



Help the aged:

The bank of phono outputs make this a good match for a legacy AVR

a Playlist function, which allows you to add files from your network sources. There's also a choice of wallpaper colours for the menus. The UD7006 even enables you to dim the display, from Normal to Off in four increments; a nice home theatre-savvy touch.

Four icon buttons dominate the main Home screen: Media Player, Set up, YouTube and Quit.

The MediaPlayer icon immediately takes you onto your local network. DLNA 1.5 compliant, the UD7006 instantly identifies connected DLNA and uPnP NAS and PC devices. Plug a USB stick in and this appears at the top of the same list. You can then navigate all connected sources for sound and vision files.

Audio file support is limited to MP3, WMA, AAC and WAV. There's no compatibility with FLAC, Ogg or APE file extensions. Video fares better in that hi-def MKVs play alongside AVI, MOV, MP4 and TS extensions.

The player's at its best with Blu-ray, disgorging ravishing levels of detail, with beautiful graded colours and no self-generated artefacts.

Battle: LA, a wondrously sharp video encode, is made all the more extraordinary by the onboard Anchor Bay ABT2015 video processor.

The Marantz is 3D compatible out of the box and again provides impressive images. *Step Up 3D* (I fancied a change from *Avatar*) comes across in all its depth-enhanced high-school dance-drama glory, with plenty of sharpness.

The deck's delivery of DTS-HD Master Audio and Dolby TrueHD bitstreams is predictably exemplary, but more significantly its PCM performance is first class.

The UD7006 isn't too slow to loads Blu-rays, though not as fast as its mass-market rivals. And it does

take a good while to wake up from standby and eject the tray.

Potent upscaling

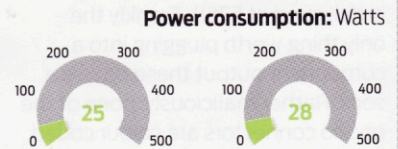
Those with a large legacy disc collection will be pleased to hear that DVD playback is solid. Deinterlacing and upscaling come courtesy of the Anchor Bay processor. It makes a lot of sense to adjust a set of parameters specifically for DVD, so they are ready to engage at the press of a button. The player also gives you the option of outputting content as Source Direct. This is helpful if you'd prefer your AV receiver, an outboard processor or even the display to handle video upscaling duties.

As a music player, the UD7006 is extremely accomplished, with provision for both SACD and DVD-Audio. SACDs output as PCM only (there's no DSD direct), but both multichannel and stereo feeds exhibit fabulous clarity and separation. You need to manually guide the player to these formats via the mode selector on the front panel if you're using a multi-layer disc, though.

The UD7006 also does an astonishingly good job with standard CDs. Heard at their best via the player's analogue output (which measured well for jitter in our Tech Labs) and routed through a 32-bit PCM1795 DAC from Texas Instruments, the UD7006 paints a beautiful soundscape.

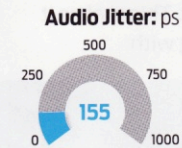
When it comes to AV fidelity, the UD7006 is an undeniable star. Not only can this plucky Marantz hold its own with the best of today's Blu-ray players, but it also thrills with music.

Sure, the user experience can at times seem a little clunky, the VOD services are limited to YouTube and it's disappointing that audio file support doesn't extend to FLAC. But this is a Marantz and for many that will be compensation enough.



Idling: When it's ticking over the Marantz consumes 25W – but putting it in standby drops it down to under 1W

Powered: Playing a disc draws an extra 3W of power



Sound: The UD7006's analogue audio jitter figure of 151 picoseconds indicates solid construction

Loading: Boot/Java

Boot speed & tray eject

11s

Tray in to main BD menu

44s

Disc loading & Java: Pretty slow to wake up from Standby

Menu: On Screen



Tweak zone:

The Marantz's setup menu is clean and easy to understand. Tweaks include adjusting the 3D settings to suit the size of your display



HCC VERDICT

Marantz UD7006
£800 Approx

Highs: Sharp Blu-ray performance; ultra high grade CD playback; integrated YouTube Leanback
Lows: No FLAC streaming or secondary HDMI output

Performance: 1 2 3 4 5

Design: 1 2 3 4 5

Features: 1 2 3 4 5

Overall: 1 2 3 4 5