

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/3477/olympus-ls-10-voice-recorder>

## Olympus LS-10 voice recorder

Is this really a recording studio in your pocket?

by Stuart Miles published on 19 September 2008

The Olympus LS-10 claims to deliver the "highest quality sound no matter the time and place - be it at a concert, a breaking news story, or out in nature", but can it live up to its claim? We get recording to find out.

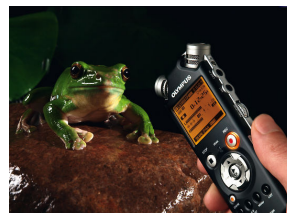
Taking the LS-10 out of the box and the first impression is that you have bought something that is going to take you a long time to understand. The pencil case sized device doesn't take the minimalist approach. It takes the "lets put yet another button in that bit of space" approach.

On a device measures 131.5 x 48 x 22.4mm there are 17 buttons, 5 input sockets, two microphones, and a large LCD screen that gives you information such as recording length, the recording rate, levels of the recording and how much space you've got left in hours, minutes and seconds.

All these buttons and inputs are: line-in, mic, earphone, and a DC power socket, a mini-USB port, volume and recording-level controls, sensitivity and low-cut-filter switches, and an on-off switch that doubles as a hold button. While the buttons give you access to the menu system, record functions, playback options, quick buttons you can programme, options to erase, and record level dials.

Once you do get past that "where is the on switch?" moment, you'll soon realise that the LS-10 offers you everything that you'll want or need from a voice recorder. On the recording front, the LS-10 delivers linear PCM recording capabilities, WAV, MP3 (MPEG1/MPEG2 Audio Layer 3) and WMA with sampling rates of up to 24bit/96kHz.

Recordings are saved on to the unit's internal 2GB of storage or an SDHC card via the slot on the side of the unit. The internal storage means



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you've always got storage space if you need it, while the expansion slot (which supports cards up to 32GB) is great if you know you've got to transfer files afterwards and don't want to have to rely on a computer.

When it comes to getting your recordings into the voice recorder you can either use the line in, mic in, or the twin stereo microphones on the top of the device that give the unit a bit of a personality (all it needs is the screen to have a "face" screen saver and you've got yourself a little friend to talk to).

The mic offer high-sensitivity as well as noise-reduction capabilities and for those looking to record outside, comes with optional (but included) wind muffs so your recordings aren't buffered by the wind.

Powered by two AA batteries you'll get around 10-12 hours of recording and it's certainly long enough to record most board meetings or jamming sessions. While you have the ability to set the recording levels manually, for the most part you'll want the LS-10 to do it for you and in all the recordings we've made with it so far it has managed to get the right level every time.

It's not all good news though, with 2GB of internal memory and a possible further 32GB of storage via an SDHC card the LS-10's file storage is basic to say the least. All you get is six folders in which to store your recordings labelled A through to E while the sixth is titled Music. Recordings are then saved into these with files given, rather like a digital camera, catchy filenames like LS10003.

Luckily there is a speaker on the LS-10 so you can playback the tracks and therefore work out whether it's the one you are looking for, however with no way of labelling the files without a computer it's something to bear in mind. It's unlikely to affect you in the first couple of months, however 6 months in and it might be a different story.

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## At a glance

### What is it?

Digital voice recorder

### Good

2GB internal, SDHC up to 32GB supported, large LCD screen, plenty of manual and automatic control

### Bad

File system is basic, playback speaker not very loud, looks complicated

### Verdict

Expensive, but if you're after crystal clear results it's probably worth the investment

**Price** £269.99

**Our score**

**8/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**

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that bootlegging concerts could become second nature too. But using it in legal situations, in all our tests in a variety of different environments the LS-10 performed exceptionally, producing recordings that made you feel, on playback, like you were back in the room.

In interviews sound, as you would expect, came through loud and clear while nature recording was able to remove the buffeting; music was also well received.

For board meetings or interviews the quality of the recordings means you won't have any problems listening back and transcribing - it's like being in the room - while musicians will appreciate the manual and input/output options.

Expensive, but if you're after crystal clear results it's probably worth the investment.