

Sennheiser PXC 450 - FIRST LOOK

Can Sennheiser outperform the Bose Quiet Noise 3?

by Stuart Miles published on 28 April 2007

Attempting to unseat Bose in the noise cancelling arena, Sennheiser has launched a new pair on noise cancelling headphones called - the PXC 450. But can the new set beat the Bose Quiet Noise 3? We were given a brief play to find out.

Large and encapsulating, the new headphones build massively on the previous set we've reviewed from Sennheiser. As if the company had heard everything we had to say, the PXC 450 has a stack of new features and improvements over previous models.

Gone is the bulky battery compartment you've got to carry around with you, in is the inclusion of the battery in the right-hand earphone. Running off a single AA battery rather than a rechargeable as with the Bose, Sennheiser are promising 20 hours of playback on one charge alongside the ability to find juice in just about any backwater around the globe.

If that wasn't enough, the PXC 450 can be run as a regular set of headphones without the noise cancelling feature turned on and no battery present.

Not content with stopping there however, and the PXC 450s also include something Sennheiser is calling TalkThrough, that lets you hear conversations and announcements, without having to rip the phones off your head by simply pressing a button.

Pressing the button turns your music down to a preset level you choose, opens a voice channel, while still retaining full noise-reduction operation so you can hear clearly.

We aren't sure entirely how it works, but what we do know is that in our play, it worked very well. In our demo in a coffee shop in the centre of Soho,



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London we were just metres away from a building site and we had no problems hearing the spokesman from Sennheiser without hearing the workmen digging up the road.

Turn the noise cancelling on, and amazingly that drone of digging was virtually eradicated and we were able to clearly hear an acoustic guitar track on an iPod without resulting to turning up the volume, something we didn't think would be possible.

Of course all this would be useless without a decent sound and we are pleased to report this was good too with a nice rounded performance that wasn't too bassy or tinny.

VERDICT

It might have been a brief look, but from what we heard, we are very impressed with the new headphones from Sennheiser.

The only grumble we have in the lack of ability to detach the headphone cable, something that we've found really useful with the Bose when flying long haul, but at least the company has moved the battery compartment.

The AA battery support, talk option and ability to run the headphones without noise canceling make this a great alternative, if not a better recommendation than the Bose Quiet Noise 3.

Expect a full review on Pocket-lint shortly.

At a glance

What is it?

Noise Cancelling headphones

Good

Runs on a single AA battery, noise cancelling very good, talk button

Bad

Very big

Verdict

This a great alternative, if not a better recommendation than the Bose Quiet Noise 3

Price £300

Your score

?/10