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Griffin AirCurve iPhone speaker

Will this boost your iPhone sound levels?

by Stuart Miles published on 23 December 2008

Can a piece of plastic boost the sound qualities of your iPhone? Griffin the Apple accessory maker, appears to think so. We lend them an ear to find out.

It's just a hunk of plastic. That's right, the AirCurve has no moving parts, no tweeters, no drivers, no subwoofers, nothing really bar the choice of two docking holders for your iPhone or iPhone 3G and the ability to thread your docking connector cable through it.

The system works by channelling the sound from the speakers found at the bottom of the iPhone through the translucent polycarbonate body (read: plastic brick) thereby making the sounds that emanate out of the iPhone louder.

In reality you're buying a large plastic ear for your iPhone that Griffin say will increase your phone's sound capabilities by around 10 decibels thanks to its "Waveguide" technology that "has been mathematically engineered to deliver amazing amplification".

The actual result is that you get a sound that's louder than your iPhone, but not a scratch on a traditional speaker even if it does only cost around £20.

It might sound amazing (not the AirCurve but what I am about to say), but there are faults to be found in something so simple.

The clear translucent polycarbonate body is all very well and good, but for some reason the docking cradle widgets that fit either the iPhone or iPhone 3G are cheap and white, completely different to the main clear body. Couple that with the fact they don't really attach to the main unit, you'll lose them in minutes, and it's not looking good. To make matters worse, without that fitting



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widget you're buggered as your iPhone won't sit upright in the correct position making the whole thing nothing more than an interesting looking paperweight.

VERDICT

Using the wonders of science and nature is an interesting pursuit and there are about 5 minutes of "look no batteries" moments to be had with the Griffin AirCurve. As soon as you get past that moment of awe at the power of nature however, you'll soon be disappointed.

While you save on having to pack batteries or a power adapter, you won't be able to charge your iPhone, no batteries or power remember, nor will you be able to hear it - well not unless you are being silent in your very quiet hotel room.

Gimmick rather than must have.

At a glance

What is it?

Clever battery-less speaker for iPhone

Good

No batteries, fits both iPhone and iPhone 3G

Bad

Not very loud, iPhone holder is white when rest of unit is clear, only sits iPhone vertically

Verdict

It will improve the sound of your iPhone, but not anywhere near as much as a speaker system

Price £10

Our score

4/10

Your score

?/10