



DETAILS

PRODUCT
Fostex TH610

ORIGIN
Japan

TYPE
Over-ear closed-back headphone

WEIGHT
375g

FEATURES

- Bio-dynamic 50mm diaphragm
- Quoted sensitivity: 98dB/mW
- Detachable 3m cable with 6.35mm jack

DISTRIBUTOR
SCV Distribution

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WEBSITE
scvdistribution.co.uk

The opening acoustic guitar solo in Eva Cassidy's *Ain't No Sunshine* is superbly clear, and the bass is both rich and deep. All of the music's emotional qualities are beautifully presented and when the vocals join the guitar, they have fantastic expressive quality, which adds to the presence I am experiencing. This is no mean feat for a headphone.

Next, I listen to a recent recording of *A Good Heart* from Elton John's album *Wonderful Crazy Night*. As with the previous recordings, the first thing I notice is the fantastic bass response, which is well controlled and punchy. Elton's vocals are extremely vibrant and have a great presence. Furthermore, the backing vocals actually sound as if they are behind Elton, with his voice placed further forward. The backing instruments also have a very credible presence. The TH610 certainly seems at home with this sort of music.

The minuet in Act 1, Scene 2 of Prokofiev's ballet *Romeo And Juliet* played by the London Symphony Orchestra and conducted by André Previn, demonstrates how well the TH610 handles the rapid changes of mood that occur throughout the piece. The music is beautifully reproduced, ranging from the loud sections, signalling the ceremonial entrance of each new visitor, to the gentle detail of the more delicate passages, which tell the story of the visitors mingling with the other guests. It is hard to find fault with this reproduction, and never at any point do I sense that the headphone is in any way being overwhelmed by the music.

Conclusion

The TH610 is an excellent-sounding home headphone that offers a refined sound at a very attractive price. Chunky to look at, but lightweight and comfortable to wear for long periods, its balanced performance will appeal to anyone seeking a less insistent sound from their headphone ●

Knock on wood

This premium closed-back headphone design uses walnut enclosures. **Neville Roberts** listen in

Like its predecessor – the recommended TH600 (HFC 374), the TH610 is a closed-back, dynamic headphone with black walnut housings, chosen specifically for their acoustical properties. There is a detachable 3m OFC cable fitted with rhodium two-pin connectors that fits into gold-plated with rhodium over-coated two-pin sockets. At the other end, the cable is terminated with a 6.35mm stereo gold-plated jack.

The damping force on the diaphragm is controlled by a combination of three 'sound resistors' (on the driver, housing and earpad sides), made of specific fibres and high compression urethane. This is intended to offer a similar mid-low frequency response to that provided by the higher grade TH900mk2 headphone, while reducing ventilation to improve the low-frequency response.

The earpads are made from low-repulsion cushion material and are covered in artificial leather. The TH610 claims an impedance of 25ohm and quoted frequency response of 5Hz to 45kHz. Sensitivity is 98dB/mW and maximum input power handling is 1800mW. A leatherette bag is supplied.

The Fostex uses a bio-dynamic 50mm diaphragm, which operates within a neodymium magnet assembly and provides a powerful magnetic circuit designed to offer a wide dynamic range, low distortion and high levels of detail. The closed-back design is intended to provide good isolation from external sources and is very effective in practice. The black walnut housings have a nice quality feel and the earpads are comfortable, meaning that it can be worn without fatigue for extended periods of time.

Sound quality

I connect the TH610 to my HD83 valve headphone amplifier and fire up an LP of Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No.4 in F minor*, played by the Cleveland Orchestra. The strident trumpet blasts during the opening *andante sostenuto* are clear without alarming my ears. However, what really stands out is the deep bass drum, which is really superb and well extended. This is a great test for a full orchestra, and the exuberant presentation is remarkably well rendered here. A minor criticism is that the soundstage does seem a little closed in, but this does not detract from the well-rounded performance.

Hi-Fi Choice

OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY
★★★★★
LIKE: Bass response and authoritative sound; comfort levels

VALUE FOR MONEY
★★★★★
DISLIKE: Soundstage can occasionally become constrained

BUILD QUALITY
★★★★★
WE SAY: Refined sound for the money

FEATURES
★★★★★

OVERALL

