

# Solid Performers - Kimber Kable PK-14 and PK-10 Gold power cords

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This is the first step in putting into my system a complete set of cables from one cable company, to make what's called a 'cable loom'. The cables come from Kimber Kable. Refer to my post on October 25 "Kimber Kable Loom" for the details of the cables to be used.

Slowly building downstream to the complete Kimber set, I started with the power cords. Hi-Way Laser provided 2 pieces of PK-14, Kimber's entry level power cords at RM850/6ft; and 2 pieces of PK-10 Gold, one step away from its top Palladian model, at RM1,490/6ft. The model number is also the gauge number of the power cords. Thus the PK-10 Gold is a much thicker power cord than the PK-14. Common sense would dictate that the thicker cords should go to the more power hungry components, i.e., my monoblocks that draw 300+ watts continuous; and the thinner one into the frontend components, and that was how I started.

I checked Kimber's website for the difference in the power cords' additional designation, which are, in addition to the basic version, 'Gold' and 'Palladian'. The difference is apparently in the quality of the Wattgate connectors used - the basic models use Wattgate Economy connectors, while the Gold and Palladian models use Wattgate Audio Grade connectors. In addition, the Palladian models have a box added to the middle section of the power cords, ala MIT and Transparent.

The PK-14 and PK-10 Gold power cords are very well built. They feel robust, weighty and 'no non-sense', just a solid cable with solid connectors put on both ends.





## Kimber Kable PK-14 Power Cords

I started with the PK-14s replacing my Shunyata Python Hellix's on my CD player and my pre-amp. The Python cost more than 4 times the PK-14. Though I have to say that the PK-14 was bettered by the Python, it held itself well (I should be relieved that my high-investment cords bettered the cheaper ones ;-)).

The PK-14 was quiet and clear. It imbued the sound with excellent solidity and good body, rather than being effervescent or diffused. The sound had very good foundation. The soundstage was also very well defined and well anchored. I came to see these as the common traits of Kimber's power cords after I put the PK-10 Gold into the system too.

The PK-14, when compared to my Shunyata Python Helix, however, had a less sparkly quality and was also slightly drier. Such a comparison was of course unfair, due to the huge gulf in price. I wanted to see if the PK-14 was a worthy first upgrade step from stock power cord, those that come packed with our equipment. So I duly made the comparison.

There was no contest, I always preferred the PK-14.

The stock power cord sounded loose and the details were not so well defined. The PK-14 also showed up with better bass weight and bass definition.

The PK-14 would be a worthwhile companion for entry and mid-level components. If your equipment sounded a bit bright, splashy and lacking some body, try the PK-14.





Kimber Kable PK-10 Gold Power Cords. Note the high quality Wattgate Audio Grade Connectors

Next, I replaced the Shunyata Taipan Helix on my monoblocks with the PK-10 Gold power cords. Now, that was a closer match in the price department, though the Taipan still cost about 30% more.

The positive qualities I noted with the PK-14 were there, in greater measures - quietness, solidness, and excellent body. I especially enjoyed the bass performance, it had punch and great impact. The soundstage was pretty well spread out in all 3 dimensions. Details were excellent, they were portrayed on a black background such that I could listen into the sound.

Compared to the Shunyata Taipan, the Kimber was much better at the bottom. The Taipan, though, was more open at the top. I would call it largely a draw, but you have to choose the traits that suits you system better as they excel in different areas.

The PK-10 Gold is definitely a big step up from the basic PK-14. For the asking price, it is great value.

Putting the 4 pieces of Kimber together created a sound that has excellent solidity, was quiet and came with very good details. The things I would like to ask for was a bit more air and further improved musical flow. There was also a slight dryness in the sound that I would like to see eliminated. In these areas, the PK-10 gold did much better than the PK-14. So on a hunch, I decided to swap the power cords around and see what would happen. The 2 PK-10 Golds went to the CD player and pre-amp and the 2 PK-14s went to the monoblocks. It looked incongruous; the thicker guys went to the small boxes, while the skinnier guys went to the big ones. However, such an arrangement was not without foundation, there have been many audiophiles reporting putting the better cables to the front of the chain, and I have the same experience myself. I found that my system sounded better with the Shunyata Python Helix in front rather than the Taipan.

And so it was. The system sounded more confident with the PK-10 Gold in front, it had a better grip on the proceedings. The sound stage expanded and was better defined. There was more air. The earlier noted slight dryness was nearly banished totally. Excellent! I was now enjoying music putting in one CD after the other. I wished I had 4 pieces of the PK-10 Gold, they fit my system very well, I believe putting them all round would have brought the performance up even further.

These Kimber power cords are very very good. If you can stretch the budget I'd urge you to jump straight to the PK-10 Gold. However, the PK-14 could serve as an excellent stepping stone as you move up from stock power cord.

From here, I shall go on to the Kimber KCAG silver interconnects, that is the story for next time.

Kimber Kable is available from Hi-Way Laser. Contact Kenny 03-7873.8325; 019-281.3399 .