BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Wireless Headphones & Earbuds

Bose, Sony, Beats, JBL and Soundcore: choosing, pairing, noise canceling, fit, battery and fixes, explained in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide for seniors and families

Take your time — you can't break it

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

For Bose, Sony, Beats, JBL & Soundcore · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your wireless headphones and earbuds manual. Read it in any order and at your own pace; there is no test, and you can't fall behind. It covers the big names you'll see in stores (Bose, Sony, Beats, JBL and Anker's Soundcore) and works for most other brands too, because the ideas are the same. Every feature comes with what it actually does *for you* and slow, step-by-step directions. If you own Apple AirPods, they have their own manual from Bill's Home Tech; this guide mentions them but doesn't repeat it. Facts are current as of November 2026. Headphone apps change often, so if a screen looks a little different on yours, the idea is still the same.

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PART 1

Choosing Your Headphones

The brands, the styles, comfort with glasses and hearing aids, and the free apps that come with each brand. Start here, before you buy or right after you open the box.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. Maybe you just unwrapped a pair of Bose or Sony headphones. Maybe a grandchild handed you a little case of earbuds and said "they just work," and now they don't. Or maybe you're standing in a store looking at a wall of boxes from $30 to $450 and wondering what the difference is. Whoever you are, this guide is for **you**.

I'm Bill. Helping people feel at home with their technology is what I do every day, and I've written this guide the way I'd explain it sitting next to you at the kitchen table: plainly, patiently, and without the jargon. When a word like "pairing" or "multipoint" comes up, I'll stop and tell you what it means.

You can't break them by exploring

Wireless headphones have tiny buttons, touch spots you can't see and lights that blink in mysterious colors. It's easy to feel you've done something wrong. You haven't. Pressing the wrong button, opening the wrong app screen or unpairing them by accident doesn't hurt anything. Every mistake can be undone, and Chapter 25 shows the reset that puts almost any pair back to square one.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why this matters

Good headphones can bring back the pleasure of music, audiobooks and phone calls, let you watch TV at your own volume without bothering anyone, and block out the roar of an airplane or a lawnmower. A few minutes of setup is all it takes to get there.

What's in this guide

- **Choosing**: the brands, over-ear versus earbuds, and comfort with glasses or hearing aids (Part 1).
- **Connecting** to an iPhone, an Android phone, a computer or a TV, and to two devices at once (Part 2).
- **Everyday use**: fit and ear tips, the controls, noise canceling, calls and batteries (Part 3).
- **Apps and updates**: making them sound right for your ears and keeping them up to date (Part 4).
- **Safety and care**: safe volume, cleaning, finding lost earbuds and avoiding fakes (Part 5).

- **Fixing problems**: won't pair, one side silent, and reset steps for each brand (Part 6).

GOOD TO KNOW

Have AirPods?

Apple's AirPods have their own manual from Bill's Home Tech, called simply **AirPods**. This guide is for everything else. If your hearing is the bigger question, the **Bluetooth Hearing Aids** manual is the place to start, and **TV Listening Headphones & Dialogue** covers hearing the TV clearly.

And I'm only a phone call away

If you get stuck, you're never stuck alone. Call me at **(330) 200-8042**. No question is too small, and no one will make you feel silly for asking. Now let's find you the right pair.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

The Big Brands at a Glance

Five brands fill most of the headphone shelf in American stores. All of them make good products, and all of them work with both iPhones and Android phones. The differences are in price, comfort and which free app you use to adjust them.

Who makes what

Brand	Known for	Popular models (November 2026)
Bose	Comfort and strong noise canceling.	QuietComfort Ultra Headphones (2nd Gen), QuietComfort Ultra Earbuds (2nd Gen), QuietComfort Headphones
Sony	Excellent noise canceling and sound, lots of settings.	WH-1000XM6 headphones, WF-1000XM6 and WF-1000XM5 earbuds
Beats	Made by Apple. Easy with iPhones, and works with Android through the Beats app.	Solo 4, Studio Pro, Powerbeats Pro 2, Beats Flex, Solo Buds, Studio Buds +
JBL	A wide range, from budget to premium.	Tune (budget), Live, and Tour (premium) series
Soundcore (by Anker)	Good value; many models well under $100.	Liberty earbuds, Space One and Q-series headphones

What they cost

Prices move around constantly, and holiday sales are common. Here are the makers' own list prices for a few popular models, as of November 2026. Stores often sell them for less.

Model	Price, as of November 2026
Bose QuietComfort Ultra Headphones (2nd Gen)	About $449 list; Bose's own site has shown it on sale for less.
Bose QuietComfort Ultra Earbuds (2nd Gen)	About $299 list; seen on sale at Bose for $249.
Sony WH-1000XM6 headphones	About $449.99 (Sony's U.S. launch price).
Sony WF-1000XM6 earbuds	About $329.99 (Sony's U.S. launch price, February 2026).
Beats Solo 4	About $199.99 at Apple.
Powerbeats Pro 2	About $249.99 at Apple.
Beats Flex	About $69.99 at Apple.

GOOD TO KNOW

Older models are still good

When a new model comes out, the previous one usually stays on sale for a while at a lower price. Sony's WF-1000XM5 earbuds, for example, are still sold alongside the newer XM6. For most people, last year's model is a fine buy, as long as you get it from a real store (see Chapter 22).

HEADS UP

A price that looks too good usually is

If you see "Bose" or "Beats" earbuds for $25 on a social media ad or an unfamiliar website, they are almost certainly fakes. Chapter 22 explains how to tell and where to buy safely.

CHAPTER 3

Over-Ear, On-Ear or Earbuds?

The first decision is the shape. There's no wrong answer; it depends on what feels good on your head and how you'll use them.

The three styles

Style	What it's like
Over-ear headphones	Big soft cushions that sit around your ears, with a band over your head. Usually the most comfortable for long listening, the best at blocking noise, and the easiest to handle with stiff fingers. Bigger to carry. Examples: Bose QuietComfort Ultra Headphones, Sony WH-1000XM6, Beats Studio Pro.
On-ear headphones	Smaller pads that press gently on your ears rather than around them. Lighter and more compact, but some people find them pinch after an hour. Example: Beats Solo 4.
Earbuds	Small buds that sit in your ear opening and live in a charging case. Tiny and pocketable, great for walks, but easy to drop and lose, and fiddly if your fingers aren't nimble. Examples: Bose QuietComfort Ultra Earbuds, Sony WF-1000XM6, Powerbeats Pro 2.
Neckband or corded earbuds	Two earbuds joined by a cord that rests on your neck. You can't drop one down a storm drain, and that's a real comfort. Example: Beats Flex.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Choosing the right shape up front means headphones you actually enjoy wearing, instead of a pair that ends up in a drawer because they hurt after twenty minutes.

