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New headphones are real earsavers

By **Scott Iwasaki**

Deseret Morning News



Ever since I was a kid my mother has told me to turn my music down.

And she wasn't alone. My teachers, grandparents, former girlfriends and even my high school debate team have yelled at me to turn my music down.

But my mother was the one who tried to reason with me. "You're going to need your hearing when you get to be my

age," was her weekly mantra.

Her concern reached a pinnacle when portable stereos became a mass-market item back in the 1980s. I didn't have a Sony Walkman until I was out of high school, but I had friends who would loan me theirs so I could listen to music while I did my chores.

I remember turning the volume up to 11 so I could hear my Van Halen tapes over the roaring engine of our lawn mower.

Even today I find myself turning up the volume on my iPod to hear over the Trax train noise when I ride the light rail. And Trax noise — including the running of its metal wheels on the tracks and over-zealous families singing songs in harmony a couple of seats away — can be very obnoxious at times.

Anyway, I am able to turn my music down and make my mother happy.

That's right. I can actually listen to my Opeth and Black Dahlia Murder tunes without blowing my ears to smithereens thanks to NoiseBuster noise-canceling headphones.

This hearing device utilizes some high-tech ideas and lets the fan hear music over outside noises. More information can be found on www.noisebuster.net.

Here is how the technology of these foldable headphones is described:



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"NoiseBuster uses a microphone inside and outside the earcup to listen to the offending noise coming into the ear. . . . the system takes the information from the microphone and uses it to create a noise wave that is identical to, but directly opposite of, the one coming into the ear. The 'anti-noise' wave is output through a speaker, also located in the ear cup. When the two waves (the offending noise wave and the anti-noise wave) meet, the noise is significantly reduced."

It took awhile to understand those words. But then again, hearing is believing.

I put these headphones on when I was running water to wash dishes and I didn't hear the water. I heard the music. I actually turned the music down to see at which point I could hear the water. And even when I heard the water, it was more like a whisper.

When I took Trax last week, I tested the headphones. While I could still hear some Trax noises, I didn't have to crank the tunes to drown them out. Once I took off the headphones, it sounded like someone cranked up the volume of life.

It was quite shocking.

When I play my drums while listening to songs on these headphones, I can actually hear the drum lines I'm suppose to be playing. And when I wrap up my practicing, my ears aren't ringing from the loud music.

Each headphone includes a AAA battery so you can switch on the hearing system. It is possible to use the headphones without the sound-quieting device — but what's the point if you spend \$69 on these things?

The headphones also include a travel bag and a two-prong adapter for use in airplanes. And you know how loud an airline cabin can be.

One word of caution, if you use these headphones while working out, it would be best to use them indoors on a treadmill.

These things can cancel out the sound of approaching automobiles and growling rabid dogs.

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