

Low fidelity audio

## ByteNoise

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It seems that as much as we claim otherwise, we all like low fidelity audio, especially the musicians amongst us.

When Mellotrons first came out in 1963, they sounded amazing because they could recreate the sounds of many different instruments at the mere touch of a keyboard. Decades later, digital samplers have made these old mechanical devices obsolete in terms of realism, but they are still highly sought after machines. They are not popular because they reproduce other instruments well. They are highly prized possessions amongst many musicians precisely because they *don't* sound like the instruments they are emulating. They have a character all of their own. It is their unstable tuning and tape hiss that make them so desirable.

The digital samplers that replaced the Mellotron have now surpassed CDs in terms of fidelity, but many popular artists such as [Fatboy Slim](#) still use old 12-bit and 8-bit samplers because they have a "crunchy, grainy quality" to them.

Even Korg's latest synthesisers, such as the Triton Extreme workstation, have a piece of technology in them that has been obsolete since the sixties: a vacuum tube.

Then there's the technology to play the finished music. Vinyl still has supporters, in part because of its warm sound. This warm

sound is not in the original recording, hence detracts from the ideal playback, but it is nonetheless pleasing to the ear.

It seems that what's objectively, scientifically high fidelity and what subjectively sounds good are seldom the same. In other words, we *like* the sound of things that are imperfect.

Just don't take things so seriously that you end up arguing with someone about which is better out of analogue or digital synthesisers, or vinyl and CDs.