

Group test verdict

Impressed by what a grand can get these days, **Nick Tate** has the unenviable task of ranking these six budget turntable packages

IN SIXTH PLACE is Yamaha's MusicCast Vinyl 500. It's a great deck for the money, is packed with features – including impressive wireless/network functionality – yet still sounds nice to listen to. Its build, finish and slickness are a lesson to the world that the Japanese haven't lost their touch – even at this price.

In fifth is the Pro-Ject X1, for no other reason than the competition is so stiff. The package is strong, with an excellent MM cartridge and build is way better than budget Pro-Jects of yore. In absolute terms, though, it sounds a little soft around the edges,

and doesn't quite have the slickness of build of some others in the group.

The NAD C 588 is also an appealing all-round package. I like its compact, rounded plinth, nicely made tonearm and bundled cartridge. It's great to use, setup is easy and it sounds very similar to the Pro-Ject X1. The latter is no bad thing, yet the NAD a bit cheaper. I can see many people buying this, and then using it and thoroughly enjoying it.

Third place goes to the Edwards Audio TT4 Carbon. Full marks for the interesting plinth design, and a lot of work has gone into the tonearm. It's

very well put together at the price, and sonically snaps at the heels of the pricier Rega and Roksan. A great result for a relatively small scale UK manufacturer that doesn't go in for the usual marketing hype.

Second is Roksan's Attezza. This is a seriously impressive package that shows lots of original thinking and some fine industrial design. It's very well made and really delivers sonically too – with a superbly musical and engaging sound. Cracking value for under £1,000, it would be the group's clear winner, were it not for...

WINNER

Rega's Planar 3 is faster, tighter and more neutral than ever, and offers a taste of high-end analogue sound. Remarkably good at the price, it's a lovely design to look at and live with too. Sonically it holds its own against turntables at twice the price.



Make/model	Edwards Audio TT4 Carbon	NAD C 588	Pro-Ject X1	Rega Planar 3	Roksan Attezza	Yamaha MusicCast Vinyl 500
Price	£700	£600	£800	£880	£995	£500
Sound	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
Build	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
Overall	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
	Great at the price, attractive and well made with lots on offer and few faults	A cute compact package with quality design touches and a fine bundled cart	A warm, open and inviting sound topped off with an excellent-value cart	Stylish, affordable turntable and cart combination makes vinyl sound fabulous	Good looking, cleverly designed and well built, this is a cracking turntable	A decent budget turntable with excellent wireless streaming built in
Website	edwardsaudio.co.uk	nadelectronics.com	project-audio.com	rega.co.uk	roksan.com	yamaha.com

Key features

Electric speed change	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Unipivot tonearm	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
Head amp	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Streaming	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
78rpm-capable	No	No	Yes	No	No	No