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Evga nu audio card manual

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Picking the right sound card doesn't have to be a hassle. While there are plenty of models out there, there are a few features you should focus on. Stuff like the signal to noise ratio, sampling rate, how many sound channels different sound cards support, connection type, whether a card is internal or external. Let's talk about these points, one by one. What Is Signal To Noise Ratio And Why It Is Important Signal to noise ratio (SNR) tells about the clarity of the sound coming from the sound card. It's basically the difference between the signal power and noise power and the higher it is the clearer the sound. This ratio is expressed in decibels. For instance, is a signal to noise ratio is 50 dB that means that the audio signal coming from the card is fifty decibels higher than the noise signal. That's pretty bad SNR value. With SNR being 50 dB, you will clearly hear the noise at higher volume levels. In other words, the sound won't be clear. You should look for sound cards with at least 100 dB SNR. That's the lower limit you should agree to when picking a sound card. And don't forget that signal to noise ratio isn't the only important feature to consider. What Are Sampling Rate and Bit Rate The sampling rate reflects how accurately a sound card can reproduce higher frequencies. You can calculate the upper limit of the accurate reproduction of a sound card by dividing its sampling rate by two. For instance, a 96 kHz sound card can accurately reproduce frequencies up to 48 kHz. And that's more than enough because the upper limit of human hearing is 20 kHz. So, when looking for a sound card, a sampling rate of 96 kHz (the usual rate of mid-range cards) is more than enough. Bit rate plays a role in the quality of recorded sound.



Professional recordings usually use a 24bit rate, which is more than enough when it comes to sound quality. Look for sound cards with 24bit rate or higher. 5.1 Vs. 7.1 Sound Cards The numbers tell the whole picture. 5.1 cards support six audio channels while 7.1 cards support eight audio channels in total. 7.1 surround sound is a bit better if you have the right speaker system, but that shouldn't guide you when looking for a sound card. You should just look for a card that supports your speaker configuration. If you are using 5.1 surround speakers, 2.1 system, or headphones, you shouldn't worry about getting a 7.1 sound card. When it comes to 7.1 headsets, they will work with any sound card if they are USB-based. USB headsets have their own sound card inside them and will have eight channels no matter which sound card you're using. And yes, you can use 7.1 headsets with 5.1 sound cards. They will just play six channels instead of eight. Just remember that most 5.1 and 7.1 headsets offer virtual surround. They use two drivers but create virtual surround sound via software. Real 7.1 headphones often come with their own sound cards that support the true 7.1 setup. USB Vs. PCIe Sound Cards USB sound cards are external cards that hook to your PC via USB port. They can be placed anywhere within the limit of the cable and some have microphones allowing users to record audio directly with the sound card. PCI and PCIe sound cards are internal cards that have to be mounted inside your PC case. They use PCI or PCIe ports on the motherboard with most modern sound cards opting for PCIe interface because PCI ports are all but dead on modern motherboards. They offer lower latency than USB cards, at least on paper, and offer better sound quality since they can use more power from the PCIe port. Gaming Vs. Audiophile Sound Cards Another major difference between sound cards is their main purpose. You have models designed to offer the best gaming experience and then you have audiophile sound cards. If you want the best gaming experience but still want an excellent (but not stellar) listening experience, get a high-end gaming sound card. These often have excellent music performance. If you have serious audio equipment and want the best listening experience go with an audiophile sound card. Those are designed to offer the best possible listening performance and to work with headphones and speakers that cost thousands of dollars. Do note that some external sound cards made for gaming support consoles as well as PC. If you're a versatile gamer who likes consoles and PC check whether the external sound card you're after offers console support.



Maybe It's Better To Invest In A Pair Of Quality Headphones Than Getting A Standalone Soundcard Finally, if you have a quality motherboard there are good chances it comes with more than a decent integrated sound card. Instead of investing money in a standalone sound card, you should get a pair of quality headphones or a nice speaker system. Since your integrated sound card should be more than enough for the majority of headphones and speakers available on the market. Budget headset would work fine with almost any sound card, but if you want a high-end headset, it's better to get a nice headphone amp and DACadset for those headphones than to invest in a sound card. A standalone sound card should only be considered if you want the ultimate experience with Hi-Fi speakers, if you need an external sound card for gaming, or if you're into recording.



(Image credit: EVGA)You may be surprised to hear that EVGA has a new sound card, considering many enthusiasts have shifted away from that technology. But in January, the vendor better known for their graphics cards launched their first audio card, the Nu Audio. And today, it expanded the lineup even further with the announcement of its Nu Audio Pro 7.1 sound cards. Compared to the non-Pro sound cards, EVGA's new units bring two main areas of improvement: sound and looks.It's worth noting that EVGA hasn't engineered these sound cards all by itself. The product is the brainchild from a collaboration between EVGA and British company Audio Note. Under the hood, EVGA has added 7.1 surround sound support in the Nu Pro Audio cards; although, you'll have to use the second included "Nu Pro Surround" card to be able to use it. The two audio cards have to be internally connected to each other though, which, oddly enough, happens with a Mini DisplayPort cable. Of course, if you don't need the extra surround channels, you could simply use the primary Nu Pro Audio card only.The chunky 6.5mm headphone jack resides behind a new headphone amplifier, where EVGA said it installed the LT1469 op-amp for "lusher and more high-quality sound." The sound card also comes with Audio Note's own Seiryu capacitors, as well as AVX F95 tantalum capacitors to reduce distortion. At the high-frequency area, the NP0 ceramic caps are upgraded for Panasonic PPS caps.If you're into gaming, you'll also be happy to know that the new sound card comes with Nahimic 3D audio for virtual surround sound through your headset, which should help you identify from where your enemies are creeping up on you. (Image credit: EVGA)All this engineering results in some very respectable specifications. The headphone amplifier can handle headphones with impedances ranging from 16-600 Ohms, and the stereo playback occurs with an signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) of 123dB. It can also record with an SNR of 121dB. Over stereo, the card can handle up to 384 kHz audio at 32 bits, and in multichannel that drops to 192 kHz at 32 bits. The optical output is limited to 192 kHz at 24 bits, which isn't bad by any standards, but you wouldn't be doing yourself any favors using the optical outputs over the finely tuned DACs and amps in this sound card.Because this is the Pro card series, EVGA couldn't stop itself from impleteneting what it described as a "bold new cover design to remind you that this isn't your run-of the mill audio card." We're not so sure that a "run-of the mill audio card" is really a thing these days. However, the black and orange aesthetic is a notable change from the predecessor sound card's gray and black look. (Image credit: EVGA)The cards have some very neat RGB lighting effects and a full backplate. Better yet, the backplate isn't even just for looks, as EVGA claims it helps shield the card electronics from interference. You'll also need a SATA power connection as the PCIe 1x port won't deliver enough power just by itself.Currently, EVGA's cards are available for pre-order from EVGA for \$249.99, for which you get the full Nu Audio Pro 7.1 kit. If pre-ordered, the units will ship no later than December 20, just in time for the holidays. Join the experts who read Tom's Hardware for the inside track on enthusiast PC tech news — and have for over 25 years. We'll send breaking news and in-depth reviews of CPUs, GPUs, AI, maker hardware and more straight to your inbox.