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By JOHN BIGGS

Published: May 18, 2006

For those not yet enslaved by the white earbud, there are plenty of alluring MP3 players out there. Take the Xtatix Freefone, a self-contained player with an FM radio tuner that offers hands-free playback.

The Freefone, which weighs about four ounces, is essentially a pair of [headphones](#) studded with buttons. A U.S.B. cable transfers music from a Mac or PC and charges the built-in battery, which lasts about seven hours between charges. Like the [iPod](#) Shuffle, the device plays songs at random or in the order in which they were uploaded.

The 1-gigabyte version costs \$159 and can hold up to 300 songs; a version with half as much storage costs \$119. Both are available at www.xtatix.com and from online retailers.

A switch on one side of the headphones flips from FM to MP3 mode, and buttons control power, audio playback and equalizer settings. The other side has controls for FM tuning or to fast-forward and rewind.

In addition to music, the Freefone can store computer files, should you want to wear your important data around your ears. JOHN BIGGS

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