

Home Theatre Screens – Why are they curved?

Ever since Stewart FilmScreen introduced the curved screen, people have been asking why they should even look at this option. As you will learn, it is easily worth the extra cost.

Most movies are shot in a wider aspect ratio than what we see on TV, and this is the first reason to look at a screen differently. Movies are 2.35 times wider than it is tall, compared to HDTV which is 1.78 times wider than it is tall. If you use your home theatre mostly for movies, your screen should match this ratio.

Depending on your projector, you may require an optional lens. If you watch a movie on a regular wide screen TV or movie screen with a 1.78:1 ratio you will end up with black bars on the top and bottom of the screen. Some of us find this annoying, but the real reason you should be annoyed is you are missing 33% of the picture quality, 33% of the brightness, and wasting 33% of the cost of your projector because it is only producing black bars on 33% of the screen.

In commercial movie theaters, the lens stretches the picture horizontally, the projector adjusts for this in software and you end up a full high resolution, beautiful picture with no black bars.

Today's home theater screens are usually at least 10' wide and getting wider all the time. As the image reaches the outer edges of the screen, it is slightly out of focus compared to the centre of the screen. Curving the screen a bit fixes this problem, and increases the light level because more of the light from the screen gets reflected back to where it counts...your eyes. Again, exactly as commercial movie theatre screens are designed.

33% more picture, 33% more brightness, better picture geometry and better focus



The sound can be improved as well because the front 3 speakers can now be installed directly behind the screen, putting the sound source and the picture source in the same place. This greatly improves the overall performance of the system. As you might have guessed, this is also how commercial movie theatres are designed.

Curved screens achieve what we've been wanting for years: a true movie experience in a private and comfortable family environment. If you want proof, visit a home theater showroom with a 2.35:1 theater and curved screen. Joseph of course has a curved Stewart screen...

September 21, 2012

Our first "real" home theatre! What a project to undertake, when you know little about what is needed. Luckily, we stumbled across Mike Ohman of beyondAUDIO in Kelowna. His professional, highly knowledgeable and most of all honest approach helped us navigate through some tough decisions.

Mike made sure we were spending money wisely and not wasting it on items that would ultimately not benefit the experience or quality. The image quality and size of screen is perfectly arranged to the size of the room. The result is stunning and we use our theatre many times a week. But the sound, I will only describe with one word: AMAZING! Thank you for your excellence.

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