

Choosing Heaphones

Generally you will be wanting headphones that offer a

- precise (clear)
- balanced (low-mid-high frequencies)
- accurate representation

of what you've recorded

Some things to consider:

- Price range – what can you afford, and if they were to break in the field would you be able to replace them?
- What types of things will you be listening to? Voice, music, atmospheres?
- Sound isolation – how important is it for you to have headphones that block out external sound:
 - Open-back headphones have the back of the earcups open. This leaks more sound out of the headphone and also lets more ambient sounds into the headphone. It gives a more natural sound.
 - Closed-back headphones have the back of the earcups closed. They block more ambient noise but have a smaller, less natural soundscape.
- Frequency response – does the headphone produce a balanced response; can you hear bass thuds (like wind noise) or high squeals (often coming from old TVs)
- Distortion – does the headphone distort on loud sounds?
- Comfort – do they fit comfortably on your head? Would you feel comfortable wearing them for long periods of time?
- Connections – what type of connection does the heaphone have (3.5mm jack, ¼” jack etc), is it compatible with your other devices? Do you need a plug adaptor (this may cause some scratchyness in the sound)
- Weaknesses – often the things that will go wrong with headphones are:
 - Broken wires
 - Long/short lenghts of wire (so they don't quite reach your recorder .. or are too long)
 - Broken/scratchy connector
 - Broken plastic headgear