



Focal

Utopia open-back headphones

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Focal doesn't use the name 'Utopia' lightly. In both the traditional and personal audio world, Utopia is the company's 'cost-no-object' line and to meet the performance goals set for the Utopia, Focal spent four years developing an elegant open-backed headphone with an all-new 40mm dynamic driver equipped with a pure Beryllium diaphragm that features a patent-pending 'M shape' dome. This was made because, according to Focal, "a listening distance of an inch requires that the shape of the dome is completely redesigned to achieve a plane wave in ultra-nearfield listening." At the same time, Focal also made every attempt to reduce the mass of all moving parts within the driver. Apart from its low-mass beryllium diaphragm, the driver also incorporates a special monolayer voice coil that foregoes use of a voice-coil former in order, says Focal, "to make it even lighter." Likewise, the firm created an ultra-thin, well damped, and extraordinarily lightweight driver surround with a thickness of only 75 microns. All told, the mass of the driver's moving parts is an astonishingly light 135mg.

In our test, Chris Martens felt the Utopia offers "an effortlessly neutral frequency response, coupled with the resolving powers and transient speeds of an electrostatic headphone, while it renders instrumental and human voices with coherency and harmonic integrity." He concluded by saying simply, "I consider this headphone a masterpiece." +



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