

Jabra Elite 10 review: comfy noise cancelling earbuds with spatial audio for all

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Bluetooth pioneers Jabra are back with a new set of noise-cancelling earbuds offering a comfortable fit and advanced Dolby Atmos spatial audio for Android and iPhone. The Elite 10 cost £230 (€250/\$250/A\$380), undercutting chief rivals from Apple, Bose and Sony while offering all of their features regardless of what type of phone or tablet you have, which very few others manage. Jabra's past earbuds have been some of the most comfortable on the market and the Elite 10 continue that welcome trend. New for this generation is a lighter, vented fit that avoids the "plugged in" or blocked feeling some earbuds can have. The oval-shape silicone ear tips fit gently but securely in your ear canal with the rest of the soft-touch plastic body sitting in your concha. A button on each earbud handles fully customisable controls, including switching noise cancelling modes, playback control and volume, with single, double, triple and press and hold options. Take out one earbud and the music pauses. The earbuds are water resistant to IP57 standards, which means unlike most rivals they will survive a dunk in the pool. Specifications Water resistance: IP57 (case IP54) Connectivity: Bluetooth 5.3 (SBC, AAC) Battery life: 6 hours with ANC (up to 27 hours with case) Earbud weight: 5.7g Earbud dimensions: 19.6 x 18.8 x 28.2mm Driver size: 10mm Charging case weight: 45.9g Charging case dimensions: 24.4 x 46.9 x 65.4mm Case charging: USB-C, Qi wireless charging The Elite 10 tick most of the connectivity boxes. They have Bluetooth 5.3 with Google and Microsoft fast pairing, with support for the standard SBC and AAC audio formats out of the box, and the new LC3 audio format with a promised update in the near future. They can connect to two devices simultaneously – handy for juggling calls and watching video, which works very well. Call quality was good in quiet offices and on noisy streets, allowing a bit of background noise through while remaining clear. The Jabras have good but not class-leading noise cancelling. They handle the drone of engines and fans well but struggle more with higher tones and voices, letting more road noise in from the street than the best. Their "HearThrough" or transparency mode is one of the best, though. They sound good, producing well-rounded, easy-listening audio. Bass is solid, mids are strong and highs are crisp, with a full equaliser available in the Jabra Sound+ app. They cannot match the best in the business for detail but have a nice and wide soundstage and handle the separation of tones well. One area they are almost unrivalled is in Dolby spatial audio support for all devices. They can create the virtual surround sound effect with head tracking – meaning the centre channel stays in front of you even if you turn your head – on Android and iOS. It is particularly effective for movies but will also work with standard stereo music, giving it more depth. Sustainability Jabra estimates the batteries will last in excess of 500 full-charge cycles, with at least 80% of original capacity, but they are not replaceable and the earbuds are not repairable, ultimately making them disposable. The cases are repairable, however, and Jabra sells replacement

pairs of earbuds, cases and tips. The earbuds and case are made with 75.7% recycled plastic. Jabra operates trade-in schemes in the UK and publishes annual sustainability reports. Price The Jabra Elite 10 come in a choice of five colours costing £229.99 (€249.99/\$249.99/A\$379). For comparison, Sony's WF-1000XM5 cost £259, Google Pixel Buds Pro cost £199, the Sennheiser Momentum True Wireless 3 cost £189, the Bose QuietComfort Earbuds 2 cost £279.95, and the Apple AirPods Pro 2 cost £229. Verdict Jabra has done it again, creating a great set of earbuds with the Elite 10 in a compact and comfortable package costing slightly less than top-end rivals. They can't beat the best for noise cancelling or outright audio quality, and they lack higher quality Bluetooth audio format support such as aptX or similar. But they are very easy to live with for the day-to-day commute with easy-listening sound, solid battery life, a fairly small case, simple button controls and good call quality. The cross-platform Dolby spatial audio support is particularly welcome for anyone who uses both Android and Apple devices, as is the multipoint Bluetooth for connecting to two devices at once. Unfortunately, like most earbuds the Jabras are not repairable making them disposable and therefore losing them a star. If you are looking for a more comfortable alternative to Apple's AirPods Pro, Sony's XM5 or Bose QC Earbuds II, the Elite 10 are definitely worth considering. Pros: good sound and decent noise cancelling, Dolby spatial audio for both Android and iPhone, multipoint Bluetooth, comfortable, good case, solid battery life, IP57 water resistance. Cons: not repairable, batteries not replaceable, no higher quality audio format support, can't match the best on sound or noise cancelling.