

All right, everyone. I'm back again today with the Ever Solo Z10 DAC. This is the newest DAC from Ever Solo. I believe it was meant to be paired with their T8 streaming transport, which is exactly what I have been doing, comparing it, listening to it, and I just recently reviewed a DAC that Garore Divinity. How does this compare to that one? Cuz they sit at the exact same price point. Let's talk about the Ever Solo Z10.

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All right. So, you guys know I love my DAXs. I have listened to so many DAXs over the years. I've heard the high-end, the low end, the mid-end, everything in between. And today, I have a really good one for you, especially if you own an ever solo streamer such as the dedicated streaming transport, the T8, or say you own an A6 or even an A8. this deck may be of interest to you. Now, earlier in the year, I reviewed the Hi-Fi Rose RD160.

That was quite a many months ago, uh beginning of the year, I believe, if my memory serves me correct. And the the Hi-Fi Rose RD160 was made to go with their RS130 streaming transport. As a combo, this combo comes in at around \$12,000. I'm talking about the Hi-Fi Rose now. Ever Solo to me seems like they have been going after Hi-Fi Rose, trying to compete, I should say, with Hi-Fi Rose, making similar products, right? So, the Ever Solo T8, I talked about it in that review. I said it's an awesome streamer. It's so good. I'm still using it. I have no need to get it out of the system. But I compared it to the RS130, talking about how the Hi-Fi Rose is built to a more luxurious standard, much heavier, much better build, much better casing, a bigger screen, um, and so forth. The RD160 deck from Hi-Fi Rose, that's almost six grand in itself, looks a lot like the deck I'm talking about today, uh, when you look at it in pictures. The Z10, they have a similar design aesthetic. They have a slim box with a knob on the right side, a display on the front that can show you various screens such as VU meters, a

volume control, it can show you the signal path just like the Hi-Fi Rose, but the Ever Solo Z10 even uses the same DAC chips as that RD160. It's using a set a pair dual AKM DAC chips which are known for their more analog sound while retaining detail. So the same DAC chips are used here in the Ever Solo Z10, but the Z10 comes in at around \$18,900 instead of that \$5,800 of the Hi-Fi Rose. So my question was, how will this DAX sound? Because even though it uses the same chips, implementation is everything in the way a deck is designed and built.

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[Applause]

So right off the bat, uh, Ever Solo FIA, which is trademarked, I'm looking at this on their website now. Now it says independent left/right channels with dual decoding modules, three custom linear power supplies, three independent power channels. So this deck has three independent power supplies. That's a good thing. It's also a dual channel fully balanced analog preamplifier here with an R2R volume control. You hear you'll hear clicks when you turn the volume. But this is also a fully functional preamp which I did test. Going on. Ever Solo says this has the Ever Solo precision core. This means there is an OCXO temperature controlled crystal oscillator phased locked loop technology here. Uh there is an external input if you want to use an external clock and there's support for that at 50 ohms or 75 ohms. There's also clock reconstruction and data shaping using an FPGA.

Now this has a touchscreen which is 8.8 in in size. So the Ever Solo FIA stands for full isolation design. This is uh where they build this in the chassis but they separate everything so it eliminates cross talk, noise contamination, grit and grime. This separates the digital and analog domains according to their website to minimize interference and preserve signal purity. So these three independent power supplies I talked previously in a video how Nagra uses multiple power supplies

within their deck to make everything just noise-free. be grit-free and sound super refined. The Ever Solo here uses three independent linear power supplies. There's one for the left channel, the right channel, and the system power. There is native support here for DSD512 as well as PCM 768 kHz at 32bit. Now, the Z10 has all the inputs and outputs you could want. It has I squared S. It has coaxial. It has optical. It has a fully isolated USB input. And after testing the coaxial and the USB, I much preferred the USB input here. Um, this keeps again all the noise away. Electrical isolation is what they're calling it. So, I would use the USB input of the Z10 coming from something like the T8. Now, the Z10 also has HDMI ARC. It also has a headphone amplifier here. So in addition to everything else, the preamplifier, the dual deck chips, the headphone amp, Z10 also has Bluetooth capability. So if you're someone who just wants to use Bluetooth, you can Bluetooth right to the Z10.