Questions to ask yourself

1. **Where will I use them?** At home in a favorite chair, over-ear is hard to beat. On walks or at the gym, earbuds or ear-hook buds like Powerbeats Pro 2 stay put better.
2. **Do I want to block out noise?** On a plane, a bus or a noisy house, look for **noise canceling** (Chapter 14). Most mid-priced and premium models have it now.
3. **How are my fingers?** Earbuds have tiny touch spots. Over-ear headphones usually have bigger, real buttons.
4. **Do I wear glasses or hearing aids?** See Chapter 4 before you buy.
5. **Which phone do I have?** Every brand here works with iPhone and Android. Beats feel most at home with an iPhone; most others work equally well with either.

TIP

Try before you buy if you can

Many electronics stores have demo headphones on display. Wear a pair for five minutes, with your glasses on if you wear them. Comfort is personal, and no review can tell you how a headband feels on your head. Keep your receipt and check the return window, too.

CHAPTER 4

Comfort, Glasses & Hearing Aids

Headphones are something you wear, like shoes. A few practical points make a big difference to comfort, especially if you wear glasses or hearing aids.

If you wear glasses

- Over-ear cushions press the arms of your glasses against your head. Soft, deep cushions help; so do glasses with thin arms.
- If you feel pressure after a while, slide the earcups a little higher or lower until the arm sits in a softer part of the cushion.
- Earbuds avoid the problem entirely, which is one reason many glasses-wearers prefer them.
- Over-ear headphones with glasses on may not block noise quite as well, because the arm leaves a small gap in the seal. That's normal.

If you wear hearing aids

Most regular headphones and earbuds aren't designed to be worn with hearing aids. Earbuds can't go in an ear that already has a hearing aid in it, and over-ear cups pressed against a behind-the-ear hearing aid can be uncomfortable or cause whistling. Before you spend money, it's worth knowing that many modern hearing aids can stream phone calls, music and TV sound straight into your ears by Bluetooth, with no headphones at all.

GOOD TO KNOW

Talk to your hearing professional first

Your audiologist or hearing aid provider knows your hearing aids and can tell you what works with them. The **Bluetooth Hearing Aids** manual from Bill's Home Tech explains streaming from your phone and TV. Headphones don't diagnose or treat hearing loss, and the hearing-test features in some headphone apps (Chapter 17) are for tuning sound, not a medical hearing test.

Comfort tips for everyone

- Adjust the headband so the cushions sit evenly around your ears, not resting on the tops.
- Take a break every hour or so; your ears appreciate the air.
- With earbuds, the right size ear tip matters more than anything else (Chapter 12).
- If an earbud aches, it's usually too big a tip or pushed in too far. Try the next size down.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Comfortable headphones get worn. Getting the fit right means you'll reach for them for an audiobook or a long call instead of putting up with a phone held to your ear.

CHAPTER 5

The Free Apps for Each Brand

Wireless headphones work fine without any app: you can pair them and listen right away. But each brand has a free phone app that unlocks the useful extras: noise canceling settings, sound adjustment, battery readouts, software updates and, for some brands, finding lost earbuds.

Which app goes with which brand

Brand	Free app
Bose	The **Bose** app (it used to be called the Bose Music app). Free for iPhone and Android.
Sony	**Sony | Sound Connect** (it used to be called Headphones Connect; Sony renamed it in October 2024).
Beats	On an **iPhone**, no app is needed: Beats settings live right in the iPhone's Settings app. On **Android**, install the free **Beats** app from the Google Play Store.
JBL	**JBL Headphones**. A few older budget JBL models use a separate JBL firmware update app.
Soundcore	**soundcore** (Anker's app).

Installing the app

1. On an iPhone, open the **App Store**. On an Android phone, open the **Google Play Store**.
2. Tap the search box and type the app name from the table above.
3. Check the name of the company under the app: it should be Bose, Sony, Apple, HARMAN (JBL's parent company) or Anker. Copycat apps exist.
4. Tap **Get** or **Install**, then open the app.
5. Follow its steps. Most apps ask permission to use Bluetooth and to send notifications; say yes, or the app can't find your headphones.

TIP

Do you need an account?

Some apps ask you to create an account or sign in. Others let you skip it. An account is usually only needed for extras. If you're asked, use an email address you check and a password you write down on the cheat-sheet in Chapter 27.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Five minutes installing the app means your headphones get the latest fixes, show you their battery level, and can be tuned to sound better for your ears.

SCAM ALERT

The app is always free

None of these brands charge for their headphone app. If an app, website or pop-up asks you to pay to "activate" or "register" your headphones, close it. It isn't from the maker.

PART 2

Getting Connected

Pairing mode, the one trick behind every connection, then step-by-step pairing with an iPhone, an Android phone, a computer and a TV, and how to stay connected to two devices at once.

CHAPTER 6

Pairing Mode: The One Trick to Learn

Pairing means introducing your headphones to your phone so the two remember each other. You do it once per device. After that, they reconnect by themselves whenever you turn the headphones on or open the earbud case.

To be introduced, the headphones must be in **pairing mode**: a few minutes when they announce themselves to anything nearby. Brand-new headphones usually go into pairing mode by themselves the first time you turn them on. After that, you start it by hand.

How to start pairing mode

Headphones	How to start pairing mode
Bose QuietComfort Ultra Headphones	Press and hold the **Power/Bluetooth** button until the light blinks and you hear the pairing prompt. Or, if they're already set up in the Bose app, use the app to connect another device.
Bose earbuds	With the earbuds in the case and the lid open, use the button on the back of the case; the Bose app can also add a new device.
Sony WH-1000XM6	The first time, they go into pairing mode on their own. For each later device, press and hold the power button for about 5 seconds. Pairing mode ends after 5 minutes if nothing pairs.
Beats earbuds with a case	Put both earbuds in the case, leave the lid open, and press and hold the system button on the case until the light blinks.
Beats headphones	Press and hold the power button until the light blinks.
JBL and Soundcore	Varies by model. Many earbuds enter pairing mode when you open the case; others use a button or a touch-and-hold on both earbuds. The quick-start sheet in the box shows yours.

TIP

Look for the blinking light

Almost every brand signals pairing mode with a **blinking** light, often blue or white, and many also speak ("Ready to pair") or play a tone. A steady light usually means "on" or "charging," not pairing.

