

Wireless in-ear monitoring is great for performing. **Jon Musgrave** connects up this latest all-in-one entry level bundle

CONTACT WEB: sennheiser.com **KEY FEATURES** Kit features XSW SR transmitter, XSW EK receiver and IE-4 in-ear headphones. UK unit transmits 476MHz to 500MHz in 0.025MHz increments, Two XLR/TRS jack combi inputs, Onboard 1/4" headphone monitor output with level control, Removable BNC antenna, Integrated receiver sync feature





The XS Wireless In-Ear Monitoring Set is an entry level UHF kit from Sennheiser, but at £529 is still a considerable chunk of cash. Still, what you're getting is Sennheiser's years of experience designing onstage wireless systems. The box has everything you need to provide wireless in-ear for one person, including the XSW SR Stereo Transmitter, EK Stereo Receiver, rack ears and full-width rack extender. There's a multi-territory transmitter power supply and AA batteries for the receiver and a pair of IE 4 in-ear headphones. You can add additional receivers and transmitters and a two-unit rack joiner plate is included. At £529, the bundle price is considerably cheaper than the individual components (£679).

Setup is simple. On the back of the transmitter is a pair of XLR combi inputs flanked by the antenna connector and power supply input. On the front there's a menu-based display alongside a 1/4" headphone output and level, a convenient way to check the feed/set levels. On the transmitter you can select between left only (mono) or left and right (stereo) input, and also adjust the overall input gain.

On the top of the receiver you have a mini jack for your in-ear phones, a volume control, antenna and status LED (Link). The front of the receiver has a small display that

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shows current transmission frequency, battery level status, RF signal level and audio signal level. A flap-down panel reveals the battery compartment, display navigation buttons and infrared interface. In addition to setting the bank and channel to match the transmitter, you can also activate the onboard limiter and EQ (+10dB at 13kHz). This is also where you adjust the left/right balance or activate the Focus option. This feature centres the left and right channels, then lets you blend between them. So, if you use two separate mono feeds into the transmitter, for track and performer say, the performer can then control their balance on the receiver. Nice. With a bunch of preassigned frequencies across eight banks and 12 channels, I didn't need to use the manual frequency Tune option, but you have an adjustable range of 476-500MHz in 0.025MHz increments. If you hit Sync on the transmitter, holding the receiver IR panel up to it, they pair automatically. Unsurprisingly the audio quality is excellent, although adjustable EQ

gain would be welcome. I also like the sound and volume of the IE 4 headphones, and with three different size end attachments, achieving a comfortable sealed fit is easy. I also found the wireless connection very stable and although these things are circumstance-specific, without any obstacles I was well in excess of 15 metres from the transmitter before I noticed the odd drop out creeping in. All told this is a quality package and if your budget can stretch this far, you won't be disappointed. **FM**

FM VERDICT

8.5

It may not be cheap, particularly for entry level, but this set does precisely what it should, so you can crack on with performing

THE PROS & CONS



Everything you need to get started

Good onboard options for receiver

Stereo/blended mono performer options

Multiple bank and channel presets

Quick-setup infrared sync feature



Included headphones sound good but don't feel very robust