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Samsung Yepp YP-55 H and V

by Charlie Brewer published on 2 July 2004

To compliment the existing range of weird and wonderful Digital Audio players offered by Samsung, the new Yepp YP-55 H and V models have recently been unveiled. It would appear the overriding concern for the design department was size, with both players measuring 1inch x 1inch square, and 3.2 inches long. Power comes from a single AAA battery, giving up to 15 hours playback, keeping the weight of both units to 1.6oz. Overall the Yepp YP-55's look more like implements for lighting young ladies' cigarettes than listening to music through, but do these svelte packages contain technology that make them worth pulling from you pocket? Two models are currently available, the orange, or if you are in the USA, charcoal tipped YP-55 V and the universally blue tipped YP-55 H. Colour aside, both units are identical in look and feel and differ only in the amount of embedded flash memory, with the V holding 256Mb as compared to the H's 128Mb. The bodies are metal with end caps made of plastic, giving the YP-55's a chunky feel in the hand. The bottom of the unit houses doors for the battery and the USB port. The top has the inputs for the direct-input mini-jack and headphone jack. The front panel contains a backlit LCD screen through which all the numerous functions can be accessed. The start / stop button sits above the screen and the neck of the device rotates left and right to allow shuffling between tracks. The YP-55s are designed to cram plenty into not a lot of space. As well as offering a fairly standard MP3, WMA and ADPCM playback facility there's the less usual features like the voice recorder and a FM radio. Better still is the direct-input record and encode function that will let the user create MP3 files by connecting other devices, via their line-out sockets, to the input on the top of the unit. Sadly the synchronised record feature is a little archaic and the play counter on the source and the record counter on the YP-55 never seem to tally up. One problem, I found, is that regardless of the source signal's origin, the YP-55 H seemed to record all the tracks as one



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unbroken MP3 file. This would mean if you had the patience of a saint you would then have to go and edit the file, to insert breaks between the tracks where they should be. It could be that this can be corrected in the elaborate menus but I was unable to discover how. The radio function takes a little getting used to but the FM receiver ranges from 88.00Mhz to 108.00Mhz, so will cover all the major UK radio stations. Interestingly by holding the WOW button, this is a sort of digital effects equaliser by the way, the YP-55 H will run through the whole frequency range and insert 20 preset markers to the tuned stations it finds on the way, dramatically speeding up set-up time. The voice recorder function creates WAV files instead of MP3s making the files more easily exportable for transcribing and preserving quality. The microphone is located on the front top of the body and the acoustic pick-up is average and will more than adequately cover personal voice memos. Heavy background noise or great distance, from the mic, could affect the quality of these results though. The menus offer a wealth of settings from record rate, scroll rate, equalisation and a host of other parameters to personalise the device to your hearts content, if you can get to them. The YP-55H, I received, was without a manual and it took a colleague and I over two days to work out how to turn off the auto-shuffle on the track list, let alone the finite inner-working of the other menus. The access problem related to depressing buttons for extended durations, in order to activate the fuller menu functions. Once this Pandora's Box has been opened though, and you have your specs on as the menu is displayed in 4pt type, you are well away. One other irregularity is the lack of USB cable supplied with the device. A direct adapter is provided that connects the USB port to the device, so if you have a PC with rear-mounted ports be prepared for plenty of crawling on the floor to plug the YP-55 in every time. That said, once the YP-55 is in place, it is detected like an external drive and other files can be placed on to it, and acts like a removable drive.

VERDICT

Overall the YP-55's are versatile. Getting to grips
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At a glance

What is it?

Small, compact MP3 player

Good

Good sound and radio

Bad

Irritating USB handling and 1-track MP3 recording

Verdict

As with all single AAA-powered devices, you'll end up carrying a pack around. Good tech but the handling makes them average.

Price &#pound;79.99 YP-55H
&#pound;120.00
YP-55V

Our score

7/10

Your score

?/10

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with their inner-secrets can be a little like contemplating bus timetables when tipsy but there are plenty of features to be make this study worthwhile. The 15-hour battery life is commendable as is the compact design and Mac and PC compatibility. Removable Media would have been a bonus, to allow for memory expansion, as would a clip, rather than a lanyard, to attach the device to things.