

Review: Steelseries 7XB - Xbox360 Wireless Headset

Written by Dexter K.
Monday, 15 August 2011 01:09

Warning: Invalid argument supplied for foreach() in `/usr/www/funkykit/httpdocs/plugins/system/ki_mootools_control.php` on line 56

Warning: reset() [[function.reset](#)]: Passed variable is not an array or object in `/usr/www/funkykit/httpdocs/plugins/system/ki_mootools_control.php` on line 77

Warning: key() [[function.key](#)]: Passed variable is not an array or object in `/usr/www/funkykit/httpdocs/plugins/system/ki_mootools_control.php` on line 78

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Introduction

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Steelseries has been a large player in the "gaming" headset market on the PC for a number of years now. They are highly regarded by professional and amateur gamers alike.

Steelseries is looking to take that success they have had in PC peripherals and are starting to turn their attention to releasing console friendly audio equipment.

The cool thing about the launch of these items is that they are touted to be compatible with both consoles and PCs.

This lets gamers to use one headset for both their PC and Console. A pretty neat idea since it allows one to get used to one set and not multiple designs.

Today, we take a look at the Steelseries Spectrum 7XB - Xbox 360 Wireless Headset. It's made

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for gamers and music lover alike ... with the added bonus of being totally wireless.



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For more information on Steelseries and their other products ... here's a little something taken from their [website](#) .

"From day one, SteelSeries has been focused on making professional gaming gear that provide mean

What originally began as a small two-person operation in Copenhagen back in 2001 has become a glo

Fast-forward to today, and we've come a long way since our first glass mousepad. We have global offi

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With all of the formalities out of the way, lets get onto the actual product. That's what everyone is here for, right?. Now let's take a closer look at the [Steelseries Spectrum 7XB](#) - Xbox 360 Wireless Headset...

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Features and Specifications

For more information please visit [Steelseries's website](#) ...



Advanced Sound

The rich and detailed sound that the Spectrum 7xb delivers is powered by 50mm drivers for a superior reproduced soundscape that delivers clear sounds from footsteps and grenade drops to team communication and a games soundtrack. Perfected for both Xbox 360 and PC gaming, the Spectrum 7xb was tested by professional gaming teams to achieve great sound for all ears.

Interchangeable Ear Cushions

It's important to have options. The Spectrum 7xb is equipped with leather ear cushions that are interchangeable with cloth earcups that can easily be swapped out for a completely different audio experience. Regardless of what type of sound you prefer, both ear options surround the outside of the ear, making them comfortable to use. *The cloth ear cushions are sold separately.*

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Intelligent Wireless

The Spectrum 7xb operates with wireless 4Mbit/s bandwidth for true "lossless" digital audio. It was designed to avoid interference from other devices, using intelligent frequency hopping up to 344 times/second to offer crystal clear audio.

Perfect for travel

The feature to disassemble the SteelSeries Spectrum 7xb into 4 pieces including at each earcup, headband, and the cord, makes it ideal to travel with.

Five Powerful Buttons

All found on the left earcup, 7xb wearers can access 5 important buttons that will ultimately improve the way they control their audio and hear their game:

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- On/Off: Obviously turns the 7xb on/off
- Volume + : Turns the in-game audio up
- Volume – : Turns the in-game audio down
- LiveMix: Improves the balance and mixing of Xbox LIVE™ chat and in-game audio, so that voice communication is mixed perfectly and is clearer than ever before over the sounds of gunfire and explosions, without having to increase the volume of the headset and risk hearing damage.
- ExactSND: Provides pre-set equalizer settings that can be quickly switched between to improve directional sounds, environmental sound, and entertainment.

The Spectrum Transmitter

Operating up to 9 meters (32 ft.) away, the Spectrum Xbox 360 transmitter connects the headset to your Xbox. The headset features a smart LED to notify when the headset is connected.

And the Numbers

Headphones

- Frequency response: 18 – 28,000 Hz
- Impedance: 32 Ohm
- SPL@ 1kHz, 1 Vrms: 112 dB
- Cable length: 3.3 ft. (Detachable from headset to controller with 2.5 mm plug)
- Jacks: 3.5 mm

Microphone

- Frequency response: 50 – 16,000 Hz
- Pick up pattern: Uni-directional
- Sensitivity: -38 dB

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Transmitter box

- USB Powered (from Xbox 360)
 - 3.5 mm stereo jack input
 - Input level control
 - 2.6 GHz radio interface
 - Range: 9 m (30 ft.)
 - Dimensions: 83 mm x 83 mm x 26 mm
-

A Closer Look

Now that we've heard what Steelseries has to say about their headset, lets get some real user information

When I first opened the package, I was greeted by the standard looking Steelseries headset that we have all come to know. The design isn't exactly radical, but it works and it works well. They are pretty much the same as the last headset I reviewed (the 7H), except for a couple differences.

