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Bluetooth Headset Reviews

REVIEWS & COMPARISONS

Mobile / Accessories / Bluetooth Headset Review

2016

BEST



Gold Award



Plantronics Voyager Legend

\$67.99

[Review](#)

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2



Jawbone Era

\$129.99

[Review](#)

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Overall Rating

Call Performance

Comfort Features










Hands-Free Performance

Battery Performance

Help & Support

9.80
/ 109.38
/ 10

Call Performance

Voice Quality		100%	95%
Noise Reduction		95%	95%
Contact List Caller ID			
Adjustable Microphone			
Automatic Volume Adjustment			

Bluetooth Headset Review: Free Your Hands with a Bluetooth Headset

Bluetooth headsets liberate your hands, allowing you to be more efficient and safe when you take a call while driving or multitasking. Read our Bluetooth

headset review to find the one that fits your needs.

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Comfort Features

Stability		100%	100%
Weight (ounces)		0.63	0.21
Earbud Options		3	4
Behind-the-Ear Support			
Concha Fin		N/A	

Hands-Free Performance

Bluetooth Version	(?)	3	2.1
Voice Control	(?)	✓	✓
Voice Dialing	(?)	✓	✓
Voice-to-Text	(?)	✓	✓
Text Reader	(?)	✓	✓
Multimedia Compatibility	(?)	✓	✓
Mobile Apps	(?)	✓	✓
Smart Sensors	(?)	✓	✓

Battery Performance

Talk Time (hours)	(?)	7	4
Charge Time (hours)	(?)	1.5	1
Standby Time (days)	(?)	11	10
Charging Case	(?)	✓	✓



Help & Support

Warranty		1 Year	1 Year
Phone			
Email			
Live Chat			
Downloads			
FAQs			
Support Forum			

Gold Award Winner

Plantronics Voyager Legend



Features

The Plantronics Voyager Legend is the best Bluetooth headset because it combines high-quality audio and noise



plantronics®

headset because it combines high-quality audio and noise cancellation with the most comprehensive hand-free control. With moisture protection and a secure over-ear fit, you don't have to worry about missing your important calls.

[GET STARTED >](#)

Top 3 reasons to get the Plantronics Voyager Legend Bluetooth Headset



Noise Cancellation

The audio quality for the person on

uses a three-microphone system with an internal 21-band equalizer to remove background noise.



Moisture Resistant

One of the comfort features that

military grade, water resistant coating that protects this headset from moisture like sweat and rain.



Comprehensive Performance

Voice commands are just scratching

Bluetooth Profile. Additional Advertisement



BEST BUY EXPERT SERVICE. UNBEATABLE PRICE.

SAMSUNG

Samsung - Radiant360 R1 Speaker - Black



by Brandon Carte

Bluetooth Headset Review

Why Buy a Bluetooth Headset?

The top performers in our review are the [Plantronics Voyager Legend](#), the Gold Award winner; the [Jawbone Era](#), the Silver Award winner; and the [Plantronics Voyager Edge](#), the Bronze Award winner. Here's more on choosing a product to meet your needs, along with detail on how we arrived at our ranking of the best 10 Bluetooth headsets.

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A banner advertisement with a light gray background. On the left, there are four circular social media icons: Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and Pinterest. To their right, the text "A better network." is written in a bold, red font. On the far right, there are images of two smartphones, one gold and one silver, with the latter showing a screen with the time 12:45.

A vertical advertisement with a dark blue background. At the top, the price "\$149.99" is displayed in white. Below the price is a black cylindrical object. Underneath that is a row of small, light gray rectangular items. Below that is a single light gray rectangular item. At the bottom, there is a yellow "Shop Now" button, a white box icon, and the text "FREE 2-DAY SHIPPING ON THOUSANDS OF ITEMS" and "ORDERS \$35 & UP". A small copyright notice "©2016 Best Buy" is at the very bottom.



e call. If you're on your computer, you have only one hand for typing. If

you're in your car, you only have one hand for driving. With a Bluetooth

headset, both hands are free. You can drive more safely. You can multitask

more effectively. The best Bluetooth headsets are intermediary devices

between you and your phone, allowing you to function as though the person you're talking to is standing next to you.

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A horizontal advertisement with a dark blue background. On the left is the Best Buy logo. To its right, the text "EXPERT SERVICE. UNBEATABLE PRICE." is written in white. Below that, the "SAMSUNG" logo is shown. At the bottom, the product name "Samsung - Radiant360 R1 Speaker - Black" is listed.


Bluetooth headsets are no longer limited to people with high-end jobs who spend most of their time going from phone call to the next. The majority of people who use Bluetooth hands-free devices are drivers. Driving while using a handheld phone is extremely distracting and dangerous. Not only does it take your hand off the steering wheel, but it also takes your eyes off the road. As a result, 14 states have made it illegal for all drivers to use a handheld cell phone. In 45 states, law enforcement can ticket you for texting behind the wheel. A hands-free Bluetooth headset allows you to safely use your phone while driving, and it keeps you within the law.


