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How to connect wireless subwoofer to sony sound bar

Staff, Courtesy of JBL Every good home theater starts with two fundamentals: the largest and sharpest screen possible, and high-quality surround sound to accurately reproduce the multi-channel soundtracks of modern films and digital entertainment. For years, that meant doing some extensive (and, sometimes, expensive) wiring for at least five separate speakers plus a subwoofer. If you want the absolute best sound possible, there's still no way around doing that work. But if you are willing to settle for very good, then you have ever heard before. "Most wireless systems won't be completely wireless; they will often connect from the sound bar or subwoofer to at least a couple of the speaker cable into the walls or under the carpet. Depending on your budget, space, and priorities, a wireless surround system could be just the ticket to make your movie nights a little more immersive. Here's what to look for while shopping. Best Wireless Surround Sound Systems Flexibility: Polk Audio Fanatics: Nakamichi Shockwafe EliteBest for Future Flexibility: Polk Audio REACTBest Value: Vizio Sound Bar Best for Enhancing Older Films: Sony HT-Z9F What to Consider5.1 or more? The traditional surround-sound specification calls for five full-range speakers: one center channel, left and right up front, plus left and right up front, plus left and right speakers mounted on either side of your listening area. Whether branded Dolby, DTS, or something else, this is a 5.1 system, with the "point one" referring to a separate channel for a subwoofer. The "sub" is how you get all the earth-shaking booms and rumbles from superhero movies and car crashes. Most people will be satisfied with 5.1, but it's possible to add two more speakers behind the listeners for a 7.1 setup. Add a second subwoofer, and you're at 7.2. Want ceiling speakers? That's 7.1.2 or 7.1.4 depending on how many you add. Keep in mind, however, that most movies and media won't be able to take advantage of the extra speakers will be digitally extracted and modified from the 5.1 soundtrack. Wi-Fi or Bluetooth? The first wireless systems were built around Bluetooth. It's the easiest and most convenient way to connect, but it has some limitations. You'll want to make sure that your entire system fits inside a circle with a 30-foot (or less) radius, and you'll need to be comfortable with the limitations in quality imposed by the low bandwidth of Bluetooth connections, which have to compress the signal a bit and take out some of the fine detail. If you're already listening to CD-quality or better audio, and even then, many people won't notice them. Wi-Fi systems have extended range—up to 100 feet between speakers, more if you have Wi-Fi boosters—and better sound. But they aren't as foolproof to set up or troubleshoot. If you aren't completely comfortable with the nuts and bolts of operating Wi-Fi equipment, you'll want to get some help from a qualified installer. All of these systems use HDMI cables to accept incoming video; some of them also have the ability to accept a Bluetooth pairing from another device for incoming audio, so you can play music from your phone through the systems from the same manufacturer, you can use watts as a measure of relative loudness. However, different manufacturers may use different standards to measure power, so don't choose one system over another just because it offers "500 watts" compared to another system's "300 watts" when it comes to speaker size, bigger is almost always better, despite what you read in the advertisements. A speaker is fundamentally a device for moving air. Larger-diameter speakers need less back-and-forth movement to do it, which means they can be clearer, crisper, and more articulate than small-diameter speakers making large "excursions" back and forth to produce high volume. This is all doubly true for subwoofers. If you live somewhere the neighbors won't complain, get the largest-diameter "sub" you can, powered by the highest-capacity amplifier. Don't be fooled by claims of extensive bass performance due to "ports" or "resonance chambers." To shake the floor, you need raw power and size. How We EvaluatedI've been building and evaluating traditional wired home theaters for almost 25 years. I looked for a wide variety of performance, price, and size options, relying on manufacturers with an established reputation for repeated excellence in amplifier and/or speaker construction. Here are seven wireless surround Technology: 5.1Connections (Incoming): Wi-Fi, BluetoothConnections (Speakers): Proprietary Bose 2.4GhzTotal Wattage: 600The Bose Lifestyle systems are easy to set up, simple to use, and capable of working with Amazon's Alexa. The heart of the system is a console that manages inputs from various sources then plays the sound through five individual speaker modules and a subwoofer. As is typical with Bose, the speakers are quite small and rely on specialized enclosures to produce "bigger" sound. If you want the most sonic punch available with relatively little use of space, the Lifestyle systems are just the ticket. With a total system range of around 32 feet from Bose's 2.4Ghz signal, this is best for smaller rooms and/or apartment living. It's not fully wireless; the front three speakers are wired to the console, while the rear speakers are powered by, and connected to, separate modules. But that means you won't need to recharge or reload batteries. Consider this a great way to get decent surround sound without (most of) the setup hassles. Best Upgrade for a Wired System Klipsch Reference Key SpecsSurround Tech: Depends on the receiverConnections (Incoming): Proprietary wireless