

Urbeats by Dr Dre Review

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By Virginia Barry August 30, 2013

Better than 96% of Reviewed Headphones



The Urbeats are a strong bet.

Overview

If you haven't noticed the literal ocean of people every which way wearing Beats by Dr. Dre, then maybe you should have your eyeballs checked (or maybe you don't review electronics for a living).

Together, Beats Electronics and Monster Cable Products devoured 53% of the headphone market before divorcing last year. Now, Beats Electronics is on its own, and it means *business*: I just spent a week with the **Urbeats by Dr. Dre** (MSRP \$99.95)—and these in-ears really put up a fierce fight.

Design & Features

Designed with Goldilocks in mind

The Urbeats sport slick visual design elements, but their utilitarian aspects really make for the best talking points. Since in-ears can be tough when it comes to finding just the right fit, Beats Electronics includes four different-sized silicone speaker sleeves with an accompanying carry case. Talk about customizable!

Next, a 3.94-foot cable has a flat shape to effectively resist tangles. If you ever use in-ears while jogging, you'll love this tangle-free design. The cable also houses a handy mic and remote, and even a shirt clip. No need to reach for your device in order to skip a tune, take

a call, or crank the volume—and iPhone users can even hold the main button down to activate voice commands. Unfortunately, the mic is so high up on the cable that you really can't see it at all—a minor gripe. More important is the fact that the connections aren't the most protected, so handle the cable with care.

Lastly, users will also find a small carry case for the Urbeats for on-the-go protection. And speaking of on-the-go, these headphones block a considerable amount of unwanted, outside noise. High-pitched bothers like birds and neighboring conversations are 1/32 as loud. Even lower frequency sounds like dump trucks and trains can be reduced to anywhere from 1/2 to 1/4 of their original loudness. If you want the world to go away, these Urbeats can help.

Audio Quality

Bass bumpers

When I unwrapped the Urbeats and found myself confronted with the image of an unclad lady in not but a set of headphones, I felt less than optimistic. Yet this set of in-ears entered the audio lab and emerged mostly unscathed, with favorable results across the board.

Beats fans love big bass, and the Urbeats by Dr. Dre don't withhold the booty: Low notes get a real boost, so that hip hop and dub offer the rumbling bass that so many young consumers love. Hooligans. Better still, the mid and high notes aren't left in the dust. Often, bass boosters fail to properly emphasize the rest of the scale and music loses its texture and detail, but not so with the Urbeats: Snare drums, guitar notes, flutes, and the rest come through loud and clear. The volume isn't *perfect*—certain notes in the high end of the middle range are too quiet, so you may lose a high note on strings, woodwinds, and the like, now and again. But this is a mild error that many people will never even notice.

From there, it's really just roses, sunshine, and unicorns. Unless you're just blasting your tunes—which is bad for your health—you won't find a single portion of the scale that suffers audible distortion, not even in the often-flawed sub-bass range. Next, volume between the left and right speakers wavered so little that it's practically undetectable across the board—a rare feat. And to top it all off with a big cherry, the Urbeats showed wonderful noise-blocking ability and barely leaked a drop of noise. Your horrible taste in music need not bother your neighbors. For under 100 bucks, these results look mighty fine.

Last Look

Eat your Beats

Thanks to healthy sound quality, customizability, and a tangle-resistant cord with a mic/remote, the MSRP \$99.95 Urbeats by Dr. Dre are excellent companions for travelers, runners, and office drones alike. These headphones block out a great deal of unwanted sound while keeping music locked in, too—so you won't bother your neighbors.

Comparison shopping is certainly never a bad idea, as there are definitely suitable alternatives for less—competition is never far, is it? But if you're waffling, just think on this: This is a great set of in-ears, and at the end of the day, the right buyer for the Urbeats is a bass lover with a \$100 dollar bill in their pocket.