not last. Only the mass merchants or big chain stores are where you will see these items normally. These products are for the person who just needs something to get by!

#1C Low End Electronics (Best Low End)

These are the off brands that actually work. They are very inexpensive and are always made overseas. These are a step up from the last category, but they still do not compare to anything in the next step up. Again, you usually will see these products at Circuit City, Best Buy, Costco, or Wal-Mart. These may be the next models up from the bottom. The problem with these products is that they are very un-reliable, and warranty issues are a huge problem.

A final statement about low-end electronics. I have broken it down into 3 groups for you, but it is in your best interest to stay away from this stuff. You will have a much better life, if you just save your money, and get something in the next categories. The above categories as with all the categories that I talk about are found in every type of Electronics. Stay away from brands you have never heard of! They exist in all forms of electronics, from Computers to televisions, from radar detectors to Microwaves; you can apply everything that you learn in this book to every single electronic item that you are looking at. Make sure you do your research, and beware!

#2A General Consumer Electronics (Entry Level Products)

This is the beginning of the products that are made to last. These are the products that start to do exactly what they say they will do. Most good companies, such as Kenwood, JVC, Pioneer, Sony, and many more have what they call their “Entry Level Product”. What Entry-level product means, is it is a good product with no bells and whistles. This is usually the first model of any line. From televisions to stereos. The entry level of a good brand falls right here. It will do what it is supposed to do, but it will be stripped down of almost all features.

#2B General Consumer Electronics (General Products)

This is the bread and butter of the industry. Every company usually has a line of products that falls into this category. You will find these products everywhere. They are the average priced well-known brands. They usually do what they say, and have a few nice features on them. These products will be found in every store from Wal-Mart to specialty electronics stores. They are not usually the lowest price, but they are not far from the bottom. This is a good place to be, if you are not looking for anything spectacular. These products get the job done, have good warranties, and will last a fair amount of time. Stick to the brands you know.

#2C General Consumer Electronics (Top of the line Stuff)

This stuff is one step above the General Products above. Usually this will be the best stuff that the mass merchants have to offer if they even stock it. Wal-mart, Costco, Circuit City, Best Buy, will all have a few of these models (Rarely)(and usually the salesman will have no clue on how to use them) but they will not have the full line to choose from in most cases. These products are the best of the general products; they will be packed with features, lots of toys, and have many accessories at a good price. You will see much more of this type of product in specialty retailers, such as Outrageous Audio. In many custom installation applications, this is the beginning of the good stuff. The features that are available on all of these products are well worth the investment if they are going to be used. Sometimes it is best to step up to a product like this if you have future plans for expansion. Also, the warranties on this type of product as well as the reliability are far better than the above categories. When you buy in this category or above, it is very rare that warranty ever becomes an issue, because it doesn't break!

Special Note on the above categories. You have to be real careful when you are in a store. A store may represent an item as being in a different category than it truly is. For instance, a Pioneer CD player may be represented as the “best in the world” by the salesman, well, as you will soon learn, the best stuff on the market is very hard to find. So don’t be fooled by a salesman just trying to make his commission.

#3A High End Electronics (Same Brands Different Line)

This is where we start getting into the good stuff. This stuff is what separates the average consumer to a hobbyist. Somebody who really wants the best bang for the buck will want to dabble in this area. Most of the good companies will have a product that fits into this category. You will never see these products in a big store, such as Wal-mart or Best Buy or Circuit City. These are very extensive units, and the functions of the units have to be understood by the salesman thoroughly before the item can be presented. Again this is true in all product categories. Just to name a few brands that you would want to look for. In Car Audio, you would look for Kenwood Excelon, Boston Acoustics, Orion HCCA, etc. These are examples of the company’s top of the line products. The salesman has to go to training to be able to present these units to the customer properly. Re-liability, as well as performance cannot be touched. This is the stuff that the cost of the item is second to the quality. Cost is an issue, but most people that buy these types of items want it to last for years and want the best of the best. Spend a little more up front for an item like this, and it may last 10 times longer and sound 10 times better. All of the items in this category will have features that people only dream about.

#3B High End Electronics (Super High End)

Most specialty stores will only have one or two items like this in their store. These are the items that are very high priced, top of the line, special order items. Most salesmen will not know about these items. If you find them in a store to play with, you are lucky. This category is where money is not really worried about. At Outrageous Audio, we have this gear if you want the best. Anytime I have sold products like this to people, it amazes me how they really don’t pay attention to details. The features are so involved in this type of product that they require many hours of dedication to learn how to operate each unit. Phone book size manuals, with more features than anybody could ever imagine. You need to sit in your driveway for hours learning all of the features. FUN FUN FUN!!!

#3C High End Electronics (The Wacko Crazy Stuff)

Okay, you are going to read this paragraph, and you are going to think that I am full of B.S. Well, I am not. This paragraph is why I can say that most cities do not carry “High End Electronics”. Salesman may call their stuff high end, but this is the top of the top. The best of the best. I have a close friend here in Oregon that owns a High End Home theatre store. His systems start at \$400,000, and go up from there. \$100,000 amplifiers, \$400,000 over head projector units, \$50,000 surround sound processors. Names like Krell & McIntosh, & Churchill.

This is High End Electronics. Shall I continue?? Well, here is some more for you, Phoenix Gold made (10 years ago) a 150Watt car amp that uses real gold in the circuit Board. The Amp sells for \$90,000. Some speaker wire companies offer speaker wire for your car that is \$1600.00 per foot. Tweeters for \$5,000 a pair, Subwoofers at \$15,000 each for a 12" woofer and that does not include the enclosure. Have I made my point? How about this? Record players yes record players for \$30,000. Well, I can assure you that I will not be buying much of this type of gear, because my last name is not Gates! I have sat in my friend's sound rooms, and listened to this equipment. Of course it is good. It gives you chills, but I don't have that type of money to spend on electronics. I am just letting you know that there is true High End equipment out in this world that most people do not know about. Many stores have never heard of these high-end brands, and will never carry them. These types of businesses cater to Basketball stars, Rap Stars, Movie Stars, and big business owners. They rarely advertise. My friend has more business than he can handle. He is booked for installations for the next 2 years. Somebody out there has some big money. So when you are talking about High End Electronics, make sure you realize how High End you are talking about!

So now that you understand the different categories of electronics...you will have a better grasp on what you truly want or need. I hope this has helped!