

# What are over-ear headphones? How to distinguish them from in-ear headphones?

Unsure what over-ear headphones are? Learn how to distinguish between over-ear and in-ear headphones to choose the right audio device for your needs.

Over-ear headphones are large headphones with earcups that completely cover the ears, providing comfort, excellent natural sound isolation, and deep sound quality. They are a popular choice for gaming, studio use, and home music listening thanks to their soft ear cushions that reduce ear pain during prolonged use. Let's explore what over-ear headphones are in this article from GearVN.

## Key points

1. Over-ear headphones have large earcups that completely cover the ears, providing surround sound and effective physical noise isolation.
2. On-ear headphones have smaller earcups that sit on the outer ear, making them lightweight but prone to causing pain and offering poor sound isolation.
3. In-ear headphones are designed to fit deep into the ear canal, are ultra-compact, and ideal for travel and sports activities.
4. Gamers should choose over-ear headphones for a wide soundstage; people who travel frequently should choose in-ear headphones; and on-ear headphones are suitable for the office.

## 1. What are over-ear and in-ear headphones?

### 1.1. Over-ear headphones

Over-ear headphones (or circumaural headphones) have a design with large earcups that completely cover the user's ears. This structure creates a sealed space, providing realistic surround sound reproduction and effective physical noise isolation.

1. The structure consists of a headband that goes across the head and two large earcups.
2. Using large audio drivers (typically 40-50mm) helps reproduce deep bass and a wide soundstage.
3. It incorporates Passive Noise Isolation technology thanks to a thick, snug-fitting head cushion that blocks out ambient noise.



*Over-ear headphones that completely cover the ears, providing excellent sound isolation, and large drivers for a wide soundstage and deep bass.*

## **1.2. In-ear headphones**

In-ear headphones have a design where the sound tube goes deep inside the user's ear canal. This product line is extremely popular due to its compact size, especially with the explosion of completely wireless versions.

1. Use earbud tips of various sizes to securely fasten the earbuds in place.
2. The ultra-compact driver design ensures detailed sound reproduction and excellent passive noise isolation.
3. Popular for its True Wireless technology, it offers maximum convenience for movement and exercise.



*In-ear headphones are compact, offer good sound isolation, are easy to carry, and are popular in the TWS (Two-Way) headphone category.*

## 2. What are on-ear headphones and why are they often confused with each other?

On-ear headphones are a type of headphone that covers the entire ear, but the earcups are smaller than those of over-ear headphones. Instead of completely covering the ear, the ear cushions of on-ear headphones rest directly on the user's ear cartilage.

1. The on-ear earbuds are compact, lightweight, and easily foldable for portability.
2. The ear cushions rest on the outer edge of the ear instead of completely encircling the ear like over-ear headphones.
3. The ability to isolate ambient noise is poorer because it does not create a completely enclosed space.



*On-ear headphones are compact, don't completely cover the ears, and offer less sound isolation than over-ear headphones.*

## 3. Comparison table differentiating in-ear, on-ear, and over-ear headphones.

Criteria	In-ear headphones	On-ear headphones	Over-ear headphones
<b>Size</b>	Ultra-compact, extremely portable.	On average, more compact and lightweight than over-ear headphones.	Large, bulky, and lacking in portability.

<b>Sound quality</b>	Good, with a strong focus on the mid and treble ranges.	Quite good, clear sound.	High quality, deep bass, wide soundstage.
<b>Soundproofing capabilities</b>	Deep sound insulation by completely sealing the ear canal.	Average sound insulation, sound leakage	Excellent sound insulation thanks to its ear-covering design.
<b>Comfort</b>	Wearing them for extended periods may cause ear blockage.	Aching and pain in the ear cartilage after 1-2 hours.	Very comfortable, doesn't press against the ears.
<b>Sports app</b>	Best fit, secure grip during exercise.	Easily falls off during strenuous activity.	Unsuitable, causes heat and sweating.

## 4. Analyze the practical advantages and disadvantages of each model.

### 4.1. Advantages and disadvantages of in-ear headphones

#### Advantage:

1. Ultra-compact design, easily fits in your pocket and can be used anytime.
2. It doesn't get in the way when wearing glasses or a helmet.
3. Active noise cancellation technology is well integrated into the higher-end models.

