

## Review of Curious Cable Ethernet cable

Known best for their breakthrough product the Curious USB cable and lately the Evolved USB cable, Rob Woodland the founder has recently released the Curious Ethernet Cable. Based upon similar principles to its USB stablemate the ethernet cable is striking in appearance and no less striking in performance.



Pricing is competitive at US\$440 for a 0.8 meter length, with various lengths up to 3.0m priced at US\$880.

Build quality is excellent as we have come to expect from this company, terminations are in the usual yellow Curious cable sheathing as are the data and power cables in the yellow and black “bumble bee” colours.

Before I moved to a full network based system in 2019, I used the original Curious USB from my laptop (JRiver) to my DAC. I changed completely to a streaming amplifier and fitted out the system ultimately with Audioquest Cinnamon and Vodka ethernet cables. I told myself that if and when Curious Cables produced an ethernet cable then I would be one of the first in line.

So, in August 2021 when Rob contacted me to say he had finished his ethernet cable design, made a prototype, had tests completed by audiophiles he trusted with good ears, I said yes please, can you send me an 0.8metre length as soon as you go into production. The cable arrived in early February 2022 into the UK where I live having sat in an Australia Post distribution centre in Melbourne awaiting COVID regulation clearance!

Nicely packed in a substantial box, the RJ45 connectors bound in protective bubble wrap I set about installing the cable into my system as per image to the right. The cinnamon into the EE8 was replaced with the Vodka where the Curious Cable now resides (from Innuos server into NAD M10. The original length of Vodka from the EE8 into my Innuos server remains unchanged.



I let the system bed in for a while listening to Radio Paradise via BluOs. I use Roon for serious listening, my Innuos Zen mini MkIII as the Roon Core and my NAD M10 as the Roon End Point. I will give a full list of my system components shortly.

I am fortunate that even at 72 years of age my senses and hearing are still as good as ever, so much so that I write listening reviews (I have no time for specs) on mainly cables and accessories for a couple of well known HIFI retailers near where I live.

I pride myself on having a system that has high levels of musicality, the ability to resolve high levels of inner detail and above all is enjoyable to listen to. Over the past few years any upgrades have tended to be those that enhance the already superb sound that I enjoy from my core system if you like, i.e. Source (Innuos), Amplifier (M10) and Speakers (Usher Mini Dancer 2). This has mainly been to reduce unwanted mainly high frequency “noise” inherent in all electrical supply systems and in the transmission of data, primarily to reduce the noise floor as well as unwanted vibration transfer into and from the wooden floor in my listening area.

So enough about me. Let's talk more about the star of this review, the Curious Ethernet Cable.

What did I listen to:

<b>Artist</b>	<b>Album</b>	<b>Track</b>	<b>Source</b>
Cat Stevens	Tea For The Tillerman	<i>Into White</i>	TIDAL FLAC 48kHz 24bit 2ch MQA 192kHz
Nils Lofgren	Acoustic Live	<i>Keith Don't Go</i>	TIDAL FLAC 44.1kHz 16bit 2ch
Nick Warren	La Fabrica (EP)	<i>La Fabrica (Club Mix)</i>	TIDAL FLAC 44.1kHz 16bit 2ch
The Staves	Mexico	<i>Mexico</i>	TIDAL FLAC 44.1kHz 16bit 2ch MQA 44.1kHz

I know these albums and tracks well and chose them for their fine recording quality but also for musical enjoyment and the ability to draw the listener in

First impressions when the serious listening started was the seemingly effortless presentation. Everything in the music mix was where it should be, with a warmth to the sound that was inviting, pulling me in to what the players and singers were communicating. The AQ Vodka is a wonderful cable in my view, dynamic, superb transient attack and tactile bass. The Curious was much easier to listen to with no loss of dynamics, transient attack and with great bass too, but with far greater articulation, sense of involvement and appreciation of the music being played in the studio or live venue.

I went away on holiday for a week. On my return I had a friend Paul over to listen. He has a similar set up to mine, except he uses a NAD M33, Dali Epicon 6 speakers and a REL Carbon Special sub. We know each other's systems well, and have enjoyed a similar upgrade path with regard to noise and vibration elimination. I was pleased that he heard what I heard with the Curious.

We put my system back pre - Curious and even though we still heard most of what we had always heard we noted that there was more concentration needed to enjoy the music and appreciate what the musicians were playing, less enjoyment. The Curious went back in after about half an hour of listening in this configuration. Paul took the Curious home and has since ordered a 0.8m length himself.

My current system:

#### **Equipment -**

Sky Broadband hub

Innuos Zenmini III plus Innuos LPSU

NAD M10 streaming amplifier (Dirac pro in use)

PS Audio Stellar P3 power regenerator (reduction of electrical noise)

Usher Mini Dancer 2 loudspeakers

Townshend Audio Seismic Podiums (reduction in sound vibration to floor)

Three tier Atacama Vogue bamboo equipment stand (reduction in sound vibration from floor)

English Electric EE8 ethernet switch (reduction in noise in data transmission)

## **Cables (Apologies for repeating myself) –**

<b>Route</b>	<b>Manufacturer/Model</b>	<b>Termination</b>
ADSL to Sky Hub	High Speed generic (non directional)	RJ11
Sky Hub to EE8 switch	Audioquest Vodka (directional)	RJ45
EE8 to Innuos Zenmini III	Audioquest Vodka (directional)	RJ45
EE8 to NAD M10	Curious Ethernet Cable (directional)	RJ45
Speaker cables – main single wire	Black Rhodium Proto 3200 complete with ferrite RF reduction	Locking bananas
Speaker cables – jumpers	Black Rhodium Proto 3200	Locking bananas/spade
Power cables	Nanotec Strada 309 (custom made)	Furutech gold plated both ends with gold plated fuses

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**Blackfordby UK**