GOOD TO KNOW

Lost the quick-start sheet?

Search the web for your model name plus "pairing" and look for a result from the maker's own website: support.bose.com, helpguide.sony.net, support.apple.com (for Beats), support.jbl.com or service.soundcore.com. Skip videos and sites that want you to download anything.

CHAPTER 7

Pairing with an iPhone or iPad

Pairing with an iPhone takes about a minute. The steps are the same for any brand, with one shortcut for Beats.

Any brand: pair in Settings

1. Put the headphones in pairing mode (Chapter 6). Keep them close to the iPhone.
2. On the iPhone, open **Settings** and tap **Bluetooth**. Make sure the switch is on (green).
3. Wait a few seconds. Your headphones' name appears in the list of devices below.
4. Tap the name. If you're asked to confirm or for a PIN, follow the screen (a PIN is rare; the headphones' instructions will tell you if one is needed).
5. When the name moves to **My Devices** and says **Connected**, you're done.

Beats: the iPhone shortcut

Because Beats are made by Apple, most current models pair with an iPhone like AirPods do: turn them on or open the case near your unlocked iPhone, and a setup card slides up on the screen. Tap **Connect**. If the card doesn't appear, use the Settings steps above. After pairing, tap the **i** next to your Beats in Settings > Bluetooth to find their options.

Then add the brand's app

For Bose, Sony, JBL and Soundcore, open the brand's app (Chapter 5) after pairing. It finds your headphones and walks you through the rest. Some apps prefer to do the pairing themselves; if the app offers to, let it.

Removing headphones from an iPhone

1. Open **Settings** > **Bluetooth**.
2. Tap the **i** (information) button next to the headphones.
3. Tap **Forget This Device**, then confirm.

GOOD TO KNOW

Forgetting works across your Apple devices

Apple notes that forgetting an accessory removes it from all your devices signed in to the same Apple Account, such as your iPad or Mac. That's usually what you want when giving headphones away.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Once paired, your headphones connect by themselves every time you put them on. No menus, no fuss: just press play.

CHAPTER 8

Pairing with an Android Phone

Android phones (Samsung Galaxy, Google Pixel, Motorola and others) have a fast way and a regular way to pair. Try the fast way first.

The fast way: Google Fast Pair

Many headphones from Bose, Sony, JBL, Soundcore and Beats support **Fast Pair**, a Google feature that spots new headphones nearby and offers to connect them with one tap.

1. Make sure Bluetooth and Location are turned on on your phone. (Swipe down from the top of the screen to see the quick-settings buttons.)
2. Unlock the phone and put the headphones in pairing mode, right next to it.
3. A notification pops up showing your headphones. Tap it (it may say **Connect** or **Pair**).
4. Follow any other prompts. A second notification confirms when they're connected.

The regular way: Bluetooth settings

1. Put the headphones in pairing mode.
2. Open **Settings**. On a Google Pixel and many others, tap **Connected devices**. On a Samsung Galaxy, tap **Connections** > **Bluetooth**.
3. Tap the option to pair a new device, or wait for the list of **Available devices** to fill in.
4. Tap your headphones' name and confirm.

Beats on Android

Beats work with Android too. Apple's advice is to pair supported models with Fast Pair, or any Beats by hand in Android's Bluetooth settings, and to install the free **Beats** app from the Google Play Store. The app shows battery levels, switches noise canceling and transparency on models that have them, installs updates and can help find lost Beats. The app needs permission to use Bluetooth and location to find your Beats; say yes when asked.

> **TIP**
>
> **Menus differ a little between phone makers**
>
> Samsung, Google and Motorola word their menus slightly differently, and updates move things. If you can't find a setting, open **Settings** and tap the magnifying glass at the top, then type **Bluetooth**.

CHAPTER 9

Pairing with a Computer

Headphones are wonderful for video calls with the family on a laptop, or listening without disturbing anyone. Any Bluetooth headphones can pair with a computer that has Bluetooth, and most laptops do.

Windows 11

1. Put the headphones in pairing mode.
2. Click **Start**, then **Settings**, then **Bluetooth & devices**.
3. Make sure Bluetooth is turned on, then click **Add device**.
4. In the **Add a device** window, click **Bluetooth**.
5. Click your headphones when they appear in the list, then follow any prompts and click **Done**.

Mac

1. Put the headphones in pairing mode.
2. Click the **Apple menu** at the top left, then **System Settings**, then **Bluetooth**.
3. Find your headphones in the list of nearby devices and click **Connect**.

TIP

Sound still coming from the speakers?

Pairing isn't always enough: the computer may keep using its own speakers. On Windows, click the speaker icon at the bottom right of the screen and choose your headphones as the output. On a Mac, click the **Control Center** icon at the top right, then **Sound**, and choose your headphones.

GOOD TO KNOW

Video calls and the microphone

Zoom, Teams and FaceTime each have their own audio settings. If people can't hear you, open the call app's settings and choose your headphones as both the **speaker** and the **microphone**. Chapter 15 has more on calls.

CHAPTER 10

Using Headphones with Your TV

Wireless headphones can let you hear the TV clearly at your own volume while everyone else listens at theirs, or watch late at night without waking the house. Whether it works smoothly depends on your TV.

Three ways to connect

Option	How it works
Pair straight to the TV	Many newer smart TVs have Bluetooth. Look in the TV's settings under Sound or Bluetooth for an option to add headphones, then put your headphones in pairing mode.
Through the streaming device	Some streaming players, such as Apple TV, Fire TV and some Roku models or the Roku mobile app, let you pair headphones or listen through your phone.
A TV transmitter	A small box that plugs into the TV's audio output and sends sound to headphones. Useful with older TVs that have no Bluetooth.

HEADS UP

Lip-sync delay

Bluetooth can add a tiny delay, so voices may be slightly out of step with lips on screen. Many TVs have an audio delay or "AV sync" setting to correct it. If it's bothersome, a dedicated TV headphone system usually does better.

GOOD TO KNOW

There's a whole manual on this

TV listening has its own wrinkles: some TVs mute their speakers when headphones connect, and dialogue can be hard to make out. The **TV Listening Headphones & Dialogue** manual from Bill's Home Tech covers it step by step, and **Bluetooth Pairing** covers pairing anything with anything.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

No more arguments about the TV volume. You hear every word; the rest of the room hears what suits them.

CHAPTER 11

Multipoint: Two Devices at Once

Multipoint means your headphones stay connected to two devices at the same time, for example your phone and your laptop. Listen to music on the laptop, and when a call comes in on the phone, the headphones switch over by themselves.

