

# TOTEM

## ACOUSTIC



## OWNERS MANUAL

[totemacoustic.com](http://totemacoustic.com)

# Congratulations

**We sincerely thank you for having granted Totem the special place in your living environment. These speakers are designed to redefine your musical understanding and open corridors of new experiences. We hope you not only enjoy but experience Totem as your guide to a new and rewarding listening environment! You will without a doubt experience a Totem moment.**

## Our Vision

**Created in 1987, Totem's mission is to develop loudspeakers capable of producing an involving performance that is true to the artist's intention. Our goal is to provide designs that are affordable, cosmetically timeless, and invoke an emotional response. Music, movies, TV, and video games are accurately rendered with a powerful focus that is yet soul stirring.**

**Discover yours today.**

## Journey

**For nearly four decades, Totem continues to be a world leader in combining the utmost in spatial restitution while maintaining an expansive, musically dynamic and involving sound field. This accurate, three-dimensional expansiveness and musical liquidity can be actually augmented via our smaller chassis design as we have proven through our storied history.**

# DISCOVER YOUR TOTEM

## ACOUSTIC AND AESTHETIC OBJECTIVES OF ALL TOTEM PROJECTS INCLUDE:

~Enormous sound and powerful bass from a smaller cabinet that can be conveniently integrated into any room. These are often considered mutually exclusive characteristics.

~Meticulously crafted for peak performance that lasts decades. Designed obsolescence is rampant in consumer electronics, we favour longevity.

~Aesthetics must be timeless and not trendy. Totem speakers never go out of style.

## ALL TOTEM SPEAKERS ARE DEVELOPED WITH THESE 4 DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS:

1-Proprietary scientific formulas are the foundation for the essence of Totem, eschewing outdated design guidelines and parameters.

2-Customized drivers, each quite unique and either manufactured by us or built to our exacting specs.

3-Hand made crossovers composed of the most exotic components and meticulously assembled.

4-Artisinal cabinet construction, including lock mitred assembly, interior and external veneers, Borosilicate in some cases, and graded MDF.

the speakers from the box and save all interior and exterior packaging for future use.

## **THE 4 DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS PRODUCE THE FOLLOWING 3 SONIC SIGNATURES:**

- 1- Holographic imaging for a three-dimensional, expansive soundstage.**
- 2- Bass impact that is forceful and logic defying, considering the conveniently sized enclosure.**
- 3-Most importantly, the linear phase response for uncanny, almost magical realism.**

## **REGISTRATION**

**We very much would appreciate if you took the time to register your product online. Product registration leads to quicker assistance and more efficient support in the rare case that your speaker should have a problem. This can be done quickly and easily in the support section of our site: <https://totemacoustic.com/totem-acoustic-product-registration/>**

**If you require additional information or further assistance on the Totem you've discovered, contact your TOTEM AUTHORIZED DEALER or visit the Frequently Asked Questions under warranty section of the Totem website at: <https://totemacoustic.com/faq/>**

# Environmental Information



**All Totem products are designed to comply with international Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) and CARB certification.**



**This appliance is labeled in accordance with European Directive 2002/96/ EC concerning waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE). This label indicates that this product should not be disposed of with household waste. It should be deposited at an appropriate facility to enable recovery and recycling.**

## UNPACKING

Totem Acoustic keeps to a strict quality control regimen and all factory-sealed products leave our facility in perfect condition. If there are any damages visible or concealed that has occurred in handling it must be reported immediately to your Authorized Totem Dealer.

Carefully remove the speaker(s) from the box(es); take caution as the size often defies the actual weight.

Save all custom cartons and packaging foam for future use.

**TOTEM**   
Made in Canada 

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## **Totem Limited Warranty**

**All Totem products are created with the utmost care and quality in mind. If ever a problem should arise, Totem's speakers are covered by a five (5) year limited warranty, (excluding subwoofers) starting from the date of purchase.**

**The Totem limited warranty applies to products in normal home use only. The warranty is void if serial numbers have been altered or removed. The warranty is void if products show signs of abuse. The warranty is void if the speakers have been tampered with.**

**Speakers sold as 'demo' or 'floor models' from an authorized dealer have a limited warranty of 1-year parts and service from the date of purchase. Cosmetic issues or missing accessories are not covered by this limited warranty.**