These headsets work by connecting to your phone through a wireless signal. This wireless signal essentially transfers the microphone and receiver on your phone to an earpiece. On a basic level, all Bluetooth headsets, even the smallest, consist of an audio driver and a microphone that communicates audio information wirelessly with your phone. The top Bluetooth headsets have controls on the earpiece that allow you to answer and end calls. They can also incorporate voice commands, which can include dialing contacts and dictating text messages. You practically never have to touch your phone.

There are two major features to consider when buying a wireless Bluetooth headset – call quality and noise cancellation. The call quality is how well you hear your caller. Most Bluetooth headsets have a wideband frequency range, which means that your caller shouldn't sound tinny and hollow. A noise-canceling Bluetooth headset helps your caller hear you clearly by using internal EQ filters and multiple microphones to filter out background noises like wind, cars and other people. After these two features, you should consider additional features like battery life and hands-free performance.


\$149⁹⁹







Shop Now



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ON THOUSANDS OF ITEMS

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Most Bluetooth headsets are monaural, which means that the headset fits on one ear and has only one audio driver. The monaural headset experience fits snugly within the collective phone call experience – we've been using one ear for phone calls since Alexander Graham Bell first called Thomas Watson. However, you might find your call experience will improve with a stereo Bluetooth headset, which is a set of [wireless earbuds](#) that allows you to also comfortably stream music when you're not taking a call. Stereo Bluetooth headsets have excellent call quality because of the added dimension of hearing your caller with both ears, but few have noise cancellation technology and other features common with monaural headsets, like voice dialing.

Bluetooth Headset: How We Tested, What We Found

The most important feature of a Bluetooth headset is the call quality. As with any call, there are two parts – the caller's voice and your voice. To test the quality of the caller's voice, we had the caller recite poetry as we wrote down what we heard. Then we compared what we wrote down to the actual poem to determine how well we could hear the caller. To account for variables, the caller recited 10 poems of various difficulties to create an average score for each headset. We also made sure to use different poems for each headset and that we didn't already know any of the poems so that we couldn't rely on previous knowledge to affect the score.

Since every Bluetooth headset we tested supports wideband audio, we found that the voice quality was generally very good, with only one headset scoring below 90 percent. The quality is exceptionally better than you'd get holding the phone to your ear, which scored a 65 percent on the same test.

The second part of the call quality is how well the caller can hear you. If you're on the subway or walking in a park, you don't want your caller to keep asking you to repeat yourself. Many headsets boast of noise cancellation technology with fancy names like Noise Assassin and Noise Blackout. The technology generally consists of the same principles – two or more microphones pick up your voice and background noises while a digital signal processor filters out the background noises.

To test each Bluetooth headset's noise reduction technology, we played common background noises through a surround-sound system as we recorded the results on the caller's side of the call. We tested each headset with the same background noises at the same volumes while reciting the same W.B. Yeats poem. We played noises from a busy city street, a subway, a large gathering, a park on a windy day and the inside of a car driving on a freeway. Then we compared the results to determine a noise reduction score.

While the voice quality test showed that most of the headsets provide excellent voice quality, the noise reduction test showed a lot more disparity in the call quality of the Bluetooth headsets we reviewed. While some headsets proved to be capable of removing almost all of the background noises, other headsets barely performed better than the 50 percent baseline score we got when speaking directly into the phone. If you don't like repeating yourself, you should pick a headset with a score of 90 percent or higher.

Finally, the third test we performed was for the stability and comfort of the headset's wearing style. Comfort is a critical characteristic, but it's also very subjective. However, a headset's stability is an aspect of comfort that can be

tested, as it relates to objective support points and balance. To test the stability, we simply performed a number of vigorous activities while wearing the headset – shaking and nodding our heads, lightly jogging, and jaunting up and down stairs. Not only did we note when the headset fell off, but we also noted when adjustments were required.

Several Bluetooth headsets didn't budge at all, which means you can expect to wear them through almost any task without having to make adjustments. Most wireless headsets required some adjustments, and some headsets easily shook loose. A stable and secure Bluetooth headset is a comfortable headset, because you can wear it during your workday without worrying that it will fall out or need adjustment.

Top Ten Reviews seeks, whenever possible, to evaluate all products and services in hands-on tests that simulate as closely as possible the experiences of a typical consumer. We obtained the headsets in our comparison either on loan from the companies or through retail purchase. The manufacturers had no input or influence over our test methodology, nor was the methodology provided to any of them in more detail than is available through reading our reviews. Results of our evaluations were not provided to the companies in advance of publication.

What Else Is Important in Selecting a Bluetooth Headset?

After finding a Bluetooth headset with great call quality and a comfortable fit, you should consider additional aspects of the headset. Does it have voice

controls that integrate with Siri and Google Now? How long can you talk before the battery dies? Where do you find help for any technical issues?