How it works

- The headphones remember a list of devices you've paired (Bose remembers up to eight) but are **actively connected** to only two at a time.
- Sound plays from one device at a time. Pause on one, press play on the other, and the headphones follow.
- If a third device wants to connect, one of the first two has to disconnect.

Turning it on

Brand	Where to find it
Bose	In the Bose app, select your headphones, open their settings and make sure **Multi-point connection** is turned on. Bose's QuietComfort Ultra Headphones (2nd Gen) support it.
Sony	In the Sony | Sound Connect app, look in your headphones' settings for the option to connect to two devices at once. The WH-1000XM6 supports it and switches automatically when a call comes in.
Beats	Beats paired to your iPhone also show up on an iPad or Mac signed in to the same Apple Account; choose them from Bluetooth or Control Center on that device.
JBL and Soundcore	Many recent models support it; look for "Dual connect" or "Multipoint" in the app.

TIP

Sound coming from the wrong device?

Pause whatever is playing on the device you don't want to hear, and press play on the one you do. If two devices keep fighting, turn multipoint off and you'll have one simple connection again. Sony suggests disconnecting the device you're not using if you notice sound problems while connected to two.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

You never miss a call because your headphones were busy with the laptop, and you don't have to re-pair every time you switch devices.

PART 3

Everyday Listening

Getting a good fit, learning the buttons and touch controls, noise canceling and hear-through modes, phone calls, and keeping the batteries going.

CHAPTER 12

Fit & Ear Tips

With earbuds, fit is everything. A bud that seals your ear canal properly sounds fuller, blocks more noise, stays put and feels more comfortable. A bud that's too small sounds thin and tinny and falls out; one that's too big aches.

The spare tips in the box

Most earbuds come with the medium tips already fitted and extra sizes in a little bag or card in the box. Bose's QuietComfort Ultra Earbuds, for example, come with a **Fit Kit** of three sizes of ear tips (small, medium and large) and three sizes of **stability bands**, the soft fins that tuck into the ridge of your ear. You can mix and match them.

Finding your size

1. Start with the medium tips that came fitted.
2. Insert each earbud with a gentle twist so the tip rests at the opening of your ear canal. It should feel snug, not jammed in.
3. Play some music. If it sounds thin with little bass, or noise canceling seems weak, try the next size up.
4. If it aches after a few minutes, try the next size down.
5. Your two ears can be different sizes. It's fine to use a different tip on each side.

Let the app test your fit

Several apps have a fit test that plays a sound and uses the earbuds' microphones to check the seal. In the Bose app it's called the **Earbud Seal Test**:

1. Open the **Bose** app and select your earbuds.
2. Tap the **Settings** icon in the upper-right corner.
3. Under **How To Wear**, tap **Earbud Seal Test** and follow the on-screen instructions.

Sony's Sound Connect app and the soundcore app have similar ear-tip tests for their earbuds; look in the earbuds' settings.

Changing an ear tip

1. Hold the earbud firmly and pinch the base of the tip, not the thin top edge.
2. Pull it straight off. Most tips take a firm tug; that's normal.
3. Line up the new tip and press it on until it clicks or sits flat all the way around.

TIP

Keep the spares

Put the spare tips in a small labeled envelope with the receipt. Tips wear out and get lost, and the right size makes all the difference. Most brands sell replacements on their own websites.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Five minutes finding the right tip can make cheap earbuds sound good and good earbuds sound great, and it keeps them from falling out on a walk.

CHAPTER 13

Buttons & Touch Controls

Every pair of headphones lets you play, pause, change the volume and answer calls without taking out your phone. The catch is that every model does it a little differently: real buttons, touch spots, squeezes or swipes.

The usual patterns

What you want	Typical control
Play or pause	A single tap or press, usually on either side.
Next song	Often a double tap or double press.
Answer or hang up a call	Usually a single tap or press while the phone rings.
Volume	Varies most. A swipe on the earcup (such as Bose's volume strip), buttons, or a tap-and-hold. On some earbuds volume is turned off by default and must be switched on in the app.
Noise canceling modes	Often a press-and-hold, or a dedicated button on over-ear models.

GOOD TO KNOW

Your model's exact controls

The quick-start sheet in the box has a picture of your model's controls, and the brand's app usually has a **Controls** or **Touch controls** page that shows them too. Bose's QuietComfort Ultra Headphones (2nd Gen), for example, have a Power/Bluetooth button, a multi-function button and a volume strip.

Changing what the taps do

Most apps let you change the controls. If you keep pausing music by accident when you adjust an earbud, you can often switch a control off or assign it to something more useful.

1. Open your brand's app and select your headphones.
2. Look for **Controls**, **Touch controls**, **Shortcuts** or **Gestures** in the settings.
3. Choose what a tap, double tap or press-and-hold does on each side.

TIP

Turning off touch completely

If touch controls keep triggering when you lie on a pillow or adjust your hat, many apps (Sony's and Soundcore's among them) let you switch touch off and use your phone instead.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

When the controls match how you like to do things, you stop reaching for your phone, and the headphones stop doing things you didn't ask for.

CHAPTER 14

Noise Canceling & Hear-Through Modes

Noise canceling uses tiny microphones on the headphones to listen to the noise around you, such as an airplane engine, a furnace or a busy restaurant, and plays the opposite sound to cancel it out. The result is a calm hush, so you can listen at a lower, safer volume. Brands write it "noise cancelling" with two l's on the box; it's the same thing.

The modes, and what each brand calls them

Brand	Full noise canceling	Let the world in
Bose	Quiet mode	Aware mode
Sony	Noise canceling	Ambient Sound
Beats	Noise Cancelling	Transparency
JBL	Adaptive noise canceling (ANC)	Ambient Aware, TalkThru
Soundcore	Noise canceling	Transparency

"Let the world in" modes, often called **transparency** or **ambient**, do the opposite of noise canceling: they use the microphones to pipe the sounds around you into your ears, so you can hear traffic, a doorbell or someone talking while still listening.

Switching modes

- On the headphones: usually a press-and-hold on an earbud, or a dedicated button on over-ear headphones.
- In the app: Bose, Sony, JBL and Soundcore apps put the mode switch on the main screen.
- Beats on an iPhone: tap the **i** next to your Beats in **Settings** > **Bluetooth** to choose a mode. On Android, the Beats app has buttons to turn noise cancellation or transparency on or off.

STAY SAFE

Use hear-through when you need to hear

Switch to transparency or ambient mode, or take one side off, whenever you're walking near traffic, crossing a street, riding a bike or need to hear an alarm. Full noise canceling can hide a car horn.