#### Disadvantages:

1. Wearing them continuously for many hours can easily cause pain, discomfort, and a feeling of tightness in the ear canal.
2. The soundstage is significantly narrower compared to over-ear headphones.



*In-ear headphones have an ultra-compact design.*

## **4.2. Advantages and disadvantages of over-ear headphones**

### **Advantage:**

1. Accurate spatial positioning reproduction, providing excellent support for Virtual Surround Sound technology for gamers.
2. The spacious soundstage delivers a realistic music listening experience.
3. Passive soundproofing is effective without the need to activate electronic noise cancellation.

### **Disadvantages:**

1. They are large in size, take up a lot of space, and are quite heavy.
2. It can easily cause ear discomfort if used in an environment without air conditioning.

It's best to choose over-ear headphones that use mesh ear cushions or have a cooling gel layer to minimize stuffiness during extended use.



*Over-ear headphones offer good noise isolation, but they are quite large and can get hot when worn for extended periods.*

### **4.3. Advantages and disadvantages of on-ear headphones**

#### **Advantage:**

1. Lightweight, maintaining the over-ear design without being too bulky.
2. It helps users remain somewhat aware of their surroundings, ensuring safety while working in an office environment.

#### **Disadvantages:**

1. Constant pressure on the earlobe will cause ear cartilage pain and fatigue after only a short period of use.
2. The bass range is often weaker due to the lack of a sealed acoustic chamber.



*On-ear headphones are lightweight and compact, but they offer poor sound isolation and can cause pain and fatigue after prolonged use.*

## **5. Advice on choosing headphones based on your needs.**

### **5.1. For gamers and streamers**

Professional gamers and streamers demand high-quality surround sound reproduction, accurate footstep detection, and clear microphone communication. Over-ear headphones are the perfect choice to meet these technical standards.

The over-ear design allows gamers to fully concentrate on the game without distractions. You should prioritize reputable gaming gear brands such as Razer, Logitech, Corsair, and ASUS to ensure durability and access to advanced audio tuning software.

## 5.2. For students and frequent travelers

Students often need a versatile device that's affordable and easy to carry to school. In-ear headphones, especially True Wireless models, meet this need well. Their compact design allows you to comfortably listen to music on the bus, study a foreign language in the library, or work out at the gym without worrying about tangled cables.

## 5.3. For office workers

Office workers need privacy to concentrate, but sometimes they still need to be aware of colleagues' calls. On-ear or in-ear earbuds are a reasonable balance.

These product lines deliver sound quality good enough for light entertainment. At the same time, the not-quite-closed design prevents you from being completely isolated from your surroundings.

# 6. Buy genuine gaming and work headsets at GearVN.

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2. **Competitive pricing and numerous promotions:** GearVN regularly runs attractive promotions and discounts on special occasions. You can easily own your desired device at the best price, along with attractive gifts or flexible installment payment options.
3. **Reliable warranty and after-sales service policy:** When shopping at GearVN, you can rest assured with our clear warranty policy and dedicated technical support team. Our experienced specialists are always ready to advise you on choosing the right product and answer any questions you may have during use.
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### GearVN contact information :

1. **Website** : gearvn.com
2. **Hotline** : 1900.5301



*Buy reliable, high-quality over-ear headphones at GearVN.*

## 7. Frequently Asked Questions about Headphones

### 7.1. Can I use over-ear headphones while wearing glasses?

People who wear glasses can comfortably use over-ear headphones. You should choose products with super soft memory foam ear cushions or designs with pre-cut grooves for the glasses frame to avoid pressing the glasses frame against your temples and causing pain.

### 7.2. Which headphones offer the best noise cancellation?

In terms of physical passive noise isolation, over-ear headphones hold the lead thanks to their design that completely covers the ear. However, when considering the ability to eliminate ambient noise using sound waves, high-end in-ear headphones incorporating active noise cancellation (ANC) technology offer superior effectiveness.

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2. What are Hi-Fi headphones? Decoding the high-fidelity audio standard.
3. What are earbuds and in-ear headphones? What are the differences?

*Choosing the right headphones depends entirely on your habits, usage environment, and personal listening preferences. To find the perfect fit, comfort, and sound quality, visit a GearVN showroom to try them on in person and receive assistance from our technical team.*

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