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NoiseBuster

Noise-Cancelling Headphones



NoiseBuster headphones unfolded (left) and folded for packing in your carry-on bag (below).

On a transatlantic flight of seven to ten hours, the constant roar of jet noise and air rushing past the fuselage is annoying--and, just as important, that constant low-frequency roar can make it harder to hear movie soundtracks or other audio programming. It can also make it harder to relax or sleep during the flight.



Fortunately, there's an easy solution: Noise-cancelling headphones, which have a microphone in each ear cup. The headphones work like this:

- The tiny microphones intercept low-frequency soundwaves before they reach the ear and feed that noise to electronic circuitry.
- The electronic circuitry generates soundwaves that are identical to, but the opposite of, the incoming noise.

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- When these "anti-noise" soundwaves are fed into the headphones' earcups, they cancel out most of the incoming noise.



A number of manufactures sell noise-cancelling headphones at prices of up to US \$300, and some of the headphones are too bulky to be practical. A conspicuous exception is [NoiseBuster](#) from Pro Tech Communications, the company that introduced noise-cancelling headphones in 1994. The current NoiseBuster model is lightweight, compact, and designed for easy packing with its origami-like folding design. (It even comes with a soft plastic carrying pouch and a dual-prong adapter for airline sound systems.) Best of all, it has a list price of US \$69.95 and costs only \$50 when ordered from the manufacturer's Web site.

I recently tested a pair of NoiseBuster headphones on two long transatlantic flights, and I was amazed by how effectively they reduced the constant roar of jet travel. The difference was easy to hear: Every time I flipped the earpiece switch to the "on" position, the low-frequency background roar virtually disappeared. I ended up using the headphones not only for movies and music, but also when I was just reading or relaxing and wanted a quieter environment.

The sound quality of the NoiseBuster headphones is far better than the sound from standard airplane headphones, especially with the noise reduction turned on. If you've got room in your carry-on bag for a small headphone pouch, and if you fly reasonably often, the \$50 price of NoiseBuster noise-cancelling headphones is a worthwhile investment in travel comfort.

For technical information, or to order a pair of NoiseBusters, visit the [NoiseBuster Audio Headphones](#) site.