

Diddybeats In-Ear Headphones with ControlTalk Review

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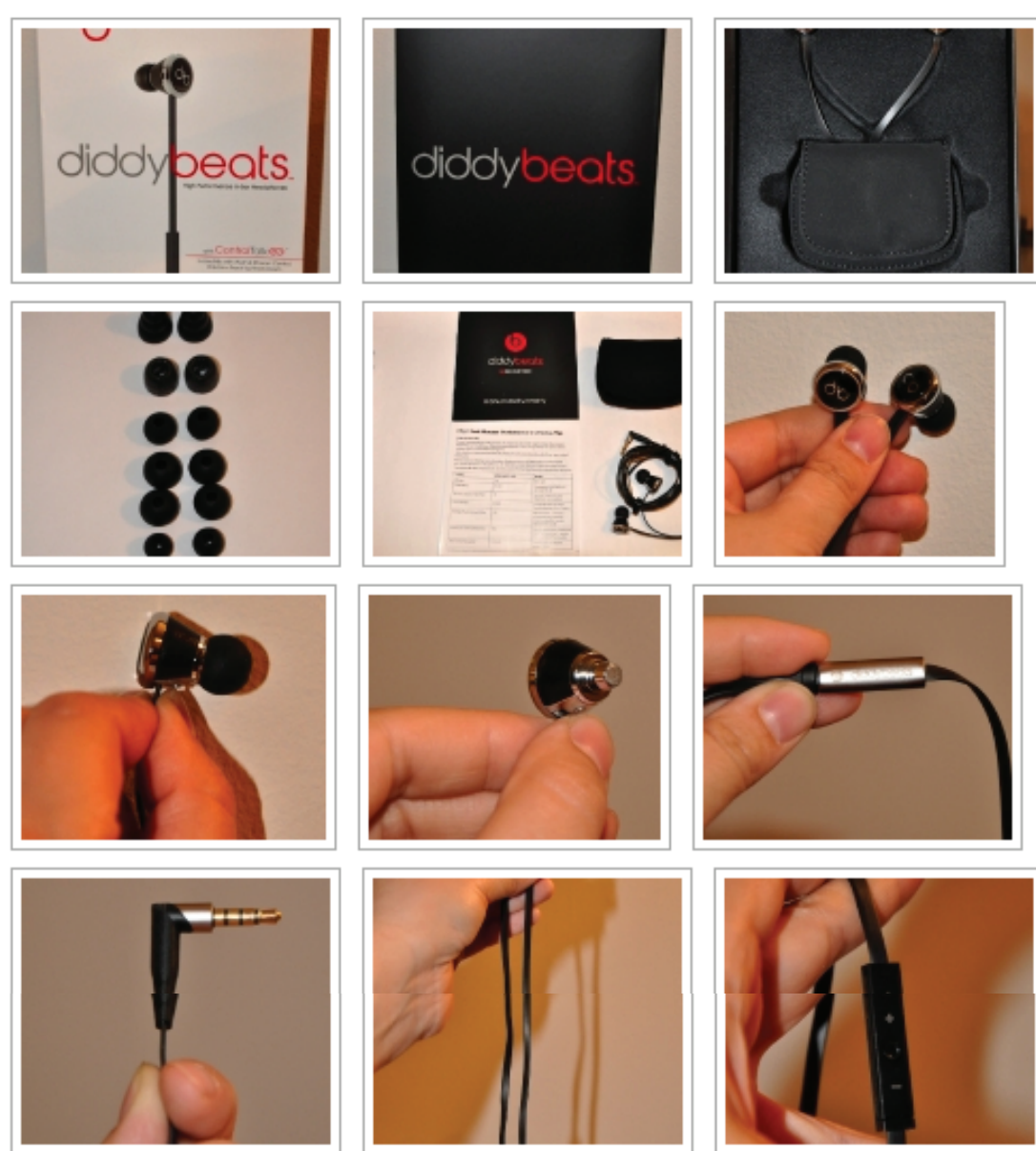


When Sean "Puffy" Combs aka P. Diddy [announced his collaboration](#) with Monster and Beats by Dre for a new pair of headphones, he made sure to declare that they would not only sound good, but look good too. The concept behind his diddybeats is that not only should they surely impress your ears, but they should also make a fashion statement by resembling jewelry when not in use. We have seen this before with Lady Gaga's Heartbeats and even Vivienne Tam's soon to be released [Butterfly In-Ear Headphones](#). These are headphones designed to make a statement in and out of your ears.

Design

Back in January Diddy emphasized how important the quality and design of the headphones were to him. He explained that he wasn't going to endorse a project that he wasn't fully invested in. Along those lines, Monster, Beats by Dre and Diddy made sure to have the diddybeats not come in just one color but three - black, pink, and white, Diddy even spoke about how much he personally likes the color pink. Each bud sports a 'db logo', and a leather-wrapped aluminum housing with polished-enamel endcap. The cable used on the earbuds is the flat tangle-free cable that first debuted on the Dr. Dre Tour In-Ear headphones and it is maintained with a cable slider piece. Right under the cable slider piece is a metal adornment that has the Monster logo on one side and the diddybeats logo on the other.