**Totem speakers can require as little as 75 hours and as much as 300 hours of actual music playing time as a minimal break-in period. During this time, refrain from playing them at very loud levels. You will notice a definite gradual improvement in the cohesiveness of the music reproduction as this occurs.**

**We reserve the right to any future change or modification without notice. If you have any further queries or require any classifications, feel free to contact your Totem Authorized Dealer.**

**If you require additional information or further assistance on the Totem you've discovered, contact your TOTEM AUTHORIZED DEALER or visit the Frequently Asked Questions under warranty section of the Totem website at: <https://totemacoustic.com/faq/>**

## **SPEAKER POSITIONING AND PLACEMENT**

Totem produces speakers with great dispersion, both on the vertical and horizontal axis. They can be placed in extremely varied positions and still produce a large and accommodating, non-shifting soundstage. Keep in mind that a room with a variety of materials will deliver a much more harmonized sound. These speakers are of a superior design and will perform remarkably well in a variety of spaces. Particular care should be taken to ensure proper placement. Below are some guidelines for general in- room placement that can help optimize performance.

### **Bookshelf**

Bookshelf speakers should be placed on appropriate stands, or shelves, at ear level or above. If they are placed extremely close to the ceiling, you can position them upside down, with the tweeter underneath the woofer. Totem speakers not only image in-between their individual positions but also towards the outside of their axis (both vertical and horizontal). In placing the Bookshelf speakers in room, one may optimize their performance by placing them closer to one another

### **Floorstanding**

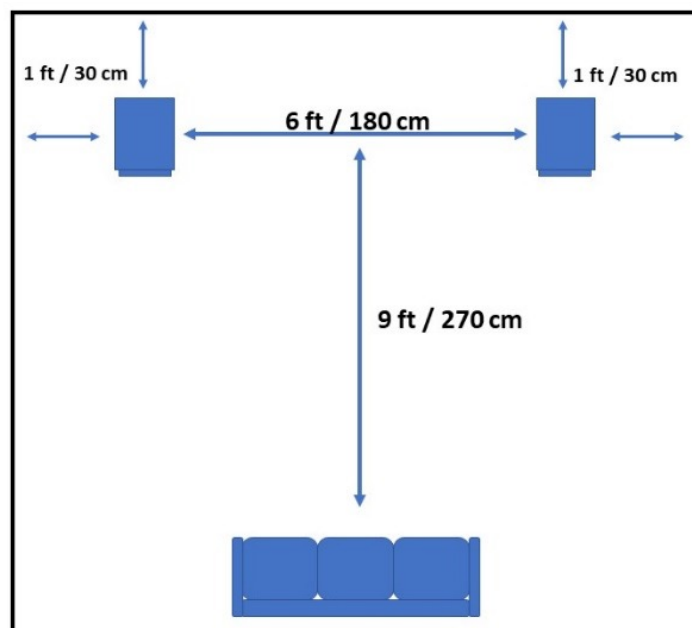
Our Floorstanding speakers create a three-dimensional, accurate soundstage without requiring any toe-in. If the distance between them is greater than 8 feet (2.5 m) and the room acoustics are having a substantial effect to the imaging, then you can experiment with angling them. Start by toeing-in one speaker slightly and then the other, if needed. Gradual experimentation is the key to finding the proper position.