For one, there are a bunch of extra buttons that aren't included on the 7H. They are Livemix, Exact SND(a life saver and more to come on this button later),power, and volume control buttons. Another thing that this set packs in is the requirement for AAA batteries if you want to use this headset wirelessly. For those of you who want to use this headset wired from time to time when they dont have spare batteries, you will be glad since they have retained the micro-usb port from the 7H and you can plug it in to use the headset as a wired headset

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(although this headset does not come with the adapter).

Like all other Steelseries headsets, this one can be taken apart into separate pieces. This is great for travel, but if you want to use this headset on a plane you better buy that micro-usb adapter or you will be out of luck since you must have the wireless box connected to your device.

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When it comes to comfort, these headphones are very comfortable. They are a bit heavier than your standard headset but I didn't find this an issue at all when using them even for hours on end. I wish they included the cloth earpads like they did with the 7H headset, but you cant have everything I suppose.

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This headset is marketed toward Xbox gamers, but in reality any platform can use it. I had no issues at all using this headset on my PC, phone, or tablet. Sure you loose out on the microphone capabilities with other platforms, but finding a quality wireless headset is hard.

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Speaking of wireless, this headset is pretty awesome for being wireless. I have never owned a wireless headset before and I must say it is pretty cool. There is nothing like being able to remain listening to music while going to get something to drink in your kitchen, or not having to take your headphones off when you go to different parts of your house. The only downside is that the signal doesn't last forever. Steelseries rates the distance you can take them, to around 32-feet or 9-meters.

Testing Methodology

For testing we will be testing only on the PC platform since I feel that it gives better overall sound quality. We will be examining the headsets performance in Music, Movies, and PC games.

Before running these tests, the headphones were properly burned-in, in order to bring out the full characteristics of the sound. This is done in order to allow the speakers in the headphones to burn-in since they often sound different out of the box, than when you burn them in for 20-50hrs. After the burn-in period, all tests were conducted. Although, I must note that with this headset it sounded like they were burned in from the factory compared to previous Steelseries headsets I have reviewed. Quite a pleasant surprise.

Music

Music testing is done with the 7XB being driven by an Asus Xonar DX sound card, all music is formatted in FLAC at 256kbs bitrate. Different music albums were used in order to get a feel for how the set would perform on different music genres. I must note that testing was done with different "Exact SND" profiles according to which genre of music was being sampled.

The first album I used was Aly & Fila - Rising sun which is a Trance/ Techno album. When I first started listening, I thought this headset was terrible. But upon playing with the headset a little more I found the proper Exact SND profile that suited this music. The headset then came to life. Crisp bass was married to rich mids and highs. This headset is everything the 7H was lacking. I'm not sure if the speakers used are slightly different but there was a pretty good difference between the pair. The soundstage need a bit of work, but this was Steelseries best attempt at Trance music thus far.

Next up is the Folk album Bring Me your Love by City & Colour. This album is used in order to give a good sense of the mids and highs, as well as some input on the finer details in guitar chords and other sounds. Once again, a proper profile was found that greatly improved sound quality. But that isn't to say that everything is perfect. The mids and highs were lackluster at times. Lows were fine throughout, but sometimes came in too strong for this type of music. Make sure you find the correct profile or this music can come in downright nasty at times.

For the next album/ genre there was a nice change of pace and we took a look at the punk album Full Circle by Pennywise . No matter what I did, I couldn't really find a profile that properly fit this album across all ranges. Some were lacking when it came to bass, some on mids, and some on highs. I settled on one that was pretty good on the lows and mids but needed a little work on highs. Some higher vocals were more of a piercing sound rather than simply high. It seems like this headset just didn't get along with this type of music no matter what I did.

Finally we took a look at the Rap album K.O.D. by Tech N9ne. This headset seemed to excel at rap music. Lows are booming and crisp, mids are solid, yet highs seem to be a little off. This lack of detail in the highs is nothing that would ruin your listening experience, but simply something that must be taken into account. Overall, I would say that rap music and this headset go hand in hand.

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