Beats Studio Buds Review

About

The Beats Studio Buds are water resistant wireless earbuds with active noise cancellation and a long battery life.

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Review

The Beats Studio Buds are a middle tier earbud with good sound quality. Their small in-ear form factor, sound quality, and battery life are all standout features, however they also lack some features that have come to be expected in premium earbuds.

Key features:

- Active noise control
- Long battery life for earbuds and case
- Quick recharge of earbuds in case
- Multiple mics on each earbud

Missing features:

- Proximity sensor for auto play/pause

The Good

The Beats Studio Buds have great build quality, a sturdy case, pretty good sound (for wireless earbuds), and great battery life.

The battery life here really is top notch, and even if you do use the earbuds so long that they run out of juice, they will quick-charge in the case. Put them in the case for just a minute or two and you'll get over an hour more listening time.

The earbuds and case have a great premium feel to them, this is important for earbuds as they are prone to breaking quite easily.

I find these fit very well in the ears, stay in better than I expected, and are easier to put in than I expected. You may need to spend a minute getting used to their shape and how to insert them. Despite their tiny size, they are easy to take out of the case and put back in without dropping them.

The Okay

The Active Noise Cancelling (ANC) and Passthrough modes are okay at best. I don't think they have included enough microphones on this device to provide higher quality ANC or passthrough unfortunately.

It is difficult to tell which sound mode you are in, especially since ANC and passthrough aren't very exceptional. Exacerbating this is the use of sound effects telling you which mode you are in when you switch. I will never learn which sound means which, and find myself switching though them multiple times and clapping or tapping to try and tell which one I am in. I prefer earbuds that say which mode they are in when you switch, For example speaking out the words, "ANC" or "Ambient".

The buttons on these earbuds are physical. I'm normally all for physical buttons, but on earbuds, touch controls are much better. These are some of the best physical buttons I've tried on earbuds, so they aren't a major downside, but you are a little limited on the number of things you can control because of them. The plus side however is you'll never get accidental presses or wonder if you're pressing in the correct spot.

The Bad

While one-touch pairing is supposed to do away with all your bluetooth pairing troubles, I actually had a worse experience pairing these to my Android phone than I have ever had with any bluetooth device in over a decade. The setup workflow is unclear as it tries to pair and install an app at the same time, leaving you on a screen with incorrect instructions. After my first time pairing, the earbuds would not reconnect to my phone, so I had to reset them and start from scratch. The second time I got errors with no way to resolve them. Eventually after a phone reboot and earbud reset everything paired fine. It was an incredibly frustrating experience and their app provides zero advice if everything doesn't go exactly as they have planned.

At this price-point it is unacceptable to not have proximity sensors.

It is not possible to control both ANC and volume at the same time. By default, you cannot control the volume level. I find it unbelievable that any company makes wireless earbuds that don't let you adjust the volume. Volume control is core functionality, full stop. Having said that, the poor passthrough does mean you could just give up that functionality and switch the headphones to volume control. Even with the change, volume control is still poorly implemented.

The case is very large despite these being very small earbuds. I'm not sure why they designed such a large case compared to other earbuds on the market. I want to keep earbuds in my pocket all the time, and these take up way too much pocket space. If you keep them elsewhere, this likely isn't as big of a deal for you.

Decision □□

While the Beats Studio Buds have a quality build and decent sound, the feature-set for the price-point is not quite there. Never pay full price for these. Even on sale there are completing products with good sound that include more features.

Your pairing experience may differ, and I hope it does, but one-touch pairing did not live up to the promise for me. And when it fails, you'll wish for your old pair of earbuds that at least would pair, even if it took 1 minute the first time.

I am using and enjoying my pair since they were a gift, but even receiving them for free I still dearly miss a proximity sensor for auto play-pause.

The Rest

My Purchase Price (including tax and shipping): This was a gift. Standard retail price is $149.99. Can often be found on sale for $99.95

Product Link: https://amzn.to/3PjKA93

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