



The

Broadcasters' Desktop Resource

www.theBDR.net

... edited by Barry Mishkind – the Eclectic Engineer

Checking It Out

Helm True Wireless 5.0 Headphones

By Barry Mishkind

[October 2020] Similar to monitor speakers, finding the right headphone involves a lot of choices and personal preferences. Helm Audio's new True Wireless 5.0 might be the one for you.

Over the years, I have had the opportunity to use a wide variety of headphones, from a Koss Pro 4AA to the Sennheiser HD414 to all sorts of earbuds, both wired and Bluetooth. I even have a set of Brush Clevites!

Of course, if you are forced to deal with a lot of damaged headsets in the control room, you can buy a package of five headsets for under \$100. But would you, personally, prefer to use one for any critical listening or to enjoy audio while walking, exercising, etc.?

WHAT WE NEED

Over the past several years, literally hundreds of headphones – wired and non-wired – have been displayed at the annual CES International show. They range from a couple of dollars to some megabuck models costing as much as \$120,000.

Finding the best balance of performance and price can be difficult. While evaluating headphones, recent models have focused on what is called True Wireless – no wires, not even between the left and right sides. You likely have seen them on Zoom calls and a lot of TV interviews of late.

The concept of wireless headphones is tempting, every broadcaster hates the constant need to untangle and fumble with cable multiple times

every day. Unfortunately, this leaves one issue for air talent: as we know, the latency as it is received Bluetooth is just a tad too long for monitoring your own voice on-air.

Nevertheless, there are plenty of other features of the Helm True Wireless 5.0 that makes it well worth your taking the time to check out.

HELM TRUE WIRELESS 5.0



The Helm 5.0 is designed to please any HiFi sound enthusiast.

The enhanced drivers fed by the Qualcomm aptX codec provides crisp clean AAC audio, with both a very nice, solid bass as well as a high end that you would not expect from in-the-ear size headphones.

The design is quite interesting, compared with other similar units. The earpieces fit the ear canal quite nicely and securely – they will not fall out as you move around, jog, exercise, etc. Plus, even so, they are comfortable enough to wear all day.

The earpiece fit also contributes to a feature any broadcaster will appreciate: noise isolation that will work in transmitter rooms. With the Helm 5.0, you will be able to clearly hear the off-air sound while working. My observation is that

there is something 15-20 dB of isolation. Not total isolation, but more than enough to handle any noisy venue, including airplanes, commuting, city noise, etc.

Yes, there is some latency, but if you are not live on-air, it is a fairly low latency, and will not interfere with watching movies, listening to music, etc.

USING THE HELM 5.0

The Helm 5.0 comes in its own case, complete with a built-in charger.

Removing the earpiece turns it on, a voice tells you the power level and that it has connected (if it has been previously set up) or is connecting. The two sides self-pair. After 6 to 8 hours of use, you can put one (or both) earpieces into the case, for recharging. (If you charge one side, the other will still work, independently.) The case can recharge the earpieces 4 or 5 times, so you can roll all day – and night.

There are “smart buttons” on each earpiece. You can easily control volume, stop/start audio, use one of the voice assistants, and take phone calls.

By the way, you do not necessarily need to carry your phone with you, the helix antenna design provides good reception for as much as 60 feet – quite good for Bluetooth. Going outside does not bring any worries. The IPX4 water resistance rating means sweat or rain will not damage the Helm 5.0

WEAR IT, LOVE IT

The box comes with a variety of tip sizes, so you can fit your ear, big or small.

Once you pull them out and pair them, you will think you are either in the room with the source, or listening to larger, wired headphones.

The charging case shows you the condition of the earpieces at a glance, as do the LEDs that display the level of charge left in the case.

Customer service appears to be attentive and efficient.

HEROS PAY ATTENTION!

The HELM True Wireless 5.0 with all these features still is modestly priced: it is just \$129 on [the HELM website](#).

But as they say: “wait, there is more!”

Visitors to the HELM website right now are offered 30% off “for a limited time.”

Even that is not the big one: If you are a “first responder,” including medical personnel, nurses, teachers, and active or retired military, HELM will make it **50% off** until the end of November. Basically, this is a killer deal: you just cannot do better for \$65.

This True Wireless is a true winner.

Are articles like this helpful to you? If so, you are invited to sign up for the one-time-a-week BDR Newsletter. It [takes only 30 seconds by clicking here](#).



[**Return to The BDR Menu**](#)