GOOD TO KNOW

That odd pressure feeling

Some people feel a slight "airplane ear" pressure with strong noise canceling. It isn't harmful. If it bothers you, lower the noise canceling level in the app if it has one, or use a milder mode.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

On a flight, in a waiting room or with the vacuum running, noise canceling lets you hear your audiobook at a gentle volume. Hear-through mode lets you chat with the grandkids without taking anything off.

CHAPTER 15

Phone Calls & the Microphone

Every headphone in this guide has a built-in microphone, so you can take phone calls and video calls hands free. Calls sound clearer to you, and you don't have to hold the phone to your ear.

Answering and ending calls

1. When the phone rings, you'll hear the ringtone in your headphones.
2. Tap or press once (on most models) to answer.
3. Talk normally. You don't need to raise your voice; the microphones are aimed at your mouth.
4. Tap or press once again to hang up. Or hang up on the phone as usual.

If people say you sound faint or far away

- Check the phone or computer is using the headphones' microphone, not its own (on a computer, see Chapter 9).
- With earbuds, make sure both are seated properly. Some models use the microphone in one particular bud.
- Wind is the enemy of every microphone. Turn your back to the wind or step indoors.
- Clean the little microphone openings gently with a dry soft brush or cloth (Chapter 20).

TIP

Hearing yourself

With noise canceling on, your own voice can sound muffled, which makes some people talk too loud. Some apps have a call setting that lets a little of your own voice through so you sound natural to yourself. Look in the app's call or microphone settings.

GOOD TO KNOW

Voice assistants

A press-and-hold on many headphones wakes your phone's assistant, such as Siri or Google's assistant, so you can say "call Mary" or "what's the weather" without touching the phone. The app usually lets you choose.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Long calls with family become comfortable, with both hands free for knitting, cooking or a walk.

CHAPTER 16

Battery & Charging Cases

Wireless headphones run on rechargeable batteries. Over-ear headphones typically go 24 to 30 hours or more between charges. Earbuds last a few hours each time, but their case is a pocket charger that refills them several times over.

Charging

- Most current models charge with a **USB-C** cable, the same small oval plug many phones use.
- Any reputable USB phone charger works. A cheap gas-station charger can be unreliable.
- Some earbud cases also charge on a wireless charging pad.
- Put earbuds back in the case whenever you take them out of your ears. That's how they charge, and it's also how they turn off.

Checking the battery

Where	How
iPhone	Add the **Batteries** widget to your Home Screen. It shows connected headphones too.
Android	Pull down from the top of the screen: connected headphones often show a battery level next to their name. The brand's app shows it too.
Beats on Android	The Beats app shows the charge of each earbud and the case, and has a battery widget.
Any brand	The brand's app shows battery on its main screen.

TIP

The case needs charging too

The most common reason earbuds "won't turn on" is a flat case. Plug the case in for 15 minutes and try again. Make a habit of charging the case whenever you charge your phone.

Making the battery last for years

- Don't leave headphones in a hot car or on a sunny windowsill. Heat wears batteries out fastest.
- If you won't use them for a month or more, charge them about halfway first.

- Many apps have an automatic power-off option that turns the headphones off when they sit unused. It's worth turning on.

GOOD TO KNOW

Batteries do wear out

After a few years of daily use, any rechargeable battery holds less. If your headphones are still under warranty and the battery fades fast, contact the maker. Out of warranty, ask the maker what service or replacement options it offers for your model before buying new.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Charged headphones are ready when the phone rings or the plane takes off. A simple habit beats a dead battery every time.

PART 4

Apps, Sound & Updates

Adjusting the sound to suit your ears with the equalizer and hearing profiles, and keeping your headphones' software up to date.

CHAPTER 17

Making It Sound Right: EQ & Hearing Profiles

Everyone's ears are different, and they change over the years. The brand apps let you adjust the sound to suit yours. You can't hurt anything by experimenting, and every app has a way to go back to the original sound.

The equalizer (EQ)

An **equalizer**, or **EQ**, is a set of sliders that turn up or down the low notes (bass), the middle (where voices live) and the high notes (treble). Think of the bass and treble knobs on an old stereo, with a few more in between.

1. Open your brand's app and select your headphones.
2. Look for **Equalizer**, **EQ** or **Sound** in the settings.
3. Try the ready-made settings (often called presets) first, such as "Voice," "Podcast" or "Treble boost."
4. If you'd like, move the sliders yourself while something familiar plays.
5. To undo it all, choose the preset called **Off**, **Flat**, **Default** or **Signature**.

TIP

A good starting point for clearer voices

If speech in audiobooks, podcasts or TV sounds muddy, try turning the bass down a step and the middle and upper-middle sliders up a little. Small moves make a big difference.

Hearing profiles: sound tuned to your ears

Some apps go further: they play a series of tones, ask which ones you can hear, and build a sound profile for your ears.

App	What it's called
JBL Headphones app	**Personi-Fi** asks you a few questions, checks the sound around you, then builds a sound curve based on your hearing.
soundcore app	**HearID** runs a quick listening test and makes a personalized EQ. Results are saved and applied automatically, and you can fine-tune them further.
Bose app	Bose's **CustomTune** technology automatically adjusts the sound to the shape of your ear each time you put the headphones on.

GOOD TO KNOW

This isn't a hearing test

These tests tune the music to your ears. They're not a medical hearing test and can't tell you whether you have hearing loss. If you find yourself turning the volume up more and more, or struggling to follow conversations, talk to your doctor or an audiologist.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A few minutes in the app can make voices clearer and music richer, without having to turn the volume up.

CHAPTER 18

Software (Firmware) Updates

Headphones have their own small computer inside, running software called **firmware**. Makers send updates that fix bugs, improve connections and sometimes add features. The brand's app delivers them.

How updates arrive

Brand	How updates arrive
Sony	Sony | Sound Connect downloads updates in the background (automatic download is on by default) and installs them when ready. You can also start one by hand in the app.
Bose	The Bose app tells you when an update is available for your headphones.
Beats	On an iPhone, Beats updates are delivered through the iPhone with no app needed. On Android, the Beats app installs updates.
JBL	On most current models the JBL Headphones app notifies you of updates. A few older budget models use JBL's separate firmware update app.
Soundcore	The soundcore app tells you when new firmware is found once your earbuds are connected.

