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RECORDING

The magazine for the recording musician

REC'S HOLIDAY BUYER'S GUIDE

Great Gifts For Your Studio

MICS EFFECTS PROCESSORS HEADPHONES
IN-EAR MONITORS STUDIO ACCESSORIES
INTERFACES CONTROLLERS SOFTWARE PLUG-INS
VIRTUAL INSTRUMENTS SOUNDWARE AND MORE!



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What Are Your Ears Really Telling You?



35 NEW PRODUCTS REVIEWED:

AirTurn · Apogee · Arturia · Audified
beyerdynamic · Black Lion Audio · EarSonics
Fluid Audio · GFI System · GForce · IK Multimedia
iZotope · LEWITT · Lounsberry Pedals · Modartt
Nektar Technology · PreSonus · Pyro · Roland
Schiit Audio · Serpent Audio · Spitfire Audio
Toontrack · Ultimate Ears · Universal Audio · Zynaptiq



PreSonus HD9 Headphones

\$79.95; presonus.com

The HD9 is the latest studio headphone from PreSonus, intended as a supplement to the company's line of audio interfaces. It's pitched as an affordable, accurate headphone for production work in living spaces where working on monitors isn't practical.

The features and specs are everything you'd hope for in a studio headphone—a dynamic closed-back design with 45 mm drivers and neodymium magnets, built into comfortable earcups with thick earpads and a comfortably padded headband. The HD9 folds compactly to fit into its included carrying pouch, and the earcups swivel 180° laterally and vertically for one-ear use. There's a 10' straight cable permanently attached to the left earcup, ending in a gold-plated miniplug with screw-on 1/4" TRS adapter.

We'll get our one real gripe with the HD9 out of the way first—its isolation isn't as good as that of other headphones in this price range. It's fine in a relatively quiet house or apartment, but it couldn't protect us from the conversation and distant background music in our local coffee house, and a relatively loud monitor mix in the phones was easily picked up on a vocal mic in a tracking session.

However, not everyone needs isolation, and if you don't, the HD9 delivers very impressive audio quality for its low price. The stated frequency response is 10 Hz to 26 kHz (±3 dB), and the phones do deliver plenty of clear bass, a fairly forward midrange that places vocals out in front of your mixes, and extended highs with plenty of sparkle for bells, high cymbals, and

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Headphones and In-Ear Monitors

the like. We can remember the days when you couldn't get this kind of performance for triple the price.

The HD9's construction is very lightweight, and the lack of weight combined with the generously thick pads make for comfortable and non-fatiguing use. They get really loud with their 1800 mW maximum power handling and 40Ω impedance, and are suitable for use with everything from portable audio devices and smartphones to audio interfaces and headphone distribution amps.

Our overall impression was of a headphone that isn't ideal for a noisy tracking room but would give great performance for home mixing and beat production in genres ranging from jazz and acoustic/Americana to EDM. It has a clear and present sound that runs rings around cheap consumer headphones, folds compactly to go anywhere, and you can't beat the price.