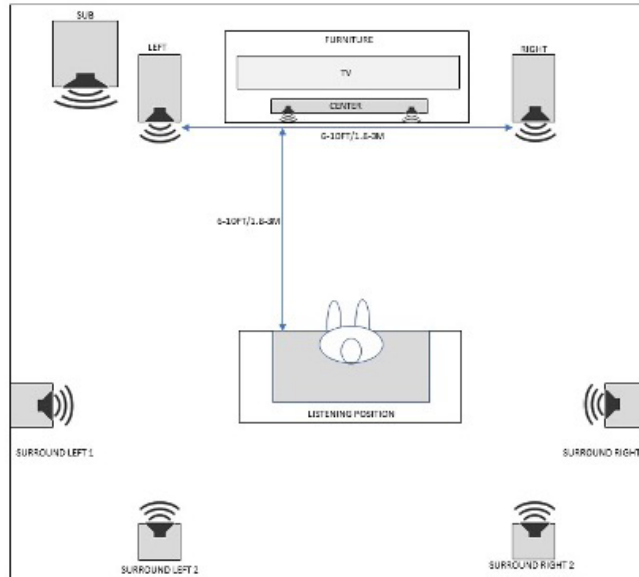
## SPEAKER POSITIONING AND PLACEMENT

Totem generally recommends that speakers be positioned 12 in (30.5 cm) from the back wall and side wall to allow a better energy flow and cleaner bass response. Moving them closer to boundaries will result in more bass enhancement but can negatively affect the perceived depth of the soundstage. Moving them farther will result in less bass reinforcement. Placing them anywhere from 4-10 feet (120-300 cm) apart will generally ensure a proper stereo image. A popular guideline is for the listening position distance to be 1.5 times the space between the speakers, so if speakers are 6 feet (180cms) apart you would be 9 feet (270cms) from them. But, all rooms and listening positions are different, so we encourage you to experiment with finding their final ultimate resting spot. We are confident you will thoroughly enjoy them whether they are placed on stands, in a bookshelf, on furniture, wall mounted, and anywhere else you want them.

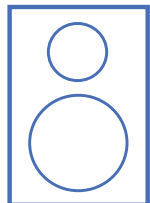
More information can be found on the Support page of our website. [www.totemacoustic.com](http://www.totemacoustic.com)



# SURROUND SOUND PLACEMENT GUIDELINES



Whether surround or stereo, the placement guidelines for the front two channels are the same. Here are some suggestions for the additional channels used home theater set ups.

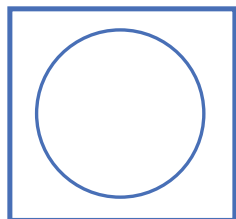


Surround speakers are generally placed behind and adjacent to the listening area, at a height of approximately 6 feet. In 7.1 systems, they are also located behind the listening position.



Center Channel Speakers are designed for dialog and main action to emanate from the video screen. The speakers should therefore be centered to the screen, 20-30 in (50.8 - 76.2 cm) above the floor, preferably equidistant from the main speakers. Our Center Channels are carefully voiced to seamlessly match the appropriate Mains. Please refer to our website [www.totemacoustic.com](http://www.totemacoustic.com) for the appropriate center channel pairing.

# SURROUND SOUND PLACEMENT GUIDELINES



Subwoofers can be placed virtually anywhere but closer to corners can enhance their bass output. Subwoofers can be placed virtually anywhere but closer to corners can enhance their bass output.

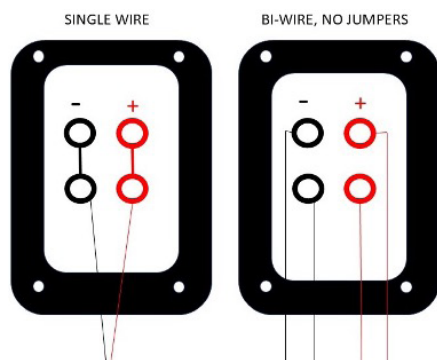
The key to maximizing their performance is experimentation. These suggestions are good guidelines to start but you might find that slight tweaks of their position could provide substantially better performance.

## PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

Model	Placement from Rear Wall	Placement Distance Apart	Break-in Time
Bookshelf			
Loon	6" - 3' / 15.24 - 91.44 cm	2' - 8' / 60.96 - 243.84 cm	71 - 100 hours
Bison	6" - 3' / 15.24 - 91.44 cm	2' - 8' / 60.96 - 243.84 cm	70 - 100 hours
Signature One	1' - 3' / 30.48 - 91.44 cm	4' - 12' / 121.92 - 365.76 cm	100-150 hours
Element Fire V2	As little as 6" / 15.24cms, but varies based on electronics and room acoustics	As little as 2' / 60.1 cm, but varies based on electronics and room acoustics	200-300 hours
Floorstanding			
Arro	6" - 3' / 15.24 - 91.4 cm	2' - 12' / 60.96 - 365.76 cm	100 - 150 hours
Bison Tower	9" - 3' / 22.86 - 91.44 cm	2' - 8' / 60.96 - 243.84 cm	70 - 100 hours
Bison Twin Tower	1' - 3' / 30 - 91.44 cm	4' - 12' / 121.92 - 365.76 cm	70 - 100 hours
Forest	1' - 6' / 30.48 - 182.88 cm	4' - 12' / 121.92 - 365.76 cm	100-150 hours
Forest Signature	1' - 6' / 30.48 - 182.88 cm	4' - 12' / 121.92 - 365.76 cm	100 - 150 hours
Wind	3' - 7' / 91.44 - 213.36 cm	6' - 14' / 182.88 - 426.72 cm	200 - 250 hours
Wind Design	3' - 7' / 91.44 - 213.36 cm	6' - 14' / 182.88 - 426.72 cm	200 - 250 hours
Tribe Tower	4" / 10.16cms	2'-15' / 60.1 - 457.2	100-200 hours
Element Metal V2	As little as 6" / 15.24cms, but varies based on electronics and room acoustics	As little as 2' / 60.1 cm, but varies based on electronics and room acoustics	200-300 hours