Getting an update to finish

1. Charge the headphones and the phone first. Soundcore asks for more than 20% battery; more is better.
2. Turn off your phone's power-saving or battery-saver mode. Sony warns an update may not finish with it on.
3. Keep the phone near the headphones and on good Wi-Fi.
4. For earbuds, Soundcore suggests leaving them in the case with the lid open during the update.
5. Don't turn the headphones off or use them for a call until the app says the update is complete.

TIP

If an update keeps failing

Close the app completely, restart your phone, turn the headphones off and on, and try again. Sony notes that an interrupted update simply starts again the next time the headphones connect. Disconnecting other Bluetooth gadgets from the phone during the update can help too.

SCAM ALERT

Updates only come from the official app

No website, email or pop-up will ever need you to download a "driver" or "firmware file" for headphones, and no maker calls you about an update. Use only the brand's own app from the App Store or Google Play.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Updated headphones connect more reliably, drop fewer calls, and sometimes gain new features, all for free.

PART 5

Safety, Care & Peace of Mind

Listening at a safe volume, keeping your headphones clean, finding lost earbuds, and steering clear of fake headphones and shady sellers.

CHAPTER 19

Safe Listening Volume

Loud sound damages hearing slowly, and the damage doesn't come back. The good news is that a few easy habits protect your ears, and your phone can do much of the watching for you.

How loud is too loud?

The World Health Organization's guidance for adults is to keep listening below about **80 decibels** which is considered safe for up to 40 hours a week. For children the limit is lower: 75 decibels. The louder the sound, the shorter the safe time: at much higher levels it drops from hours to minutes.

Easy habits

- **The arm's-length rule:** if someone at arm's length has to shout for you to hear them, it's too loud.
- Use noise canceling (Chapter 14) in noisy places instead of turning the volume up to drown out the noise.
- Take listening breaks.
- If your ears ring or feel full after listening, that's a warning sign. Turn it down next time.

Let your iPhone limit the volume

1. Open **Settings**, tap **Sounds & Haptics**, then **Headphone Safety**.
2. Turn on **Reduce Loud Audio** (called Reduce Loud Sounds on older versions).
3. Drag the slider to a level, such as 80 decibels. The iPhone turns down anything louder.

Your iPhone also sends a notification if you've listened loud enough, for long enough, to affect your hearing; Apple's example is more than 80 decibels for 40 hours over seven days. Apple notes that measurements are most accurate with Apple or Beats headphones; for other brands the iPhone estimates from the volume.

TIP

On Android

Many Android phones warn you when you raise the volume above a safe level with headphones connected. Some brand apps also offer a volume limit. Look in your phone's **Sound** settings and in the headphones' app.

STAY SAFE

Children's headphones

If the grandkids borrow your headphones or have their own, use a volume limit. Their ears are more easily harmed, and they can't always tell when sound is too loud.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Protecting the hearing you have means enjoying music, conversation and the grandkids' voices for years to come.

CHAPTER 20

Cleaning & Care

Earbuds sit in your ears every day, so a little wax and grime is natural. Regular gentle cleaning keeps them sounding clear, charging reliably and hygienic.

What to use

- A soft, dry, lint-free cloth (an eyeglass cloth is perfect) for the outside of earbuds, headphones and the case.
- A cotton swab lightly dampened with warm water for the metal charging contacts. Apple also allows a little 70% isopropyl alcohol on the contacts of Beats earbuds.
- A soft, dry, clean brush (such as a new soft toothbrush) for the mesh and microphone openings.

What not to do

- Don't get liquid into any openings, and don't run earbuds under the tap. Sweat- and water-resistant isn't waterproof.
- Don't use household cleaning products, compressed air or a hair dryer.
- Don't poke sharp objects into the mesh.
- Never wear earbuds with dirty ear tips.

Cleaning earbuds and the case

1. Take the earbuds out of the case and unplug the case from its charger.
2. Wipe the earbuds with the dry cloth.
3. Remove the ear tips (Chapter 12) and rinse just the tips in plain water if the maker allows it. Let them dry completely before putting them back on.
4. Brush any wax gently away from the mesh with the dry brush, holding the earbud mesh-side down so debris falls out rather than in.
5. Wipe the charging contacts on the earbuds and inside the case with the barely damp swab.
6. Let everything dry fully before the earbuds go back in the case.

Over-ear headphones

Wipe the headband and earcups with a dry cloth. Apple's advice for Beats headphones is a cloth lightly dampened with mild soapy water for the headband, but only a dry cloth on the ear cushions and mesh. Many brands sell replacement ear cushions when the old ones crack or flatten.

TIP

Earbud charging but one side won't?

Dirty charging contacts are a common cause. Clean them as above, then try again. Chapter 24 has more.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Clean earbuds sound clearer, charge reliably and are kinder to your ears.

CHAPTER 21

Finding Lost Earbuds

Earbuds are small and easy to lose: between couch cushions, in a coat pocket, on a bus. Many current models can be found with your phone, but only if you set it up **before** they go missing.

Beats with an iPhone: Find My

Apple's **Find My** app can locate many Beats models, including Beats Solo 4, Studio Pro, Powerbeats Pro 2, Beats Fit Pro, Beats Flex, Solo Buds, Studio Buds + and Powerbeats Fit. Find My must be turned on for your iPhone (or another paired Apple device) first.

1. Open the **Find My** app on your iPhone.
2. Tap **Devices** and choose your Beats.
3. See where they were last located on the map, or tap **Play Sound** if they're nearby.

Android phones: Find Hub

Google's **Find Hub** app (it used to be called Find My Device) can show where some headphones were last connected and ring them if they're nearby. It works with selected models from Sony, JBL, Beats and others that use Google Fast Pair. On Android, the Beats that Apple lists for Google's network include Solo 4, Solo Buds, Studio Buds + and Studio Pro. Google keeps a list of compatible headphones on android.com, under Find Hub.

1. Pair the headphones with Fast Pair (Chapter 8) so they're linked to your Google account.
2. Open the **Find Hub** app.
3. Choose your headphones to see their last known location, or play a sound to find them nearby.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **Not every feature on every model**
>
> Some Sony headphones can show their location in Find Hub but can't play a sound. Some Sony models need to be paired through Fast Pair for locating to work at all. The Powerbeats Pro 2 uses Apple's Find My rather than Find Hub.

Other brands

Some JBL and Soundcore apps can play a tone through a lost earbud while it's still connected and in range. Look for a **Find my buds** or similar option in the app. It only works within Bluetooth range, roughly the same room or the next one.

TIP

If you lost just one earbud

Most makers sell single replacement earbuds or replacement cases for their recent models, usually for less than a new pair. Contact the maker's support with your serial number, found in the app or on the case.

