

Now playing on Sonos: High-resolution music from streaming service Qobuz

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Wireless speaker maker Sonos is blasting high-resolution music.

Music from streaming [service](#) Qobuz (\$14.99 monthly or \$149.99

annually, qobuz.com) can now be listened to in "studio quality" high-resolution 24-bit quality on Sonos speakers, the companies say. Until now, Qobuz and other [music](#) streaming services on Sonos have topped out at CD-quality sound.

Music streaming services such as Tidal and Deezer offer high-resolution music on computers and apps, but they are reproduced in CD-quality on Sonos—at least for now. Sonos says more high-res partners could be coming.

High-resolution streamed music of CD-quality or better has been a niche offering for years, but there are signs the market is blossoming. There's enough interest that Spotify, the music streaming market leader, plans to offer a new Spotify HiFi subscription level later this year.

Spotify has the largest share of U.S. digital music listeners, capturing nearly 25%, or 218.6 million who are expected to listen to digital audio this year, estimates eMarketer. In comparison, Amazon Music captures about 15%; Apple Music, 11%.

Comparatively, Qobuz, which became available in the U.S. in 2019, is much smaller, with hundreds of thousands of subscribers, the company says. But a majority of its 70 million-plus tracks are in 24-bit/192 kHz Hi-Res quality. That is roughly 29 times the quality of MP3 and better than CDs, which are mastered at 16-bit/44.1 kHz. (The more bits and higher sampling rate should result in richer sound.)

During the coronavirus pandemic, music quality has become more important, says Qobuz U.S. managing director Dan Mackta. "People have had more attention to pay to music, especially at home, so there's been more time to get into the sounds and the tech we use to enjoy it," he told U.S. TODAY in an email exchange.

This is timely for Santa Barbara, California-based Sonos, which touts having speakers in 11 million homes. And it is just about to bring to market the portable wireless Roam [speaker](#) (\$169), its newest product, next month. The new speaker will stream Qobuz Hi-Res music when used on Wi-Fi.

Sonos, which became a [public company](#) in 2018, has become more than just a speaker company. Its own ad-supported Sonos Radio service launched in April 2020 and a paid subscription service (\$7.99 monthly, no ads) became available in November.

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