## CONNECTIONS

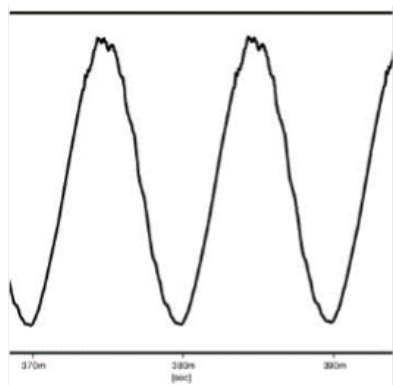
**All connections should be made with the equipment turned off.**



Totem speakers feature binding post terminals that accommodate 5 methods of connection: bare wire wrapped around the post, wire through the hole of the post, pin connectors through the posts, banana plugs, and spade lugs. A spade lug size of 8.1mm / 5/16" to 9 mm / 3/8" is required for proper fit. We recommend the WBT 0681 spade for its quality and fit but any spade in the size range can be used.

Totem delivers all speakers with jumpers installed. For a standard single wire connection simply leave the jumpers in place. Be certain to connect the positive red (+) terminal of the speaker to the positive red (+) output terminal on the amplifier. Be certain to connect the negative black (-) terminal of the speaker to the negative black (-) output terminal on the amplifier. The speakers will sound out of phase (bass loss and image distortion) if there is an error in your connection. Totem speakers can be bi-amped and bi-wired, please consult your amplifier manual for detailed instructions or contact your Totem Authorized Dealer.

## AMPLIFIER DISTORTION



The most common source of speaker damage results from amplifier distortion. Your amplifier may run out of clean power upon listening at loud levels. A direct consequence of such an overuse is distorted power, producing a greater quantity of distortion than its rated output power. This provides a threat of damage to any loudspeaker.

The greater the amplifier power, the safer the loudness potential. A 50 watt/channel amplifier, if driven above this 50 watt/channel limit, will naturally produce multiplicatively more distortion than at 50 watts. A 120 watt/channel amplifier will have substantial distortion above 120 watts but will not allow any significant distortion below 100 watts. To conclude, more amplifier power provides cleaner power and less possibility for damage.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

**No sound:** Verify that your pre-amp and/or amplifier, and receiver are plugged into the AC PLUG and are turned on. Verify that the wall AC outlet is functional and that your system is not on mute.

**Sound from one speaker only:** Verify the balance control on your system. Swap speaker sides to verify if speaker is functional. Verify power cords on all sources. (Amplifier, preamp, receiver, CD, DVR)

**Lack of bass or image:** Verify the polarity of speaker connections.

## VOLUME



The most common source of speaker damage results from amplifier distortion. Your amplifier may run out of clean power upon listening at loud levels. A direct consequence of such an overuse is distorted power, producing a greater quantity of distortion than its rated output power. This provides a threat of damage to any loudspeaker.

Distortion is inevitable when the amplifier is pushed above its rated output level, which may result in speaker damage. This occurs with any type of speaker. This type of damage constitutes abuse and may not be covered by warranty. Be attentive to the instant distortion commences, turning the volume control down to prevent speaker and/or amplifier damage.

## LIMIT

Be wary of providing more power than is appropriate for your speakers and damaging them. Although a more powerful amplifier may provide better sound, it is very important to utilize speakers within their power-range rating to prevent damage.