HEADS UP

Found someone else's earbuds?

If you find a pair, an iPhone may show it as an "unknown accessory" that's been traveling with you. That helps the owner find them; it isn't a threat to you. If you're worried about anyone tracking you, call the police.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Two minutes of setup now can save a $250 pair of earbuds later, and a lot of searching under the furniture.

CHAPTER 22

Fake Headphones & Counterfeit Sellers

Popular headphones are among the most counterfeited electronics in the world. Fakes look convincing in photos, sound poor, may have unsafe batteries, and get no warranty or support.

What Bose says

- The only way to be sure you're buying genuine Bose is to buy directly from Bose or a Bose authorized dealer.
- Bose knows of counterfeits of most types of Bose headphones.
- Fake earbuds often carry the BOSE logo but don't look like any real Bose design. **Bose doesn't make any headphones with the letters "TWS" in the name.**
- Products bought from unauthorized sellers may be counterfeit or stolen, and Bose's warranty only covers purchases from authorized sources.

Warning signs of a fake

- A price far below what reputable stores charge, especially on a new model.
- Sold through a social media ad, a pop-up website or a marketplace seller with no history.
- Spelling mistakes on the box, odd model names, or "TWS" or "Pro Max" added to the name.
- The brand's official app can't find or recognize the headphones.
- No serial number, or a serial number the maker's support can't look up.

Where to buy safely

1. The maker's own website: bose.com, sony.com, apple.com (for Beats), jbl.com or soundcore.com.
2. Large, well-known stores and their websites.
3. On big online marketplaces, check that the seller is the brand itself or the marketplace, not a third-party seller with a strange name.
4. Keep your receipt. You need it for warranty claims.

SCAM ALERT

Fake "support" and refund calls

No headphone maker will call you out of the blue about a refund, a recall, a warranty or a virus. If someone calls, texts or emails offering to "fix" or "refund" your headphones and asks for remote access to your computer, gift cards or bank details, hang up. Look up the maker's real support page yourself.

SCAM ALERT

Giveaway and "nearly free" headphone ads

Ads promising free or nearly free Bose, Sony or Beats in exchange for a survey or "shipping fee" are a common way to steal card numbers. Real brands don't do this.

FROM BILL

Not sure about a seller?

Send me the link before you buy, or call (330) 200-8042. I'd rather look at a website with you for five minutes than help you chase a refund afterward.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Buying from a trusted store means real sound, a safe battery, software updates and a warranty that works.

PART 6

Fixing Common Problems

Headphones that won't pair or keep dropping out, one earbud that's silent, sound problems, and the reset steps for each brand when nothing else works.

CHAPTER 23

Won't Pair or Keeps Disconnecting

Almost every connection problem is fixed by one of the steps below. Work through them in order and stop when it works. Nothing here can harm your headphones.

If they won't pair

1. **Charge them.** Low batteries cause strange behavior. Give headphones or the earbud case 15 minutes on the charger.
2. **Check pairing mode.** Look for the blinking light (Chapter 6). If the light isn't blinking, the headphones aren't announcing themselves.
3. **Bring them close.** Hold them right next to the phone, away from microwaves and Wi-Fi routers.
4. **Turn Bluetooth off and on** on your phone, then try again.
5. **Forget the old entry.** If the headphones were paired before, remove them from the phone's Bluetooth list first (Chapter 7 for iPhone; on Android tap the gear next to the name and choose **Unpair** or **Forget**). Then pair fresh.
6. **Restart your phone.** It clears up more than you'd think.
7. **Disconnect them from other devices.** If they're connected to a tablet or laptop nearby, they may be busy. Turn Bluetooth off on that device for a moment.
8. **Reset the headphones** (Chapter 25), forget them on the phone, and pair again.

If they keep cutting out

- Keep the phone on the same side of your body as the headphones, or in a front pocket. Your body blocks Bluetooth more than you'd expect.
- Stay within about 30 feet of the phone, with fewer walls in between.
- Turn off multipoint (Chapter 11) if two devices are fighting over the headphones.
- Update the headphones' firmware (Chapter 18). Connection fixes are among the most common updates.
- If you use an older JBL Tune model and it disconnects when idle, JBL has released a firmware update app for some Tune models that fixes exactly that.

TIP

The app can't find your headphones?

Make sure they're paired in the phone's Bluetooth settings first, that the app has permission to use Bluetooth (and location, on Android), and that you're using the current app (the Bose app; Sony | Sound Connect, which replaced Headphones Connect). Bose's first suggestion when its app can't detect headphones is to reboot the headphones (Chapter 25).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Most "broken" headphones aren't broken at all. Ten minutes with this list saves a trip to the store.

CHAPTER 24

One Side Silent & Other Sound Problems

One earbud playing and the other silent is one of the most common headphone complaints. It's nearly always fixable at home.

When one earbud is silent

1. Put both earbuds back in the case, close the lid, wait about 30 seconds, then take them out again. This lets them re-link to each other.
2. Check that the silent earbud is charging: when it's in the case, its light (or the app) should show it charging. If not, clean the charging contacts on the earbud and inside the case (Chapter 20) and make sure it's seated all the way down.
3. Check the sound balance on your phone. On an iPhone: **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Audio & Visual** > **Balance**; the slider should be in the middle. On Android, look in **Settings** > **Accessibility** for an audio balance slider.
4. Make sure **Mono Audio** is the way you want it in the same accessibility settings.
5. Look at the mesh on the silent earbud. Wax can block it completely; clean it gently (Chapter 20).
6. If none of that works, reset the earbuds (Chapter 25) and pair again.

TIP

One side of over-ear headphones silent?

If the headphones have a cable plugged in, unplug it; a half-inserted cable can send sound to one side. Then check the balance setting on your phone or computer, and reboot the headphones.

Other sound problems

Problem	What to try
Sound is quiet even at full volume	Check Headphone Safety or a volume limit on your phone (Chapter 19), and that the ear tips fit (Chapter 12). Clean the mesh.
Sound is crackly or choppy	Move the phone closer, stay away from microwaves, and update the firmware.
Thin, tinny sound	Almost always fit: try a bigger ear tip. Also check the EQ isn't set to something odd (Chapter 17).
Hissing in a quiet room	A faint hiss with noise canceling on is normal for some models. Try a different noise canceling level.
Echo or people hear themselves on calls	Turn the call volume down a little and make sure the earbuds seal well.

