

IsoTek V5 Elektra power conditioner

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IsoTek is incredibly popular in delivering power products with an excellent price to performance ratio. In producing its V5 range, the company is mostly replacing new for old, but in the Elektra, IsoTek has created a stripped-down model that delivers much of what the V5 Aquarius does in a more cost-effective manner.

The curved case of the V5 range is still on show with the Elektra, but the thicker fluted panel of the V5 Aquarius (tested in Issue 200) and V5 Titan (tested in Issue 209) is replaced by a more uniform black or silver wrap-around with a black top-plate. Heat vents carefully hidden in the side cheeks of the bigger boys are across the top plate, and the Elektra uses a power switch and fuse system instead of resettable thermomagnetic fuses.

There are differences beneath the skin, but the V5 Elektra and the V5 Aquarius share a lot in common too. Both have four independent source component inputs (5A for the Elektra, 6A for the Aquarius) and two high-power independent inputs (10A and 16A respectively). Both are fully star earthed with high purity, silver-plated copper internal wiring with FEP dielectric (6N copper in the Elektra, OHNO copper in the Aquarius). The big on paper change is the greater surge protection and 5dB greater RFI rejection in the bigger model. As the V5 Elektra offers up to 67,500A of protection, this is nothing to sniff at.

Each outlet of the V5 Elektra uses four independent, six-stage 'delta filter' power cleaning networks. These give almost 20dB of power cleaning at 1kHz (reference 600 Ohms), which improves

to nearly 40dB at 10kHz. A further five independent filter stages are placed between each output combined with IsoTek's Adaptive Gating system. Most power filters of this style 'common' output sockets together, running each in series connection. IsoTek feels this means Differential Mode noise, created by the connected load (your audio components), will cross-contaminate between the output sockets. This means the electrical architecture and multiple power cleaning networks, one for each output socket of the V5 Elektra, dramatically reduce both Differential Mode and Common Mode noise.

It's probably OTT at this level, but IsoTek includes its System Link for extending the number of outlets while maintaining star earthing. It's also optimised for IsoTek's own cables. >>





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» I'm busy comparing the V5 Elektra with the V5 Aquarius, which is a bit silly. The real money is on how it works next to the EVO3 Aquarius, the model that the V5 replaced. There are a lot of these excellent power conditioners on the market, both new ones selling at deep discount in the wake of the replacement and older models as people upgrade. Should you opt for the older EVO3 design or the new V5 Elektra?

Simple question, simple answer – yes. Would you like a longer answer – hell yes! Unless you can get the EVO3 Aquarius for an absolute steal, go for the V5 Elektra every time. It offers more of everything except background noise. There's on paper a lot more filtration and conditioning, so you are getting cleaner juice, both from the wall and from keeping each product's hands clean in the context of the whole system. This means greater focus to the sound, less grit and grain in the high frequencies and midband, cleaner and more clearly defined bass notes at the other end, and even less of the 'boat anchor' effect on rhythm that used to plague power products used with smaller amplifiers.

In reality, the EVO3 Aquarius did away with the ponderous sound associated with power conditioners

in this setting, but the V5 Elektra cuts through that slowing effect with even more vibrancy and rhythmic expressiveness. I think this is something unique to the V5 upgrades because all the IsoTek designs in this new launch thus far just get out of the way of the rhythm of a system.

Feeling hot, hot, hot!

As 'luck' would have it, the V5 Elektra turned up during one of 2022's heatwaves, and the heat did odd things to unfiltered power. On the upside, no-one was around and electronics were turned off in order to keep cool. On the other hand, the sound quality was terrible! The V5 Elektra came to the rescue brilliantly. While this might be an *in extremis* example of its performance, if the V5 Elektra can keep the poor juice of heat-struck transformers sounding good, it will do wonders during normal working hours.

Like other IsoTek products, the V5 Elektra brings a sense of calm to the sound. It's not as spatially enhanced as the V5 Aquarius, which has an uncanny effect of making loudspeakers disappear and making an image wider. The V5 Elektra has some of those properties, and more so than previous EVO3 editions. By earlier standards, the V5 Elektra is holographic.

As you climb the IsoTek ladder you get more smoothness and refinement, but if this is your first IsoTek rodeo, having heard the V5 Elektra, your first words on reading that might be 'More?' The V5 Elektra is an extremely impressive mains filter/cleaner/conditioner, one that makes a hell of a lot of sense in systems in and around £5,000. In that context, this is an upgrade that is all-but irresistible, and will set listeners on a path to include power products – and probably IsoTek power products – in their systems for good.

Sometimes power product reviews are a little difficult to write and place in context, but maybe that's because we're being polite about their performance. The IsoTek V5 Elektra needs no apologies or excuses; you plug it in, you hear what it does, you buy it. It will keep your system cosseted in great power until you reach some very high-end audio kit. +

Technical specifications

Number Of Outlets 6

Type Of Outlets UK, EU, US, AU & CH

Mains Inlet 10A LEC C14

Mains Voltage 100–230V/50–60Hz

Medium Current 230V X4 (5A – 1,150W Total), 115V X4 (5A – 575W Total)

High Current 230V X2 (10A – 2,300W Total), 115V X2 (10A – 1,150W Total)

System Link X1

Surge Protection 67,500A

Dimensions (W×H×D) 450 × 10.6 × 35cm

Weight 9.0kg

Price £1,595

Manufacturer IsoTek Systems

isoteksystems.com

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