## DECOUPLING

**Totem recommends decoupling the loudspeaker to break down cabinet resonance for optimum results. There are a variety of unique decoupling systems offered by Totem. To find the appropriate system, you must match your speaker to the correct system**

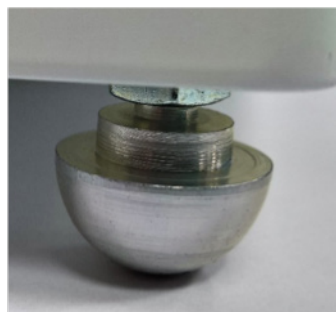
### SEMI-SPHERE DECOUPLERS

#### Included with TRIBE TOWER

Machined from solid aluminum, the Semi Sphere Decouplers are threaded to smoothly fit into the inserts at the bottom of the cabinet and the provided nuts allow for perfect leveling to any surface. The rounded surface prevents scratching like traditional spikes.



The base of the cabinet is fitted with a machined 1/4" 20 thread insert to accommodate the decouplers.



The decouplers provide stability, and acoustic decoupling with a non-scratch form.

## THE CLAW

**Included with Arro, Bison Tower, Bison Twin Tower, Forest and Wind.**



The Totem Claw is a revolutionary decoupling system whose unique geometric shape allows them to break up surface standing waves and control resonances on any surface.



Those used with the Forest and Wind are machined from solid aluminum, those on Arro, Bison Tower, Bison Twin Tower are machined from a high density inert composite. Before installation you may want to locate the final resting place of the speaker. The speakers are predrilled to accept the Totem Claws. A Robertson or Phillips screwdriver is necessary for this installation.

## ARTICULATING CLAW & RAIL PLATE

**Included with Forest Signature, Wind Design, Metal V2**

This unique decoupling system consists of two components; the articulating claw and the skid plate or rail.

This unique claw can be adjusted to modify the angle of the cabinet rake to allow optimal bass loading and phase/space articulation. The aluminum plate including two integrated, formed feet at the base of the speaker, effectively eliminates resonances between the floor and speaker enclosure. Together, they perfect the phase linearity and allows the speaker to take full advantage of its bass and soundstage capability.



Follow the same procedures for installation as the Claws. on page 16.  
Position the skid plate with the protruding feet at the back of the cabinet and use the supplied hardware to attach it. Element includes rubber ball bearing for the feet of the skid plate.



The Articulating claw consists of two pieces; the claw itself and a threaded insert.



The threaded insert fits into the base of the claw and can be adjusted as desired.

## LIST OF MATERIALS

**Forest** includes 3 Totem Claws, screws, and ball bearings per speaker. **Wind** includes 2 of each. **Metal V2** and **Forest Signature** have an articulating claw and skid plate that use 2 ball bearings each. The picture below shows the specific bearings included with each speaker: used.



1-Metal V2 includes both black rubber and metal bearings.

Either can be used.

2-Forest Signature uses black rubber bearings.

3-Forest uses silver metal bearings.

4-Wind uses silver metal bearings

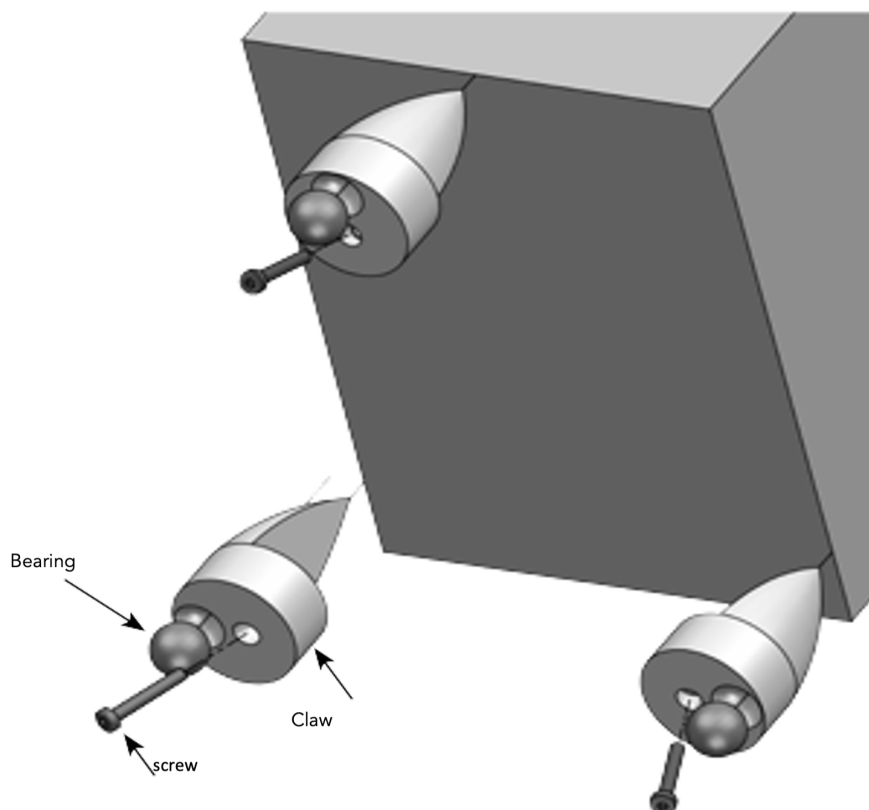
Claws for Arro, Bison Tower and Bison Twin Tower do not include nor require spikes or ball bearings. They have been designed and voiced for ideal performance without any additional accessory required. They are fitted with a ¼" 20 thread insert should you desire to purchase spikes.