The diddybeats also have ControlTalk, which makes it ideal to work with your iPhone for picking up calls and then resuming your tunes when the call is done. Also included is a simple yet purposeful pouch for your new headphones so that the assortment of included eartips don't get lost. This time around Monster has heard the complaints of many (in regards to the Tours) and has included a whopping 8 different pairs of eartip styles - from foam, to mushroom, to trees. There is enough of a selection that you should find the right tip that not only gives you the best listening experience but sound-isolation too.



Sound Quality

So to the meat of the review - the sound quality. Well the first thing that we should mention is that the included manual suggests that your diddybeats experience will only get better once you break in your new headphones in with over 20 hours of use. As much as that is a good tip - it's the first time we have ever seen such a statement. Why can't it just blow you away right out of the box for \$149.95? But we digress.

We put the diddybeats through the same tests that we would normally do any pair of headphones, earphones, In-Ear headphones etc... we listened to tracks in 128kbps, 192kbps, and 320kbps to test them.

Throughout each listening session, the diddybeats held up well, exhibiting strong balance between both bass and treble through all the different bit rates. However these headphones performed much better when listening to anything above 162 kbps. When listening to anything lower, the bass performed well while the treble and mid-range almost sounded muted and muddled. These lower bit rates, hold back the quality of the music. It was like the music was screaming in our ears to be set free from the sucky bit rate of 128kbps.

However just a bit rate of 162 kbps makes a world of difference. Songs like Fireflies from Owl City made the diddybeats shine. The headphones performed great picking up the vibraphone, piano, and violin sounds leaving you with a rich smooth experience. The same can be said about songs from artists like Ke\$ha, Lady Gaga, Black Eyed Peas and even Diddy himself that are bass heavy and in some cases feature autotune. If you only have lower bit rates to work with, which is what you typically have on your iPod or iPhone, you'll get a better experience if you just simply turn the volume up. You still won't experience nearly the essence of the diddybeats and what the drivers can do but at-least it won't sound watered down. Also having put it through its paces for three days, we have to admit that the sound did actually get better as we used them.

Comfort

Personally, in the past the foam tips would have been it for me but I actually experienced a better fit, comfort, sound quality, and noise cancellation with the included smaller mushroom shaped eartip this time around. It also handled the bass better as well as provided a suction in your ear of pure sound, while I felt the foam tips let some of it escape. When you have the diddybeats in your ears, you are conscience of it, unlike the Turbines or even a few other cheaper models we tested. You physically feel them in your ear regardless of how good the music is coming out of them. In addition if you are like many folks that often have their buds falling out of your ears while walking (my Co-Editor complained of this problem with the diddybeats - I didn't have this issue). Instead of listening to them in the traditional way, you can always put the headphones in your ear upside down and flip the cable around the top portion of your ear. That will keep it in and not have it falling out all the time. You are also not sacrificing the sound quality either and the best part is the logo can be seen by all any way you wear it.

ControlTalk

The diddybeats sport Monster's ControlTalk technology which lets you switch between listening to music and talking on your phone on the fly. The ControlTalk cable in particular has a call answer button and a built-in mic. If you're using an iPhone or one of the recent generation iPods, then ControlTalk also lets you control music and video playback. ControlTalk lets you answer or end a call, decline an incoming call, play or pause a song or video, skip to the next or previous song or chapter, scan forward or backward through songs and video, and also control the volume. Callers sounded very clear when using the ControlTalk to make phone calls. We were also told by callers that we normally spoke too using the Apple In-Ear Headphones with Remote & Mic that we sounded so much clearer and louder. Previously when we had used the Apple In-Ear Headphones with Remote & Mic to make phone calls, we were often told by people that they couldn't hear us and we would have to switch to using the handset when making a call. There is no doubt that Monster's ControlTalk technology is superior and it's also easy to use.

Conclusion

So did the diddybeats truly make a fashion and technology statement impression us? Yes. The diddybeats are a well made product that feel good in your ears and in your hand. The diddybeats look expensive with their metal and leather finishes, that combined with the iPhone ControlTalk capability and the approval of P Diddy help justify the [A \\$249](#) price tag. Yes, it's a bit pricey, but anything that has a celebrity attached to it usually is, and we all buy it anyway. It also looks like Monster and Beats by Dre took the time to release a product that is designed and packaged well.

But besides being endorsed by a hip-hop star, the In-Ear Headphones produce. In comparing it to the Apple In-Ear Headphones with Remote & Mic these are far superior even if those are cheaper. When compared to even the [Dr. Dre's Beats Tour In-Ear Headphones](#) they even perform well just based on comfort and noise cancellation. However the Tours did perform a bit better in regards to Bass output - but those headphones were meant to be DJ headphones in your ear, where as the diddybeats are not. While the Tour's struggled at being a pair of headphones you could wear for hours on end due to its unusually deep In-Ear shape, the diddybeats provide comfort, and quality sound that consumers will enjoy and even the novice audiophile will appreciate.

The Good: Designed well, looks expensive and well made, sound quality is excellent for 162kbps bit-rates and above

The Bad: Tends to fall out of some people's ears - even with all of the included ear-tips, sound quality on lower bit-rates is just average

For the purpose of the review Monster provided us a pair of complimentary diddybeats.