

Sennheiser Momentum True Wireless 4 review: best-sounding noise-cancelling earbuds

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Sennheiser's latest high-end earbuds aim to retake the crown as the best-sounding noise-cancelling earbuds you can buy, with cutting-edge chips, tricks and future-proofed tech. The Momentum True Wireless 4 earbuds cost £259.90 (€299.90/\$299.95), pitting them directly against the best from Bose and Sony. Other than some fetching new colours, the fourth-gen buds are identical on the outside to their predecessors with a mix of metallic, plastic and fabric surfaces that look and feel great. They are average sized for earbuds and fit well with a decent range of silicone tips and wings provided to customise them to your ears. They were comfortable for long listening periods but those with small ears may struggle a bit to fit them in. The Sennheiser logo on each earbud acts as a touch-sensitive button, allowing you to control playback, volume, noise-cancelling modes and other features. They work well with a full set of customisation options. The earbuds last about seven hours between charges, which is long enough for most activities. The fabric-covered case can fully charge the earbuds just over three times for about 30 hours of total playback time. Specifications Water resistance: IP54 (splash) Connectivity: Bluetooth 5.4, SBC, AAC, aptX adaptive, LC3 Battery life: Seven hours; up to 28 hours with case Earbud weight: 6.2g each Driver size: 7mm Charging case weight: 66.4g Case charging: USB-C, Qi wireless charging Future-proofed tech Most of the big upgrades are a result of new chips. The TW4 support Bluetooth 5.4, have a multipoint to connect to two devices at once, and have improved range and a stronger connection to your phone. They also connect to the Sennheiser Smart Control app on your phone significantly faster, allowing you to quickly change modes and other settings, removing a pain point common to many Bluetooth headphones. Along with the standard SBC and AAC Bluetooth audio formats, the earbuds also support aptX Adaptive, including lossless playback at the equivalent of CD quality with the right phone. Most Android devices support some form of aptX but only the limited number with Snapdragon Sound from Qualcomm will be able to reach the highest-quality versions. Sennheiser is promising to future-proof the earbuds with an imminent update to add support for LC3 for the next-generation Bluetooth LE audio playback and Auracast, which are technologies expected to be used in phones and other devices in the next year or so. Auracast promises to allow multiple earbuds to connect to one phone, tablet, TV or other device, like a radio broadcast of sorts but over Bluetooth, and is expected to be added to Android 15 this year. Fantastic sound Sennheiser has improved what was already the best sound from Bluetooth earbuds. The TW4 produce rich, full and detailed audio capable of doing justice to just about any music genre. They still have plenty of low-end but are a little more balanced than their predecessors with a cleaner, more energised sound overall. They still have the ability to fully adjust the sound via an equaliser or a sound personalisation feature in the app, too. The earbuds have effective active noise cancelling

that is capable of reducing most road noise and rumble as well as distracting background sounds. The earbuds adjust the level of noise suppression automatically, which means that in quieter environments, voices and keyboard taps break through more clearly than ideal. I would prefer an option to set them to maximum noise cancelling all the time. The wind-noise reduction setting is the best I have tried and the ambient awareness mode is also good. The TW4 cannot match the market leader, Bose, for noise cancelling but they do a generally good job of quietening the outside world. Call quality is also improved over previous iterations, coming through with clarity in a quiet office and still clear, if a little more robotic, in noisy environments. Sustainability Sennheiser estimates the batteries will maintain at least 80% of their original capacity after 500 full charge cycles. An optional protection mode extends battery longevity by slowing charging and limiting the maximum charged capacity. But the batteries are not replaceable, ultimately making them disposable. Spare parts including tips (£9), earbuds (£170 for pair) and cases (£100) are available. The earbuds do not contain any recycled material and Sennheiser does not publish impact assessments for products. Price The Sennheiser Momentum True Wireless 4 cost £259.90 (€299.90/\$299.95) For comparison, the Sony WF-1000XM5 cost £229, the Bose QuietComfort Ultra Earbuds cost £299.95, Google Pixel Buds Pro cost £130 and the Apple AirPods Pro 2 cost £229. Verdict Sennheiser's fourth-generation top earbuds take what was great about previous efforts and improve just about everything on the inside. They still look classy, particularly in the new copper colour. But it is the little quality of life improvements, including the faster connection to the control app on your phone and multipoint support, that are most noticeable. The advanced aptX Bluetooth format support is great for those with compatible phones, while the promise of LC3 and Auracast support for the next generation of Bluetooth ensures the earbuds are future-proofed. The active noise cancelling is solid but it is Sennheiser's top-quality audio that makes it the class leader, sounding better than ever. The earbuds lack advanced Dolby or spatial audio support, which is common among rivals. The case is a little bigger than ideal, and they feel a touch overpriced. But the biggest downside is the lack of replaceable batteries or repair options, ultimately making them disposable and losing a star. If you want the best-sounding set of Bluetooth earbuds, the Sennheiser Momentum True Wireless 4 are it. Pros: top-quality sound, good noise cancelling, long battery life, optional stability wings, multipoint, aptX Adaptive support, full equaliser, pocketable case, cross-platform app, promised LC3/Auracast updates. Cons: expensive, case bigger than some of the best, lack of advanced spatial audio features, cannot manually set noise-cancelling level, unrepairable.