## CLAW INSTALLATION

Start by positioning the speaker on the top portion of the cabinet. Take precaution to protect the finish by using the packaging foam end cap to secure your speaker prior to installation.

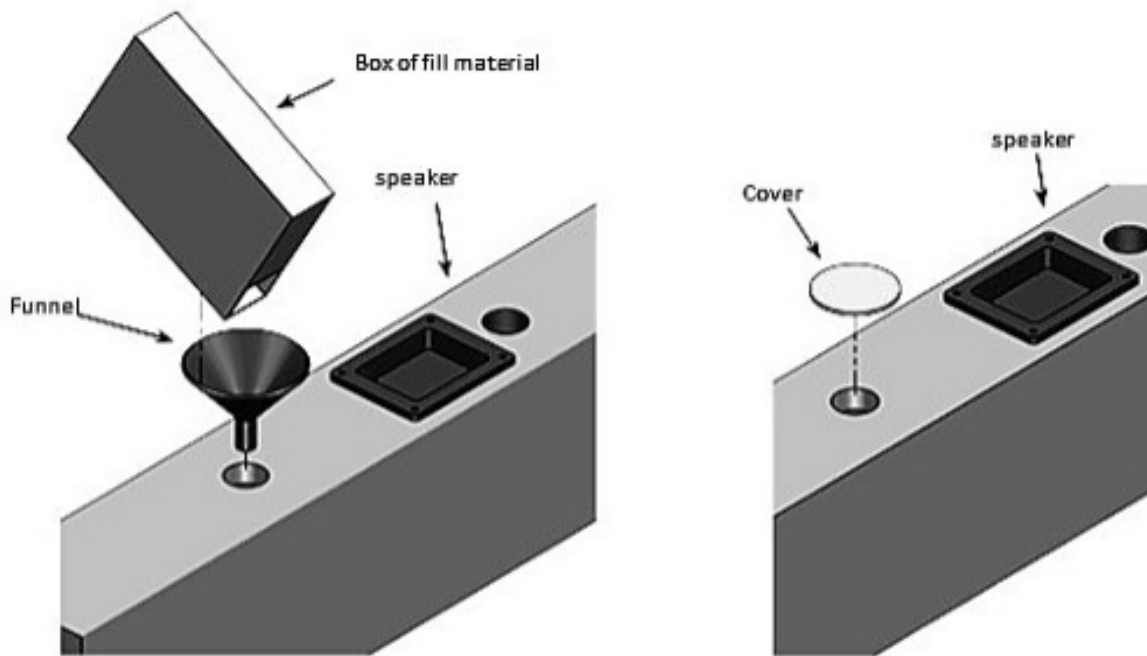
Insert a screw into a single Totem Claw and position the assembly (screw and claw) over the pre-drilled hole; the screw will serve as a guide to find the pre-drilled hole. The Totem Claws should be positioned on each rear side of the speaker and one centered in front.

Using the appropriate screwdriver or low speed drill, with proper bit, screw in the fastener carefully while firmly pushing the Totem Claw flush against the front speaker surface, making full contact with the wood surfaces. Repeat the procedure for all 3 Totem Claws and speakers. Position the speaker on its claws after finding the appropriate room location. Insert the self-centering ball bearing underneath the Totem Claw. The Claws can be used with or without the ball bearings depending on the floor surface.



# MASS LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

Optional for Arro, BisonTower, Forest, Forest Signature



**Note:** Always remember to apply the plastic adhesive stopper to seal the cavity. To prevent damage, the speakers, should never be transported with mass inside. The cavity must be emptied prior to transport by using a shop vac and sealed thereafter using a sturdy tape to avoid any loose sand from migrating. Totem recommends the use of clean dry sand, silica sand, dry particulate matter, or non-odor kitty litter.

