

Spending tens of millions for an earbuds instead of headphones or speakers, is it worth it?

It can be said in the world of sound, there is a dangerous area that lies on the boundary between science and subjectivity, and the struggle for final results can lead to significant differences between the numbers in price.

When I first entered the audio world, first encountering high-end audio equipment, I often told myself that I could choose to buy a 90-95% quality device but it was cheaper. to 50, 60%. But when I went into this world, I realized that 5% of sound is a problem and not many audiophiles are willing to hook their hands to pursue that 5%.

It can be said in the world of sound, there is a "dangerous" area at the boundary between science and subjectivity, and the struggle for the final result can lead to significant differences between children. number in the selling price. Most people are aware that high-end audio is a luxury market, but many people still tell me that they have a hard time trying to understand why people can pay a large amount of money. So for a favorite earbuds (also known as earbud and In-Ear Monitor in the audio world). Spending 20 million for a speaker? Not cheap but also very normal, not rare. But 20 million for an earbuds? (IEM - In-Ear Monitor) sounded like it was a bit 'weird'! I bet that if you ask a normal person, listen to music with an iPhone headset that there are IEMs that sell for up to 40, 50 million, absolutely shocking is the first reaction you encounter. How many people around you use earbuds on a million? Probably not much, but who dares to assert that they can't 'adventure' with IEMs of only 2-300 thousand? So who will spend a few tens of millions on these tiny headphones?



1. Do you distinguish headset, headphone and earphone?

It seems that not many people realize, or more correctly concerned about the booming earphones market and market value, continue to increase every hour. Like smartphones or any other product, the IEM market has dozens of different companies, capturing every segment from 'introductory' to 'professional'. Check out some of the leading brands and products in the IEM market, including Shure KSE1500 \$ 2,500, Campfire Audio Solaris \$ 1,500, Hifiman RE2000 \$ 1,500, RHA CL2 \$ 900, Sony IER-Z1R \$ 2300, AKG N5005 \$ 6400 .

Please note, the IEM market is still booming and growing despite the 'extinction' of the mobile device's headphone jack that the leader for this trend is the iPhone. Most of these high-end IEMs don't have any smart features at all, don't even have microphones, but it's okay, with these products, sound is the only thing that exists, other things. whether or not it doesn't matter!



So why are people willing to pay so much when headphones don't play music? First of all, please mention flexibility. IEM simply gives more flexibility to use than anything else in the sound world, and with a busy life, has to move as much as we do today, spending a large amount of money on an IEM. Good before the purse hook or headphone seems to be more reasonable.

No, IEM cannot completely reproduce a sound-like substance that we encounter on a speaker, at least without special recording techniques or proper algorithms. In addition, IEM cannot give a wide, airy soundstage that is like a headphone. And finally IEM is definitely not for everyone, saying that because some people simply can't stand the feeling of attaching a small piece of metal or plastic into their ears.

But for those who are not bothered by these things, pouring sound directly into your eardrum the way IEM works can create a unique sound experience but no less. effective. In general, a more detailed soundstage is the first thing that we can see clearly when using IEM compared to speakers or even headphones, regardless of any price segment. But as mentioned, the soundstage will be a weakness of IEM compared to speakers and headphones. In my experience, you don't have to spend a few tens of millions to look for a speaker that gives you a realistic soundstage - the main advantage of the speakers, but you have to take a lot of 'rice' before I can find myself an IEM with a 'delicious' soundstage like a speaker, that's for sure.



The second factor that we must mention on IEMs is better noise isolation, and if good noise protection is done, of course sound quality, or more specifically, details and nuances in Your music will also be significantly improved.

Talking about noise isolation, you can also get excellent sound insulation from adaptive noise cancellation headphones. And although active noise-canceling headphones have improved significantly over the past few years, even the best in the market like Sony WH1000 xm3 or Bose QC35ii are still quite fuzzy compared to high-end IEMs when speaking. about the detail and truthfulness of sound.



Another notable point to mention here is that I have been 'earwashed' with speakers and headphones costing tens of thousands of dollars, but there is no system that can give details. as tall as a pair of good IEM.

However, the most important and most obvious benefit on IEMs is that it is very small. Speakers should be placed at home, or if they are portable speakers, you can carry them with you, but you won't be so rude to open speakers to listen to music in public places such as on a bus or in the right office. is not? HI-FI headphones and high-end headphones are also often very large, heavy, and it's important that your mobile phone can hardly pull headphones like this, even if pulled, it will be It is impossible to produce all the sound, but you need to have

relatively bulky amplifiers (amplifiers). But with IEMs, you can always carry with you - even if its mobile settings can be a little messy (for example, the Shure KSE1500). What's better than being able to take with you a world-class audio system to anywhere - be it a gym, an airplane, a bathroom or a bus, train station for entertainment and relax anytime, anywhere. As mentioned, there are very few top headphones that have good mobility because they require a strong enough power source, while enough powerful ones are not small or light.



Moreover, another important thing is that if considering above the same price, IEM usually gives a slightly better sound quality than headphones. Meanwhile, as said, 'a little better sound' in sound, and especially on high-end products, means you have to spend a lot more money, so consider carefully the choice. choose yours.

When talking about Hi-Fi sound quality, it is not the need or accessibility but the desire and desire. Most people are willing to splash money on what they really need because they make them happy - be it designer clothes, class watches, luxury cars, and sound is no exception. It does not make us cool or better, but it helps us to have more relaxing moments, and good IEMs are necessary to do this.



You can treat sound as a hobby or a passion. If you are an audio lover, go to an audio store and experience, you will realize the value of an expensive IEM, especially if you have 'sensitive' ears, it will be worth it. Sorry to not invest more 'delicious food'. The last word, if we can assign the value of a device to happiness, spending \$ 1,000 for a pair of fancy headphones is almost a bargain, believe me!

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