

The Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 is the leading active noise-canceling (ANC) headphone of 2025.

While no pair of headphones is absolutely perfect, one model stands out from the rest: the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2.

Wireless headphones had a boom year in 2025, with Sony and Bose updating their flagship active noise-canceling (ANC) over-ear headphone models. Plus, other competitors like the AirPods Max and Sonos Ace are still thriving, so consumers have plenty of options. Apple even launched the AirPods Pro 3 , a pair of wireless headphones with active noise cancellation (ANC) good enough to compete with the best over-ear headphones. There's never been a better time to invest in a great pair of headphones, but which ones should you buy?

While no pair of headphones is absolutely perfect, one model stands out from the rest: the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2. They offer the perfect combination of comfort, portability, ANC, and of course, sound quality. At \$449 (and often sold for less), the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 is a favorite over-ear headphone this year.

The great features of the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2

Comfort, sound quality, customization options, and portability are all excellent.

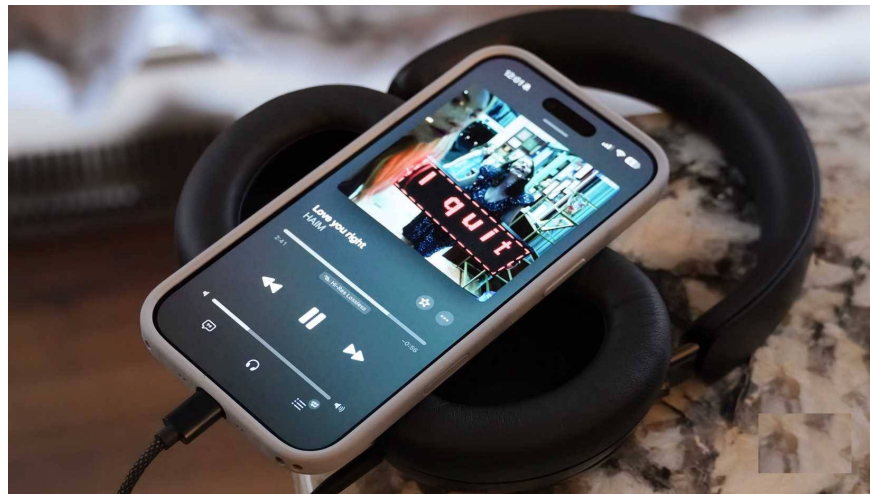






Bose is competing with Sony's WH-1000XM6 for the title of best ANC headphones to launch in 2025. These are top-of-the-line models released this year, and they're only \$10 apart in price. Surprisingly, the Sony WH-1000XM6 and Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 take very similar approaches to competing with Apple's AirPods Max. The Sony and Bose headphones are lighter, more compatible, and easier to store, and both offer active noise cancellation and Transparency mode, but not as good as Apple's.

Sony caters to audiophiles' needs with support for the LDAC audio codec, while Bose only supports SBC, AAC, and aptX Adaptive. Some may not appreciate Bose's extensive customization settings for the QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2. There is a simple EQ if you need to fine-tune the sound – near-perfect fine-tuning right out of the box – as well as support for custom ANC modes.



Many people particularly appreciate the Immersion mode on the QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 headphones, which is essentially a combination of ANC and spatial audio. However, because the headphones handle spatial perception themselves, your source content doesn't need to be processed with Dolby Atmos or any similar technology. You can connect virtually any device to the Bose headphones, and it will add a sense of spatiality to

the content you're listening to.

In terms of sound quality and ANC, the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 has accompanied several users on numerous cross-country flights, and it's a perfect replacement for AirPods Max. While the AirPods Max's noise cancellation might be slightly better, the Bose earbuds are more comfortable to wear.

With their foldable design and included carrying case, the QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 earbuds are easy to carry in a travel bag.



The sound of the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 is quite balanced, with a slight hint of power in the bass range. The bass isn't overpowering, but it's deep and full. Bose has succeeded in delivering this explosive sound without overpowering the mids and highs, something many people appreciate. If the bass is too strong, the Bass Reducer EQ configuration will prioritize vocals.

What are some drawbacks of the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2?

Apple still has an advantage in active noise cancellation (ANC).



Compared to AirPods Max, still considered the gold standard for active noise cancellation (ANC), the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 headphones fall short. AirPods Max offer better noise reduction, but don't worry, the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 still performs very well in this area.

There are a few drawbacks to the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 that might affect the experience for some. The headphones support USB-C for wired audio, but the built-in headphone jack is a 2.5mm port. You'll need to use the included 2.5mm to 3.5mm cable to connect the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 to your favorite audio devices. The headphones need to be charged to operate in wired mode, unlike Sony's WH-1000XM6, which can operate entirely in analog mode via a 3.5mm cable.

Additionally, there's a button to control both power and Bluetooth pairing (each earbud should have its own buttons). Battery life, while quite good at 30 hours with ANC on, isn't outstanding compared to some other options on the market.

Why is Bose the market leader in active noise cancellation (ANC) headphones?

Doing almost everything well while still delivering compelling value.





While the Sony WH-1000XM6 or AirPods Max might be better alternatives for some, Bose's QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 has proven to be the most comprehensive pair of headphones on the market in 2025. They outperform Sony's product at nearly the same price, and are only slightly inferior to Apple in some aspects, while costing \$100 less. This is a great indication that Bose has reduced the price of the QuietComfort Ultra Gen 2 by \$50 – making these headphones even more worthwhile.

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