## MASS LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

**Optional for Arro, Bison Tower, Forest, Forest Signature**

Caution: Overloading tends to reduce overall image. Please experiment with small increments of loading to achieve optimal results.

1. Lay one speaker against a low piece of furniture (example: couch) with the speaker facing the ground. Take care not to crush the dome tweeter or scratch the finish. The packaging foam may also be used to secure the cabinet.
2. Fill **only** the lower opening, not the upper (Black plastic lined) cavity. The upper cavity is for bass reflex and air control and will cause damage to the speaker if filled.
3. Use a funnel or any device which will facilitate loading.
4. Peel off one of the transparent plastic mass loading covers, from the plastic backing. Two (2) mass loading covers are provided.
5. Apply it to the opening to seal the cavity. Repeat this procedure on the next speaker.

**Note:** Always remember to apply the plastic adhesive stopper to seal the cavity. To prevent damage, the speakers, should never be transported with mass inside. The cavity must be emptied prior to transport by using a shop vac and sealed thereafter using a sturdy tape to avoid any loose sand from migrating. Totem recommends the use of clean dry sand, silica sand, dry particulate matter, or non-odor kitty litter.

## OUR THOUGHTS ON GRILLS

All Totem models come equipped with magnetically attaching grilles included in the box. This is a departure from our original practise as for years we did not include grilles and only made them available as an optional accessory. We firmly believe that our customized drivers are of the highest quality, the cabinet is a timeless design, and the combination provides an extremely appealing esthetic.

Most importantly however, therefore, are the micro details that are lost when a grille, no matter how supposedly acoustically transparent, is in place in front of the drivers. Totem's absolute dedication to phase consistency and subsequent holographic, almost interactive soundstage are slightly altered with attached grilles and while the effect is admittedly extremely small, it is not insignificant to us and probably not to you, a Totem owner.

## INSTALLING MAGNETIC GRILLS

These models have magnets embedded in their baffles and their optional grills are as well. They are instantly easily attachable and removable.

## MORE TOTEM PERFORMANCE ENHANCING ACCESSORIES

Totem offers a selection of accessories that can further enhance your enjoyment of our speakers. Some have been designed for speakers, some for the associated electronics, but all help enrich the listening experience and help get the most musical satisfaction from our speakers.

### BEAK



The “Beak” was developed to control parasitic vibrations that occur on top of a speaker cabinet. These resonances interfere with speaker performance, specifically the waveform symmetry emitted by tweeters. Implementing a Beak on any speaker can effectively control and provide a better interaction between speaker, tweeter and housing.

### TRESS SPEAKER CABLE

Speaker cable is an important element of the overall system performance so ask your dealer about Totem Tress cable. Tress is a twisted pair of 14-gauge, multi strand, linearized oxygen-free silver-plated conductors coated in black and white Teflon. Dielectric shielding makes it impervious to damage and oxidization. Tress can be run long distances -in-wall and around room and maintain peak performance. It provides great extension in both high and low frequencies, excellent spatial ability, has no capacitance buildup, and is FT4 rated. It is one of the best performers out there, yet remarkably economical.



## **SINEW**

The Sinew offers an unparalleled medium across which a signal can ride and pass through with no added coloration or loss of any kind.



## **URTH POWER BLOCK**

The ultimate power block, the URTH will lower the noise floor, smoothen the power, and satisfy the most demanding power requirements. Amplifiers, subs, cross overs or any audio component will benefit from URTH's quality components.



## **URTH POWER CORD**

When the AC flows freely and cleanly, and advanced isolation technology is used to thwart EMI/RFI, the rest of the chain clearly benefits. Urth Power Cord adds liveliness to the presentation and accents music in subtle but noticeable ways.



# THANK YOU

We sincerely hope you enjoy your Totem speakers and greatly appreciate your patronage. New products are consistently being developed so be sure to periodically visit your authorized Totem dealer or our website to keep informed on everything Totem has to offer.

If you already purchased a Totem product, we very much would appreciate if you took the time to register your product online. Product registration leads to quicker assistance and more efficient support in the rare case that your speaker should have a problem. This can be done quickly and easily in the support section of our site: <https://totemacoustic.com/register-your-product/>

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