HEADS UP

Physical damage

If an earbud went through the washing machine, was dropped in water or the case is cracked or swollen, stop using it and stop charging it. A damaged battery can overheat. Contact the maker.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Getting both sides back saves you buying a new pair, and most fixes take under five minutes.

CHAPTER 25

Reset Steps, Brand by Brand

A reset is the headphone version of "turn it off and on again." There are usually two kinds, and it helps to know which you're doing:

- **A reboot or soft reset** restarts the headphones. Your pairings and settings stay. Try this first.
- **A factory reset** (Sony calls it **initializing**) erases everything, including every paired device, and returns the headphones to how they came out of the box. Afterward, you must remove them from your phone's Bluetooth list and pair them again.

Bose

Model	What to do
QuietComfort Ultra Headphones (2nd Gen)	Reboot: press and hold the **Power/Bluetooth** button, and while holding it, plug the charging cable into the headphones. Once connected, wait two seconds and release the button. This doesn't erase your settings. If they don't respond, do it a second time.
QuietComfort Ultra Earbuds (2nd Gen)	With the earbuds in the case, press and hold the button on the back of the case for about 30 seconds, until the case light turns off. This resets the controls and reboots the earbuds and case; it doesn't clear your device settings.
Factory restore	Bose has a separate factory restore for each model. Bose says to use it only if the reset above didn't help or Bose support asks you to. The steps are on support.bose.com under your model.

Sony

Sony's Help Guide for each model (at helpguide.sony.net) describes two options: **resetting**, which restarts the headphones and keeps your pairings and settings, and **initializing**, which returns them to factory settings and deletes all pairing information. Software updates you've installed stay installed. After initializing, delete the headphones from your phone's Bluetooth list and pair again. The button combination differs by model, so look up yours in the Help Guide or the Sony | Sound Connect app.

Beats

Apple publishes reset steps for every Beats model at support.apple.com (search "Reset Beats"). For **Powerbeats Pro 2**:

1. Place both earbuds in the charging case and leave the lid open.
2. Press and hold the system button on the case for at least 15 seconds.
3. On your phone, forget the Powerbeats (Chapter 7 or 8), then pair them again.

JBL

Many JBL earbuds have a small reset button on the charging case. JBL's **hardware reset** is to press and hold that button for more than 5 seconds; this resets the earbuds without restoring factory settings. For a full factory reset, JBL's support site (support.jbl.com) has the steps for each model; the quick-start guide in the box shows them too.

Soundcore

Soundcore's support site (service.soundcore.com) has a reset table for every model. As an example, the **Liberty 4 Pro** earbuds, which have a touch bar on the case:

1. Place the earbuds in the case and leave it open.
2. Press and hold the touch bar on the case for 5 seconds.
3. Choose **Reset** to restore factory settings (or **Bluetooth Pairing** to just pair).
4. Remove the old entry from your phone's Bluetooth list, then pair again.

HEADS UP

Reset only what you need to

A factory reset means pairing again with every device: phone, tablet, computer and TV. Try a reboot, charging and forgetting/re-pairing first.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing the reset for your model turns a frustrating afternoon into a two-minute fix.

PART 7

Help & Your Cheat-Sheet

When a hand from Bill is worth it, and a one-page summary of everything that matters.

CHAPTER 26

When to Call Bill

Most of what's in this guide you can do yourself, and I hope you will. But some days it's nicer to have someone sit beside you and just get it done. Here's when a call is worth it.

Good reasons to call

- You'd like help **choosing** headphones that suit your ears, glasses, hearing aids and budget, without a sales pitch.
- You want everything **set up at once**: paired with your phone, tablet, computer and TV, the app installed, the fit checked and the controls explained.
- Your **TV** and headphones won't cooperate, or the sound is out of sync.
- You want **Find My** or **Find Hub** set up so lost earbuds can be found.
- You've worked through Chapters 23 to 25 and they **still won't connect**.
- You're not sure whether a **seller, website or phone call** is genuine.
- You'd like a **patient lesson**, at your own pace, on using your headphones with your phone.

What working with me is like

I'm Bill, and I serve Portage County, Ohio and the surrounding area. I bring more than 30 years of professional experience, and I work at your pace, explaining as I go so you can do it yourself next time. No jargon, no rushing and no selling you things you don't need.

FROM BILL

How to reach me

Help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. Call **(330) 200-8042** or book a time at **billshometech.com/book**. Bring your headphones, your phone and the box if you still have it.

GOOD TO KNOW

Meet Sophie

When you call or visit the website, you may be greeted by **Sophie**, my AI receptionist. She can answer simple questions and book a time for you. If you'd rather talk to me, just tell her.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

An hour together can turn a box of confusing gadgets into headphones you actually enjoy, with the confidence to handle the next hiccup yourself.

CHAPTER 27

Your Headphones Cheat-Sheet

Everything that matters, in one place. Keep this handy.

The essentials

What	How
Pairing mode	Usually a press-and-hold until a light blinks (Chapter 6).
Pair on iPhone	**Settings** > **Bluetooth**, tap the name.
Pair on Android	Tap the Fast Pair pop-up, or **Settings** > **Connected devices**.
Pair on Windows 11	**Settings** > **Bluetooth & devices** > **Add device** > **Bluetooth**.
Apps	Bose app · Sony | Sound Connect · Beats app (Android) · JBL Headphones · soundcore.
Noise canceling vs. hear-through	Quiet/Aware (Bose), Noise canceling/Ambient (Sony), Noise Cancelling/Transparency (Beats).
Safe volume	Below about 80 decibels; iPhone: **Settings** > **Sounds & Haptics** > **Headphone Safety**.
Lost earbuds	Find My (Beats on iPhone) or Find Hub (Android). Set it up before you need it.
Safe buying	The maker's website or a well-known store. Bose makes no "TWS" models.

Write it down once

Item	Yours
Brand and model	_____
Serial number	_____
Bought from / date	_____
Warranty ends	_____
App account email	_____
Ear tip size that fits	Left _____ Right _____
Devices paired	_____

When something's wrong, in order

1. Charge the headphones or the earbud case for 15 minutes.
2. Put earbuds back in the case, close the lid, wait 30 seconds, take them out.
3. Turn Bluetooth off and on on your phone.
4. Forget the headphones on your phone and pair them again.
5. Restart your phone.
6. Reboot or reset the headphones (Chapter 25).
7. Update the app and firmware (Chapter 18).
8. Call the maker's support, or call Bill at (330) 200-8042.

FROM BILL

I'm here when you need me

$49 remote · $99 in your home. (330) 200-8042 · billshometech.com/book. Take your time, and enjoy the music.