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So once I placed it in the system, I discovered the menu is super easy. Now there's an R2R volume control here, and it clicks when you turn it up. There is no fixed output setting with this deck. Now, if you're just using it as a DACK and not a preamp, you're going to want to turn that volume all the way to the max to get the highest output from it. If your amp or preamp has high gain, you can turn that down several notches to wherever it sounds best in your system, but there is not a fixed output here. You do have to use the volume control. I listen to it with the volume maxed out. Now you have the usual uh ever solo tricks here. You have all the VU meters. They made a new one for the Z10, which is like an electric blue, and it reminds me of the Advanced Paris uh VU meters on their amps. It looks really, really nice. That's what I usually left on the Z10 for the appearance because the T8 I had the album art going. So once I started listening to it and I had a variety of speakers I was listening to it with uh I noticed an immediate

difference from the Divinity DACK. Now the Divinity DAC is an R2R DAC uh quite different from a chipbased DAC like the Z10, but the Z10 had more impact. It was more incisive. It was sharper. Um it did have some of that velvet sound. It had a little bit of that analog vibe in the mid-range. Uh, the bass was quick, tight, but explosive. The top end had a little more sparkle up top than the Divinity. The Divinity was a little bit a hair warmer, right? And a little bit different of a vibe. I would say the Divinity is more of a uh spatial immersive deck where the Z10 is more of it's going to deliver everything on the recording as you would expect it to be delivered. You're going to get every snap, crackle, pop. You're going to get every hit. Uh, I was playing a track with I put it on my Instagram at hi-fihuff official. Uh, Detroit duel. There's a song there's a track with big big drums and the dazzle amp with the Z10 and the T8 paired with some T plusA Talis R330s. I think they are speakers jaw-dropping explosive. the the coolest I ever heard this track replicated in any of my spaces throughout the time I've been listening to this track. I remember listening to it on a set of Cornwall 4s back when I lived in Arizona and it blew me out of the room. Here with the T+ I was getting and the Z10 I was getting more of that clarity and that that impact and that's something I noticed with the Z10 impacts, bass impacts, drum impacts.

um everything was powerful sounding. So the Z10 versus the Divinity, the Z10 is cleaner, clearer, and more impactful where the Divinity was a little more organic, a little more um spatial, if you will. So listening uh I switched speakers to my Icon 12s which brings some warmth and humanity to the sound, the more soul to the sound and I was hearing that same impact in the bass and the drums, but those leading edges were a little bit muted now because of the speaker I was using. So, this is all really going to depend on the speakers you have and if you like that kind of high attack, high energy, deep impact

kind of sound, which is what the Z10 paired with the T8 was bringing me. Now, keep in mind this was using the internal clock of the Z10. I wanted to switch things up and see if I can make it even better. Now, I have a Vinsshine SW10 Pro, which uses its own clock, and I was able to hook up that clock to the input on the back of the Z10, which allows you to use an external clock. So, when I was using the clock of the SW10 Pro, things became a little more refined, a little smoother, a little uh uh richer, right? And that was telling me that the clock inside of the SW10 Pro was doing its thing, but it wasn't a huge night and day difference. I could easily live with the clock inside of the Z10 as it's excellent as well. It's just a little bit of a different flavor, but I wanted to really evaluate the Z10 as it is out of the box because that's how 98% of the people are going to use it. Uh, with the T8, it was a perfect combination. Uh again, I hooked these two up with uh the isolated USB and um away I went. And I did uh use the USB cable that came with the Z10. Uh and then I upgraded to a cable I found on Amazon that has amazing build quality and it's like 30 bucks. And when I put that in, it really did make a difference. This cable is a no-brainer. I'll link to it in the description below if anyone's interested. So, using the USB input, everything was sounding really clean, really tight, and I was throwing on tracks that I knew had spatial qualities. Again, I go back to Carbon Based Life Forms. Um, there's a ton of tracks that can immerse you into it. Uh, I like um World of Sleepers. I talked about this track before. It's a track I used to test detail, imaging, and immersion. And with the Divinity, uh, the details were a little softened, but they were there. It pulls out all the details, but they were a little softened on the top end. With the Z10, it's pulling out those same details, but they're a little more even noticeable versus the Divinity. They pop out and they have, you know, when they're

