

# the t.bone HD 815

£28

Headphones designed for both recording and mixing? **Jon Musgrave** is intrigued

**KEY FEATURES** **DESIGN:** Closed back, over ear **TRANSDUCER:** Dynamic **TRANSDUCER**  
**DIAMETER:** 50mm **FREQUENCY RANGE:** 10-35kHz **IMPEDANCE:** 32 Ohms **MEAN SOUND PRESSURE**  
**LEVEL:** 99dB **MAX. POWER HANDLING:** 1800 mW **ACCESSORIES:** 3m cable (minijack to minijack),  
adapter 3.5mm to 6.3mm **FEATURES:** Twist-lock minijack on ear left cup **WEIGHT:** 364g (incl. cable)

In an ideal world, one set of headphones would suit all our studio tasks, but the need for isolation coupled with personal sonic and comfort preferences mean we often end up with multiple pairs. Up for review I have the t.bone HD 815, a new budget headphone designed for both recording and mixing.

The HD 815, much like t.bone's new HD 515, is a closed back over ear design. Aimed at the budget-conscious buyer, and available solely from Thomann, the price including delivery to the UK is £38. That said, out of the box, these feel anything but cheap. With plenty of metal in the construction, including the ear cups, they should be robust enough for regular studio use. And they look pretty good as well.

With t.bone's new logo on the ear cups and subtle left/right labelling on the headband, the all black design is both slick and minimalist. In terms of construction, the ear pads and headband incorporate plenty of padding coupled with a super soft covering, and the panel-stitched ear pads add structure and depth.

The headband includes some, though not loads of, length adjustment, and the ear cups themselves have limited rotational movement, which isn't ideal. Even so, I found the fit pretty good with the ear pads properly enclosing my ears. It's worth noting that the ear cups do not fold in for storage. Audio connection is via a twist-lock minijack on the bottom of the left ear cup, and the included 3m lead is fabric-covered, much like the individual ear cup leads. Nice touch. Even so, the twist-lock minijack socket is too narrow to accommodate a regular minijack plug, so you'll probably need to contact Thomann should you need a spare lead.

For recording you need your headphones to offer isolation, but also upfront sonics so that you can hear yourself properly. The HD 815 delivers plenty of isolation, keeping outside sounds at bay and limiting spill back into mics. Sonically, it has quite a hi-fi delivery, with plenty of high and low frequencies and a more subdued mid range. That said, this isn't particularly extreme, and doesn't have the excessive hyped sound of some consumer designs. It's certainly very different to the HD



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515. Overall, although I'd happily use it for recording, it doesn't seem like the sound of the HD 815 has been tailored particularly for recording. However, the moderately sweetened sound makes for a reasonable mixing headphone, and although the design is quite bulky, I could certainly mix on these for extended periods.

Designing a headphone that suits both recording and mixing is a challenge. The HD 815 does a reasonable job in both categories, but I wouldn't say it excels at either. Even so, these are budget headphones, and I can't think of another headphone at this price point that delivers this combination of sound and build quality. With that

in mind, overall I think the HD 815 most definitely makes an attractive budget option. **FM**

### FM VERDICT

# 8.5

**If you're after a well made budget headphone that can handle both mixing and recording duties, the t.bone HD 815 is one of the best options available**

#### THE PROS & CONS



Excellent isolation

Good build quality

Reasonably balanced sound

Detachable twist-lock cable

Stylish design



Quite bulky