

Linx B-Tube Bluetooth speaker

How does this wireless speaker perform?

by Chris Hall published on 9 July 2008

Looking like something from the latest James Bond movie, or maybe even Sex and the City, the Linx B-Tube is a highly portable Bluetooth-enabled speaker to take your music on the go.

Measuring a little over 6 inches in length, and a good inch and a half thick, the brushed silver finish gives the B-Tube a space-age finish. It also comes in grey if you want it to look like a piece of battleship.

The ends of the device are the speakers, as well as providing the controls: one is a multi-function button, the other rotates to adjust the volume. Along the body of the tube you'll find a microphone, and around the back you can plug in the power and standard 3.5mm input from any other music device.

The ace up the sleeve here is the Bluetooth connection, meaning that this is not just another speaker. Pairing the device to your mobile phone is straightforward, but you'll need to have the instructions to hand to operate the multi-button to ensure you get this step right.

Featuring A2DP, it supports stereo from your music through the two 2W speakers which makes things sound a little better than a single speaker, and much better than an in-built phone option. However, as is sometimes the case with Bluetooth speakers, we did find that the connection sometimes dropped meaning a blank spot in the music.

You'll also find a microphone so that the B-Tube can act as a speaker phone, with the music cutting out when your phone rings, which adds an extra dimension when sitting on the beach listening to your tunes: now you can conference call as well (a popular option with the youth of today, I'm sure).



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With interesting looks on its side, things are let down slightly by the volume controller, which has a wobble and felt gritty, as though it already had too much sand inside it.

From a sound point of view the volume is reasonable: at the top end it suffers from a lot of distortion, but you can get a fair amount of oomph out of the little speakers. Bass suffers, of course, and you'll find that bass-heavy music does not fare well: general pop and rock is ok but move towards house and dance music and you'll be disappointed.

In the box you get a neat little stand to stop of the B-Tube rolling off the desk when you put it down, plus a bag to keep it nice and clean whilst out and about. You also get the 3.5mm cable as well as the charger, which features a USB cable so you can also charge the device from your PC.

Linx promise 8 hours of music playback from the B-Tube, or 15 hours of talk time.

For those who don't want the Bluetooth connection, the B-Tube also comes in a Lite version for 20 quid less, with smaller dimensions, offering the same great design but only a wired connection to your music. In the box you'll also get a range of adaptors to cover 3.5mm, 2.5mm, Sony Ericsson, Nokia, and Motorola connections.

VERDICT

Overall, the thing working in the favour of B-Tube is the interesting design and the range of functions you get. Whether you just want a speaker for your MP3 player, or something specifically for wireless use, the B-Tube covers all angles.

At a glance

What is it?

Bluetooth speaker

Good

Design, works as speaker phone, rechargeable

Bad

Lacks bass, sometimes drops signal

Verdict

Whether you just want a speaker for your MP3 player, or something specifically for wireless use, the B-Tube covers all angles

Price £49.99

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10