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## IRadioPop USB Internet Radio Player and Recorder

Do you need 11,000 internet radio stations in your pocket?

by Davey Winder published on 1 January 2008

You can easily use your web browser to visit any of the thousands of radio stations that broadcast across the Internet, streaming live audio directly to your PC or laptop.

So why would you want to shell out any money for a device that does the same? The answer is that you wouldn't but you might want to for a small something that can be plugged into any PC and bring you access to 11,000 radio stations via its own custom front end interface.

The fact that the iRadioPop is tiny, this dongle measures 48 x 18mm and weighs in at just 8g, helps of course.

Oh, and it needs no batteries because it is a USB stick so grabs the minimal power it requires directly from the computer it is connected to.

Then there is the small matter of it also being a radio recorder, allowing you to grab a Windows Media audio file of whatever you happen to be listening to at the time and play it back later.

The software itself runs on Windows XP and Vista, but it does require Windows Media Player 9 or later to do its stuff, and it is actually an Internet Explorer plug-in which manifests itself as a standalone player - but what you are really looking at is a mini-web browser.

This becomes apparent if you forget to click on the play icon next to a radio station name and click on the name itself. Do this and Internet Explorer appears and takes you to the radio station home page instead of playing the audio you were expecting.

However, the mini-web app approach has many



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advantages such as allowing you to set up favourite radio stations with a single click, and just as easily browse by genre or region using a familiar web based link clicking approach.

Searching through the 11,000 stations on offer is surprisingly speedy and simple, and we challenge you not to find something you will want to listen to within a minute or so. Because the application is contained on the USB stick itself, rather than the host computer, the iRadioPop is ideal for mobile users as you can take your favourite radio stations with you wherever you happen to be in the world and access them from any Windows PC within seconds of plugging the USB dongle in.

We were less impressed by the recording ability though. A great idea in principle, even if it is restricted to recording audio in Windows Media format, that is rather hamstrung in practise by the annoying fact that it will not record to the USB stick itself.

We would have thought that the obvious thing to have done here was add 1GB of memory to the stick and let you record directly to it, so you could take that recorded audio with you. But instead the iRadioPop is locked down with no recordable memory space at all, a huge disappointment.

Still, that is perhaps a small grumble considering that this is otherwise a hugely flexible and surprisingly cheap proposition.

## VERDICT

We loved the small size yet huge potential for almost endless audio enjoyment wherever you are. Recording limitations aside, the iRadioPop is the perfect gift for any gadget lover.

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## At a glance

### What is it?

USB Internet Radio Player and Recorder

### Good

Tiny size and huge radio station choice, price, Vista compatible

### Bad

Audio and content quality hugely variable, cannot record direct to USB stick

### Verdict

11,000 radio stations from something smaller than a stick of chewing gum

**Price** £12.99

**Our score**

**7/10**

**Your score**

**8/10**