supposed to sizzle, they sizzle. When they're supposed to snap, they snap. When they're supposed to crackle and pop, they do just that. The sounds coming from the speakers because the Z10 is an accurate deck. Now, it has musicality in here as well, thanks to that Velvet Sound AKM DAC chip technology. But make no mistake, this is a deck that will pull out the details, bring out the richness, and give you that snap and drive and energy. So, going on to some other speakers. I placed in the little Vipers from Virtual Hi-Fi that have been blowing my mind. They're behind me right now. You can see them behind me. They're tiny little speakers. Um 3D printed cabinets, uh a subwoofer, a carbon subwoofer in the front, an AMT Mundorf tweeter up top, two passive radiators in a sealed cabinet. These things are explosive. And with the Z10 DAC, these things really come into their own. I mean, the imaging is precise. It's It's pretty amazing really the imaging with the Z10. There's no smearing going on or soft edges. You're hearing it just as you should hear it. And with these speakers and with the Icon 12 speakers, you're getting a little bit of that warmth, that analog feel from the Z10. Going back to the T+A speakers, I'm getting the most amazing amounts of detail and immersion that I've heard in this room. Yeah, those TNA T plusa I should say Talis R330 bookshelves are the first speakers that have come in here to seriously challenge my big mighty Icon 12s. But the Talis are cleaner, clearer, more open, and even more spatial with just about the same amount of bass uh in performance and quantity. Uh they're spectacular speakers. Now, it gets offensive when you have sound that comes out sharp and lean. Then it starts bringing on listening fatigue, which is what I cannot stand. the Z10. I was in here four, five, five hours one night listening non-stop. I never became fatigued. So, there is body and soul there with this deck. Now, the pairing of the T8 and the Z10. This is a dynamite dynamite way to get

into streaming or to upgrade your streaming. Um, as a matter of fact, I've, you know, I've heard streamers and DAXs in the 10 15,000 range. This pairing comes in at what, under \$3500, but you're getting a separate streamer and DAX stack that performs to, again, and this is what I like to look for and tell you guys about, these, this stack performs to a higher level than it costs. Uh, under 3500, I'd expect to pay six. it doesn't reach the heights of the hi-fi rose uh RS130 and RD-160 for refinement

for um just overall scale and and and beauty of the sound richness of the sound. It's so hard to describe.

But is the Rose Stack worth 8,000 more 9,000 more? Hell no. Hell no. Now, it is if you have plentiful cash and you want the really good stuff in looks and sound, but when we're talking just sound quality, you're going to get a different vibe from the Hi-Fi Rose. It's going to be even more refined uh and a richer type of sound. You're going to hear that money, not all that money, but you're going to hear that it costs more money and it's and it's more refined in sound. But to me, the biggest bang for the buck in the DAX streamer world right now is that EverSolo T8 and the Z10. You're getting all of the features you could ask for, right? You're getting all of those inputs, the isolated USB. You're getting a fast streamer that reacts fast. Uh Tidal Connect, Kobus Connects works a treat on the T8. Spotify works on the T8. Apple Music works on the T8. So, all of this music right at your fingertips going into the dedicated deck, the Z10. It sounds beautiful. They look cool on my uh counter here. And uh yeah, the price is very very right. So, I can easily highly recommend the Z10. Now, what if you're not what if you don't have a T8? This Z10 will work with any streamer you have and it will offer that same sound quality. Right. One more thing to touch on is I did try it as a preamp going into the Vincshine Dazzle. The Dazzle can be used as a power amp. Now, I previously tried the Gallion Navy into it with amazing results. That Navy

is a stunning, stunning preamp. Um, but I tried the Ever Solo Z10 as a preamp going right into the Dazzle. didn't excite me as much as when I used used the navy going into it, but it was a beautiful combination. Uh maybe a little more airy than using the built-in preamp of the Dazzle. So, these are ways you can kind of change the presentation of your system, little things like this. But at the end of the day, I kept it as just a DAC going into the Dazzle and listening to the music in that way. So yeah, make no mistake, the Ever Solo Z10 is a knockout home run. 18 between \$18 and \$1,900. I don't think you can get a DACK that provides this power, this clarity, this energy, this kind of impact while keeping things kind of analog and fullbodied and beautiful. This is DAXs are getting so so good. It comes down to finding what you like, picking your flavor, and living with it. There there you don't have to spend 20, 15, \$10,000 on a DACK these days because some of that technology has trickled down to these lowerc cost models. And that is only a great great thing. And uh if I was purchasing a T8, that's the DACK I would go with without question. The Ever Solo Z10, they're dynamic duo. They are a perfect pairing and they look and sound fantastic. So, I hope you like this review. Thumbs up, subscribe, leave a comment below, and I will see you in the next one.

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