

We all know that a set of headphones will let us concentrate more on the radio signal and cut out interference from the outside world. But did you know there are some real differences in headphones? Differences that mean comfortable DXing or a missed ID.

Let's divide headphones into three groups and look at the advantages and disadvantages of each.

1. Stereophones--they are everywhere today! Lightweight, comfortable, cheap. But wait! There are serious drawbacks. First, the wide frequency response emphasizes static over speech, and that makes listening very tiring. Also, the foam covers used on most lightweight stereophones actually absorb some of the signal, and we don't hear all that's there.

2. Professional communications headphones--unlike stereophones, these headphones are tailored especially for speech reproduction. Try a pair if you can. You will be surprised how much static is reduced and how speech stands out. The Telex company makes a complete line that is available at amateur radio stores or aircraft supply companies.

While this type of headphone is excellent for serious DXing, its limited frequency response makes listening to a good signal tiresome after awhile. Music especially suffers.

3. Semi-pro communications headphones--these are my choice for general listening. Frequency response is wider, but not as wide as stereophones. Two Kenwood models have donut shaped foam cushions that allow more DX to get through the center hole. Model HS-5 is a well made, tight fitting headphone that keeps outside noise out. A problem with tight fitting phones here in the southwest is that your ears start to sweat in the summer! Model HS-6 is lighter weight and a more open design, like stereophones, but better made and comfortable for long hours of dial twirling.

Well, there you have it. Hope I've given you some insight into what is available and what may suit your needs best.

---The following rundown of headphones is from the ANARC Marketplace Report; Dennis' comments on the ones he has tried are in parentheses:

- Kenwood HS-4: standard full-size headphones, enclosing the ear; 8 ohm impedance; 300-3000 Hz frequency response; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug; US\$20 Cdn\$26.
- Kenwood HS-5: deluxe model, full-size headphones, enclosing the ear; with earpads; 8 ohm; 150-4000Hz; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug; US\$40-45, Cdn\$55. (very nice closed ear model; keeps the house noises out of the DX)
- Kenwood HS-6: ultra-lightweight with headband; 12.5 ohm; 100-10,000 Hz; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug; US\$30 or less, Cdn\$31+. (probably the best for SWling, comfortable, good frequency response, but lets in background noise)
- Kenwood HS-7: ultra-light weight ear-fitting; no headband; 16 ohm; mini phone plug, comes with adapter to $\frac{1}{4}$ ".
- Telex C-610: standard, full-size headphones, enclosing the ear; 8 ounces; 8-20 ohm; 50-12,000 Hz; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug; designed for code practice; US\$11, Cdn \$20
- Telex C-1210: full-size headphones, enclosing ear; 12 ounces; 8-20 ohm; 20-20,000 Hz; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug; US\$38, Cdn\$47.
- Telex C-1320: deluxe, full-size headphones, enclosing the ear; 15 ounces; 8-20 ohms; 20-20,000 Hz frequency response; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug; US\$42, Cdn\$70.
- Telex CS-7: Same as C-1320 except 600 ohm impedance. US\$45, Cdn\$79.
- Telex HFC-91: ultralight, ear-fitting; under-chin band; 1.5 oz.; 8-20 ohms; 100-3000Hz frequency response; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug; 1 millisecond delay designed to enhance CW or SSB; Cdn\$15. (Hard on the ears since the phones hang from them)
- Telex HMC-2: ultralight, earfitting; under-chin, aluminum tone arms; 1.2 ounces; 8-20 ohm; 100-3000 Hz; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug; Cdn\$24. (same comment as the HFC-91)

Telex HTC-2: lightweight, ear-fitting; headband; 1.6 ounces; 8-20 ohm; 100-3000 Hz; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug; Cdn \$24. (very restricted frequency response means speech really stands out from the static, but tiring for SWling, glasses may prevent proper fit)

Telex PC-1000: full-size, enclosing the ear; cushioned, with headband; 12 ounces; 8-150 ohm; 50-12,000 Hz; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug; US\$17-19, Cdn\$27.

Telex SWL-610: Same as C-610, except 2000 ohm impedance. US\$12-13, Cdn\$23.

Yaesu YH55: full-size headphones, enclosing the ear; cushioned earpads; 8 ohms; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug. US\$15-20, Cdn\$25.

Yaesu YH77: light-weight, 2 ounces; with headband; $\frac{1}{4}$ " phone plug; US\$15, Cdn\$25. (nothing more than cheap stereophones wired for mono)

(also from Dennis: Japan Radio ST-3: fully enclose ear yet comfortable for long term wearing. Limited frequency response but still pleasant audio for SWling. 600 ohms works well with SPR-4)

