



# PRO

# MOBILE

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## Equipment Reviews

Pioneer CDJ-2000, Peavey PR15D Speakers, dJay for iPad, KAM KCD3000 USB, ADJ Quad Phase, Training Your Next Great DJ, Turbosound Milan M15 Speakers

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[www.promobile.org.uk](http://www.promobile.org.uk)

The Peavey PR15D is an active speaker cabinet with bi-amped Class D amplification. For the non-tech-geeks out there, this means that within each speaker are two separate amplifiers, one 150 watt unit powering the 15" woofer and a separate 50 watt version connected to the 1.4" compression driver. These amplifiers utilise modern Class D technology, which allows them to be much lighter than traditional amp designs.

I have previously not been a fan of active speaker systems, as combining the heaviest bit of my mobile DJ kit (the amp) with the bulkiest (the speakers) just seemed to make no sense. However, thanks to the PR15Ds' robust, yet lightweight, polypropylene injection-moulded casing and Class D amplifier design they actually weigh just

18Kg, which is less than my existing passive 15" cabinets!

There are, of course, also advantages to active speaker systems. Firstly, setup is made easier, with only one connection required direct from mixer to speaker (instead of mixer to amp and then amp to speaker). Another advantage is that the speakers and amplifiers are matched by the designers to give the best possible combination. A system utilising a pair of active speakers also automatically provides a certain level of backup, which is essential for professional DJs. If you're running a system with a single amp powering a pair of speakers and the amp goes - that's the end of the night! If you're using a pair of active cabs and an amp goes, you'll only lose one speaker and can still limp to the end of the night.

As I have already mentioned, the PR15Ds have a polypropylene construction, which features handles on either side for lifting and a third handle on top for carrying and positioning. This makes the speakers very easy to manoeuvre which, together with their light weight, means that they are ideal for mobile DJ use. Even after using them a couple of times I still found myself bracing for a much heavier lift as they look as if they should weigh much more than they do.

Mains power is provided to the cabinets by an IEC input socket, which is paired with a two-position on/off rocker switch. Two power indicator LEDs are provided, one on the back panel and another on the front beside the peavey logo. The back panel LED also has a dual function, as it glows green when the power is connected and red when the amplifier's DDT compression kicks in.

Audio input is provided to the speaker via a combination ¼" jack and XLR input socket. Thanks to an internal pre-amp, the input can be switched between standard line level and mic level sensitivity, which means that if necessary a mic can be connected directly to the speaker. This may be useful



for a simple 'dry hire' system for wedding speeches, especially as a ¼" jack line output is also provided so multiple active speakers can be 'daisy-chained' together. Another LED illuminates green for line-level mode and yellow for mic-level, while a ground lift switch is also included, which disconnects XLR pin 1 from direct contact with ground to eliminate hum caused by a ground loop. A rotary level control is also provided, as is a second 'direct' input ¼" jack socket, which bypasses the unit's preamp and therefore the level control.

If I were forced to find fault with the PR15Ds, and thinking of other active cabs I've come across in the past, there are no tone controls (bass, mid, treble) and no internal crossover for use with separate subs. Personally, however, I actually prefer this 'straight-forward' implementation, as I have separate active crossover and equaliser units built into my playback rack and would rather have these controls located at my DJ position than out on the actual speakers.

A metal front grille provides protection to the speaker cone and a mounting socket on the base of the cabinet allows it to be positioned on a speaker stand or a pole attached to a sub. A 15" passive sub cabinet, the PR Sub, is also available from Peavey as part of the PR range, as are a collection of other passive and active speakers of varying sizes. The PR12 (passive) and PR12D (active) are similar cabinets based on a smaller 12" driver, while the range is completed by the PR10 (passive) which has an even smaller 10" woofer.

Due to time constraints, I only had the chance to try the PR15Ds out at two gigs before writing this review; however they were in two very different venues. The first was a fairly small function room in an up-market hotel for a December Wedding. I used the PR15Ds as my only sound source for the entire evening and they were more than adequate for the job. The background music during the wedding breakfast was

clearly audible throughout the room, but not in any way intrusive. I also provided radio mics for the speeches; the sound was crisp and true to life and I suffered no feedback problems. Then for the main dancing portion of the evening reception I achieved a great sound that was both crystal clear and suitably 'heavy' so that the dancers could feel the beat. Even at the end of the evening when the groom's 'raver' mates started to 'throw shapes' on the dance-floor to their requested 'anthems' I still didn't find myself lacking volume.

The second event that I took the PR15Ds along to was a Corporate Christmas party night at a hotel that I regularly supply. 300 were served dinner and the majority stayed to party until the bitter end. The room is the largest that I work in regularly and takes some filling. I tried out the PR15Ds while setting up before the guests arrived and they did a good job of taking on the large space, however I'm pretty sure that when the 300 revellers took to the floor I would have been lacking in 'omph'! If I'd also had the PR Sub base bins the system may have been up to the challenge, however this space is just too big for a pair of active 15s alone, regardless of their quality. In the end I used my usual tops and bins on the stage and then put the Peaveys at the back of the room to provide 'in fill' sound for the dance-floor. I often do this in big rooms to ensure plenty of volume on the dance-floor without having to run my main PA so loud that I deafen those people sitting at tables near to the front! The PR15Ds did just as good a job in this 'supporting role' as they did the previous evening when they were the 'main attraction'.

Overall, I was very impressed by the PR15Ds. They offer good high frequency clarity and plenty of bottom end 'clout' from a well-designed and elegantly implemented active speaker. While they are not the cheapest active 15" cabinets on the market, I do believe that they offer excellent value for money due to a good combination of sound quality, usability and, most of all, low weight!