for subwoofer only)Klipsch's great-sounding Reference can be an affordable way to build your own high-quality system for a low cost, but you'll need an A/V receiver. The wireless 150-watt subwoofer uses Klipsch 2.4Ghz technology to go anywhere in a room; just plug the included transmitter into the low-frequency output on your existing receiver (or the one you're about to buy). The five speakers are entirely conventional, which means they will need wiring from the receiver. The good news is that a lot of receivers, even low-cost models, already have all the connections needed. This system is ideal for anyone moving into their own place who already has a decent A/V receiver as part of a small stereo or headphone rig. It's not the solution for everyone, but some new home theater enthusiasts will appreciate the large-diameter speakers and clean design Affordable Low-Cord Solution JBL Bar 5.1 \$400 AT AMAZON \$600 AT VERIZON.COM \$600 AT VERIZON.COM \$600 AT VERIZON.COM \$600 AT DELL.COM Key SpecsSurround Tech: 5.1 Connections (Incoming): BluetoothConnections (Incoming): BluetoothConn system offers both. Under casual conditions, you can just listen to the full soundbar that connects to your TV via HDMI. It switches on and off automatically. Want a more immersive situation? Detach a set of completely wireless speakers from the soundbar, place them behind you, and enjoy about 10 hours of sound between charges (a Micro-USB connection can power them indefinitely for more permanent placement). The 10-inch subwoofer is also wireless. Low-frequency sound tends to be perceived by humans as non-directional, but more sensitive listeners will appreciate the freedom to adjust the sub's location to suit. With exceptionally small surround speakers and modest total power, this isn't the choice for large gatherings or full-size home theaters. It is a way to get good sound in rooms that don't have a lot of options for additional power cords or speaker mounts. Best for Audio Fanatics Nakamichi Shockwafe Elite Key SpecsSurround Tech: 7.2Connections (Incoming): BluetoothConnections (Speakers): Wi-Fi (most speaker connections) Total Wattage: 1,000 Nakamichi has a long history of stratospheric hi-fi equipment, such as the iconic "Dragon" tape deck that conjured comparisons to Harley-Davidson and Gibson Les Paul. The cost has usually been just as high. So a price of just under a thousand dollars for a complete wireless surround system with these specs has to be seen as a bit of a bargain. You get two powered subwoofers that also supply power to the two-way rear surround speakers. A thousand watts of total system power. Want more? There's an Ultra version that upgrades to the rarely discussed 9.2 surround speakers. A thousand watts of total system power. speakers, and bespoke subwoofer enclosures—a proposition that can easily cost more than a new pickup truck—you won't find much that hits harder, and sounds clearer, than this system. Best for Future Flexibility Polk Audio REACT Key SpecsSurround Tech: 5.1Connections (Incoming): HDMI (from TV)Connections (Speakers): Polk Wi-FiTotal Wattage: Varies on configurationPolk's take on wireless surround begins with the Alexa-capable REACT soundbar, which uses digital processing to provide the impression of surround speakers and subwoofer. All three of those items will need their own power cord, but that's all the connection you'll be doing. For setup, just turn everything on, push two buttons, and let the members of your new wireless system find each other. As with the JBL system, this reasonably priced setup is best thought of as a way to get good sound in a smaller room. But there's another selling point: Unlike most of the other systems discussed here, you can buy it a la carte. Although short of full surround sound, that option could be compelling if you can add it later if your living situation changes? Best Value Vizio Sound Bar Key SpecsSurround Tech: 5.1, virtual 7.1.2Connections (Incoming): Bluetooth, Wi-FiConnections (Speakers): Wi-FiTotal Wattage: 50The SB is another "demi-wireless" offering, because the rear speakers are wired into the subwoofer, however, is truly wireless and can be placed anywhere in a reasonably sized room, with no cable besides the required power cord. Vizio's affordable soundbar system can do DTS and Atmos decoding, turns on via an HDMI signal from your television, and provides reasonable volume and audio range. The relatively modest sub won't carry the lowest lows, and the audio quality doesn't match a more expensive system, but for an affordable price, you get a very apartment-friendly form factor. Vizio offers two other models that pack a little more punch for a little more punch f purchase. Best for Enhancing Older Films Sony HT-Z9F \$698 AT AMAZON \$698 AT B&H PHOTO Key SpecsSurround Tech: 3.1, virtual 7.1.2Connections (Incoming): Bluetooth, Wi-FiConnections (Incoming): Bluetooth, Wi-Pairing Dolby ATMOS decoding with Sony's own proprietary Vertical Surround Engine, this soundbar with powered sub claims to reproduce the immersive sound of ceiling-mounted speakers. Older movies that aren't mastered in 7.1 will benefit from this more than a newer 7.1-soundtrack film would. Adding a set of SA-Z9R speakers upgrades this system to true 5.1 surround sound; they plug in separately and have built-in amplifiers, but they connect wirelessly to the main system. Total system power is 500 watts; small rooms are where the system will shine best, particularly with regards to the virtual ceiling speakers. If you are a Sony devotee who wants a little of the flair shown by the firm's upscale ES products in an affordable (but not cheap) wireless surround system, this is the only choice you'll likely consider. This content at piano.io

