

Optoma NuForce BE6 review

By [Cameron Faulkner](#) October 30, 2015 [Headphones](#)

Wireless in-ear headphones with (almost) no compromise



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OUR VERDICT

If you want the freedom that wireless provides without sacrificing audio fidelity, the BE6 are right up your alley. It suffers from the middling battery performance that plagues other ultra-compact wireless headsets, but trumps most of them with stand-out design and performance.

FOR

Compact, aluminum build




Stellar performance

Excellent value

AGAINST

Discreet design puts a squeeze on battery duration

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There's a rat race going on within the tech industry to become the smallest and lightest out there in every category, wireless in-ear headphones included. And when these compact buds come to market, they're usually chock full of compromise. Either the sound performance is cruddy, or the battery doesn't last for longer than a few hours.

But occasionally, a company strikes the fine balance between raising the bar in terms of design innovation, while still including the features that we all want and expect. One of those companies is Optoma, most famous for its projectors. A year after acquiring NuForce, it has crafted the \$129 (£99, about AU\$180) BE6, the most convincing argument for wireless earbuds that I've encountered yet.

Design



When in-ear headphones go wireless, there tends to be a bit of a scramble as to how to go about creating a stylish look that still packs in all of the necessary bits, like a battery, Bluetooth radio and an inline remote. Companies have figured out a few ways of solving this puzzle.

Motorola, for example, recently released the [Moto Surround](#), which houses all of its components in the plastic band that wraps around your neck. It's fairly low-profile, but slick as the presentation may be, it's proof that the challenge of shrinking down components without reducing performance is a tough one.



Optoma NuForce has carved out its own path by making a set of in-ear headphones that look almost no different than your usual set of buds, with all of the components tucked into its flat wire and inline remote.

The earpieces, which house the sound drivers, are crafted with aluminum and match the minimalist appearance of many of today's leading smartphones, like the [HTC One M9](#) and [iPhone 6S](#). Those who are used to wearing wired earbuds will probably think that the BE6's earphones appear a bit on the hefty side, but these don't present any issue when it comes to sound throughput, or staying put inside your ears during a jog.

The back ends of each earpiece are magnetized, allowing the two to click onto to each other. Many other models perform this function, but that doesn't make its application here any less cool or convenient for organization's sake. Moving down, the earpieces are supported by a few pieces of thick, matte-textured plastic to prevent the wire connecting them from fraying.



The BE6 only includes the most basic, but useful functions for listeners to take advantage of. Its inline remote hangs just beneath the right earpiece and is easy to reach. The panel of easy-to-press buttons contains a volume up and volume down button, each of which offer a dual purpose to skip or reverse songs by holding them down for a second. The middle button pauses and resumes tracks, as well as answering and hanging up phone calls. You'll also find an LED indicator that provides feedback on battery and connectivity status. On the remote's side, there's a microUSB port covered by a rubber flap.

Optoma NuForce includes a welcomed set of goodies along with the purchase. You'll receive a zip-up canvas hard case, packed inside with a microUSB and six sets of eartips (four silicon and two

Comply foam sets). If you're having trouble finding a good fit, you'll be pleased that a set of stabilizers are included. These attach to the earphones, along with a set of tips, and wedge into the cartilage of your outer ear canal.

Performance

A slick-looking set of wireless buds isn't too hard to find. But, I'd posit that you'll have a much more difficult time trying to find one that possesses both design and performance prowess. Well, it just got a little bit easier. Just as the Optoma NuForce took no shortcuts in crafting this lightweight, fully-featured build, the BE6 also impresses with its ease of use, universal support and sound performance.



Connecting to an Android or iOS device is simple, just push and hold the power button until you hear an audible chime. The setup process here is no different than every other Bluetooth headset on the market. But unlike most of those other options, the BE6 is universal, meaning that its full set of functions work perfectly on both Android and iOS. This is a huge plus in my book.

For being such a small package, the BE6 is capable of delivering a remarkable audio profile. Once you find the right fit, made easy by the several included sets of ear tips, music across-the-board sounds accurate, well-balanced and full of detail. The bass presence, while not exactly booming, is right where it should be and doesn't step on the other frequencies. Mids and highs are crisp and show off the BE6's knack for highlighting all the little nuances in

your music.



Taking phone calls with the BE6 is simple and a frictionless experience, thanks to the inline controls and sensitive microphone. The rechargeable battery is advertised to last for six hours before requiring a charge. And, throughout several charge cycles, that's just about how long it lasted.

For how much Optoma NuForce got right with the BE6, its battery is the only component that illustrates that even the slightest compromise in a super compact design is difficult to avoid. Even so, it's definitely long enough to power you through a few exercises or a few days of light listening at work.

Verdict

As noted earlier, the six-hour battery leaves a bit to be desired. This isn't really a smack against Optoma NuForce, since this figure is the industry standard at the moment. Regardless, it's a big part of this otherwise exceptionally well-crafted package that doesn't match the rest of its parts.

When comparing it to a competitor, the [Beats Powerbeats2 Wireless](#), the BE6 shows its strengths and value. These in-ear Beats retail for \$199 (£169, AU\$259) and offer a similar level of design mastery, but the BE6 one-up the Beats in terms of sound quality and value.

The Optoma NuForce BE6 doesn't revolutionize the wireless in-ear headphone, but overall, it's a refinement that the market needs.

What you're getting here matches the compact nature of a set of high-performance wired earphones and all of the goodies that the purchase usually includes, but without the hinderance of the wire. At that, the affordable BE6 is the one to beat.