

Wireless Earbuds

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Listening by device has gone through 3 eras: headphones, wired earbuds and now wireless earbuds. I have tested four products in the wireless group.

TCL SOCL500TWS

The manufacturer TCL may not be as familiar as others, but they are third in TV sales, behind LG and Samsung, and coming on strong. They are expanding their product line in several ways, notably wireless earbuds.



The earbuds come in a compact case about 2" X 2 1/4" X 1" with a flip top lid. The earbuds fit snugly inside in separate compartment for Right and Left ear. The compartment itself is a charger for the earbuds. When you replace them in the case, a light comes on in the earbud to indicate that it is being charged.

The battery inside the case is charged with the included cable: one end of which is a plug for a micro USB socket and the other end has a USB "A" plug. There is a button on the back of the case the turns on up to 4 small LEDs to show the degree of internal charge.

The earbuds connect to a source by Bluetooth 5.0. When you first take the earbuds out of the case, the pairing process begins in the usual fashion. The earbuds will play for up to 6.5 hours on a single charge.

Controlling the earbuds is by a set of taps on the TCL logo at the right or left bud top. For example, to increase volume, tap twice on the right bud; to decrease volume, tap twice on the left bud. To advance to the next track, tap the right bud and hold for 2 seconds; use the left bud for the previous track.

To receive a call, tap either bud once; to reject, tap either bud and hold for 2 seconds. You can even contact Siri by tapping either bud 3 times.

To pair to a new device, tap and hold the right bud for 5 seconds. I was not able to activate re-pairing, but the automatic pairing worked as expected.

TCL Wireless Earbuds

<https://www.tclusa.com/us/products/headphones/socl/tcl-ocean-blue-true-wireless-ear-bluetooth-headphones-socl500twsbl>

Price \$80

Letsfit T22

The earbuds come in a compact case about 3 1/2" X 2" X 1" with a flip top lid. The earbuds fit snugly inside in separate compartment for Right and Left ear. The compartment itself is a charger for the earbuds. When you replace them in the case, a light comes on in the earbud to indicate that it is being charged. It takes about 1 hour to fully charge the earbuds.



In addition, the case shows the percentage of charge of the internal battery. Charging the internal battery is by a short cable. It can take 6-7 hours to fully charge the case. There is a USB plug on the front of the case to allow charging another device.

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Controlling the earbud functions requires tapping the left or right bud. To play use one tap. Next track uses two right bud taps, previous track uses two left bud taps. Volume up uses a tap and hold of the right bud, volume down uses a tap and hold of the left bud. To answer a call, tap either bud once.

Pairing is automatic when the earbuds are first removed from the case. Re-pairing requires a double tap on the right bud.

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Letsfit T22

https://www.letsfit.com/product/US/Letsfit_T22

Price \$40

Price \$40

Earfun Wireless Earbuds

The case is compact and measures 3 ¼ X 1 ½ X 1 ¼". The pop-up lid exposes the two earbuds, their charge status and the charge status of the battery in the case. The earbuds are automatically charged when placed into their pocket. The battery in the case is charged with a cable with a USB plug at one end, a USB-C plug at the other. The degree of charge is shown on the front of the case.



The kit comes with the case and earbuds, user manual, additional size pads for the earbuds and the charging cable.

As the earbuds are removed from the case, you are advised that “power is on” and that you are connected to a device. The connection is by Bluetooth 5.0 and remains connected to the last device to which paired. This can be changed to another device if desired.

The earbuds can be used singly or together, usually the latter. The controls for volume and track re controlled by taps on the earbud. You can answer a phone call (if the earbuds are connected to a cell phone) and talk to the caller. You can even connect to your voice assistant.

The earbuds are waterproof and noise canceling. The play time is up to 30 hours.

Earfun

<https://www.myearfun.com/earfun-free-truly-wireless-earbuds>

Price \$50

JLab Go Air Wireless Earbuds

The case is a simple container without lid. The earbuds charge when put into the case. The battery in the case is charged with a cable attached to the base, a short cable with a USB plug on the end. The case is 2 ¾ X 1 X 1 ½”.



The kit comes with the case, earbuds, extra cushion tips, the attached charge cable and a brief user manual. When you insert the earbuds, you hear “Hello,” “Bluetooth connected” and “Battery full”. The connection is Bluetooth 5.0. It reconnects automatically to the last device to which connected. To connect to a new device, you must turn off Blue tooth in the previous device.

Playtime of the earbuds is 20 hours. Control of volume and track are by taps on the earbud, right for increase/next, left for decrease//previous. You can also answer, hang up or reject calls by taps.

The earbuds can be used together (the usual) or singly. You can also change the quality of sound to any of Balance, Signature or Bass Boost.

JLab Go Air

<https://www.jlabaudio.com/collections/true-wireless/products/go-air-true-wireless-earbuds>

Price \$29

CONCLUSIONS:

I tested each of these products and found each to be easy to use, with excellent sound. I occasionally had an earbud fall out of my ear. Each of the products emphasized how securely their buds fit, so I may have been doing something wrong. It is helpful to not have wires attaching you to the playing device and thus being able to move about the room or do some other task elsewhere. Any of these products would serve you well, but you can't beat the \$29 price for the JLab product.