Hands-Free Performance

The purpose of a Bluetooth headset is to free your hands so that you can continue working normally or driving safely. The best Bluetooth headsets take the hands-free ideology beyond the phone call by making it so you don't have to touch your phone at all. This includes features like voice commands that connect you to Siri and Google Now, voice dialing, voice-to-text and text-to-voice, smart sensors, and multimedia compatibility.

Battery Performance

Every Bluetooth headset uses a rechargeable battery. The talk time of each battery ranges from four to 10 hours. However, the top Bluetooth headsets also come with charging cases, which charge your headset when you're not using it. A charging case can extend the life of the headset by 10 to 14 hours. You should also consider the charge time, which is the amount of time it takes for the battery to reach a full charge.

Help & Support

Many of the manufacturers in our Bluetooth headset review specialize in wireless hands-free headsets. As a result, you can expect to receive excellent support for most Bluetooth headsets. The standard warranty for the industry is one year. The best Bluetooth headset manufacturers also include educational resources like glossaries, online communities, downloads and easily accessible manuals.

Bluetooth Headset: Our Verdict & Recommendations

The Plantronics Voyager Legend was the best Bluetooth headset in nearly every test we performed. The audio quality is exceptionally clear, and the noise cancellation is near perfect. The behind-the-ear wearing style provides exceptional stability.

Our second choice, the Jawbone Era, also provides exceptional stability, with the best concha-fin earbud on the market. The call quality doesn't match the Legend, but it still provides high-end audio performance. The Plantronics Voyager Legend, a newcomer to the Bluetooth headset market, also performed exceptionally well in all categories, though the noise cancellation is only average.

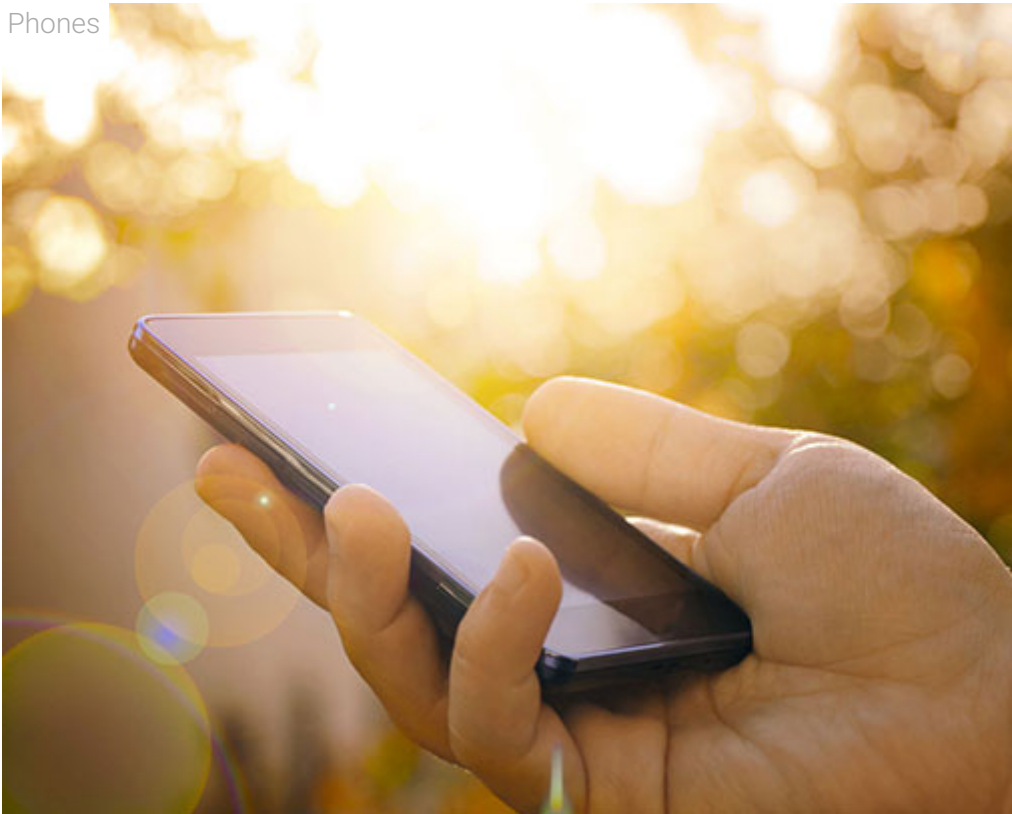
If you work in a loud environment, you should consider the [VXi BlueParrott Reveal](#). While it lacks many of the hands-free features that you'll find in better Bluetooth headsets, the call quality is unmatched. Not only was the audio quality of the caller perfect in our tests, but the noise cancellation was exceptional. Many of the digital signal processors can make your voice sound like you're underwater when it filters out background noises, but the Reveal consistently blocked out the background noise while leaving the voice clear. No matter where you are, your caller will think you're in a quiet room.

Having your hands free to multitask while you're on a call is important for increasing your productivity while you work. If you want to stay reachable, increase your contact with clients and employees, or safely drive and talk,

you'll need a Bluetooth headset with excellent noise cancellation and HD-quality audio.

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