Business Headset Buyers Guide
Our work environments and styles continue to evolve both in the office and increasingly in the home or public spaces. We work in open environments that allow us to interact freely and we rely heavily on computers and smartphones. Some listen to music to stay productive while others are continuously on calls. Whether working at a desk, interacting with a team, or on the go, everyone must remain intently focused on work.

However, in noisier environments, you can hear every device, every person, and every conversation. It can be both distracting and disruptive. That’s where business headsets come in by allowing us to work in comfort with audio privacy. The right headset allows us to enjoy premium audio quality as we chat with colleagues, listen to music, and stay connected to our devices.

So, whether you want a headset that works right out of the box, keeps you comfortable all day long, makes your “daily grind” a far more enjoyable experience, is easy to set up and manage, or all of the above, we’re here to help.

Cisco has 20+ years of experience managing the sound of our video devices and phones, so designing headsets was a natural step. Cisco Headsets are built by the same team as our endpoints and are fully tested and supported to provide the best possible experience for Cisco customers.
Know your headset styles

Let’s begin with the basic headset styles. A **wired** headset uses a wire or cord to physically connect the headset to your device. Meanwhile, a **wireless** headset has no wires and, instead, transmits audio signals through the air via Bluetooth or DECT technology.

**Single-ear** headsets—often referred to as “mono” headsets—have only one ear cup. **Dual-ear** headsets—sometimes called “binaural,” “stereo,” or “duo” headsets—feature cups over both ears. While binaural headsets deliver the same audio to both ear cups, stereo headsets transmit separate audio signals to the left and right ear cups.

Know your jargon

**Bandwidth** describes the range of audio frequencies a headset receives. The higher the bandwidth, the better the audio quality. **Wideband** is the sound quality used in most high-definition business and mobile voice network headsets. **Narrowband**, on the other hand, is the standard audio quality found in traditional headsets.

**Noise cancellation** blocks unwanted background sound and there are two types: Active and Passive. **Active noise cancellation (ANC)** uses power to generate opposite sound waves that effectively “cancel” unwanted sounds. **Passive noise cancellation**, or sometimes referred to as sound isolation, utilizes the design of the ear cup to help block the user’s background noise. Headsets with passive noise cancellation, or sound isolation, generally cost less and allow you to hear your own voice better while speaking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Use in Headsets</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bluetooth</td>
<td>Wireless</td>
<td>Popular wireless technology for workers moving between a desk and the road. Bluetooth headset range is around 30 meters/100 feet from the connected endpoint, but you can connect the headset directly to a Bluetooth enabled PC/MAC, phone, or other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECT</td>
<td>Wireless</td>
<td>Wireless technology that is best suited for a desk based worker in the office or at home. DECT headsets require a base station that is physically connected to the endpoint and then a wireless DECT signal connects the headset. This wireless technology offers greater roaming range for the user, around 100 meters/300 feet, and has the ability to be deployed in more densely populated offices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USB</td>
<td>Wired</td>
<td>Type A is the most common USB connector used on most PCs, while Type C is the newer style USB connector on laptops or mobile devices.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.5mm</td>
<td>Wired</td>
<td>Commonly referred to as the headset jack on most laptops or mobile devices. Popular wired connection for consumer style headsets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>Wired</td>
<td>RJ Connection is the name of the traditional phone type connection and is needed for a headset attached to an IP Phone. Types of connection vary by vendor but most are either RJ9 and/or RJ11.</td>
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**Safety** is critical component for headsets as your hearing can be damaged by certain sound waves. So, you’ll want to look for a headset with built-in **hearing protection** that prevents exposure to sounds above 118 dB.
Meet the Cisco Headsets

Cisco has extended the collaboration experience with a full range of business headsets. The **Cisco Headset 500 Series** is a family of headsets designed for open workspaces enabling productivity with best-in-class noise isolation, vibrant audio, exceptional comfort and proven reliability. It includes a range of wired and wireless headsets with flexible connectivity that can be deployed in high density workspaces. The **Cisco Headset 700 Series** are premium Bluetooth headsets built for business, personal, and the journey between. They are designed for mobile or office workers enabling productivity in any environment with superior audio, active noise cancellation, enterprise grade security, and sleek microphone design making it easy to transition from business to personal use.

**Hear the difference**
Experience bold sound rather than taking calls or listening to music

**Stay focused**
Noise cancellation and ergonomic design to keep you productive

**Roam freely**
Bluetooth or DECT technology let you work anywhere, with any device

**Rest easy**
Put compatibility issues and troublesome administration behind you

**Enjoy yourself**
Easy set-up and intuitive operation make your experience effortless
Don’t overlook management

Headset features and cost shouldn’t be the only factors in your purchase as headset administration is critical.

Most business headset vendors do not have access to the collaboration applications or endpoints and thus require separate software to manage headsets. This software can require a license fee and, let’s be frank, isn’t connected to the rest of your collaboration solution.

Management is critical for businesses when headsets go missing or providing support to resolve audio issues. IT admins need to be able to easily identify if the problem is due to the collaboration platform or an issue with the headset.

Headset management and troubleshooting can take a lot of time for a business with a large number of headsets deployed. As a result, it’s important to know what headset vendors offer beyond the hardware itself (e.g. easy administration software, troubleshooting tools, and simple provisioning) before making a purchasing decision.

Cisco management is unique because we own the end to end collaboration platform including the applications and devices. We fully test and integrate our solutions helping remove the pain point of headset management through platform integration and automation.

Cisco Headset Management is included FREE in all Collaboration Platforms

If you have either CUCM, UCM Cloud or Webex, you get headset management included in the latest versions of the platform for FREE. This enables you to manage headsets as IT assets down to the user level. Meaning you can easily track and manage headsets in realtime with the ability to deploy and upgrade firmware plus view headset details such as status, software version, model, assigned user, and more.

Why Cisco— Single Management Platform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Feature</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tr>
<td>Inventory Reports</td>
<td>How much do you spend on headsets? Who has what? Do they use it? If they lost it, cross charge?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remote Management</td>
<td>No more walking to desks to fix or worse just buying a new headset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tested &amp; Supported by Cisco</td>
<td>All headsets are tested with Cisco Endpoints at release and before upgrade to eliminate problems and support cases</td>
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Cisco Headset 521 and 522

These headsets are ideal if you’re working in an office or on the go. They work great with your computer or any mobile devices with headphone jack. They feature integrated calling controls and a lightweight, comfortable design. The best part is, they sound spectacular.

Outstanding audio quality
Unbeatable noise reduction
White LED: Link status
Red LED: Outgoing call
On-ear busy indicator

Single-ear/dual-ear wired options
Flexible connection options
Designed for all-day comfort
Easy setup and tuning
Cisco Headset 531 and 532

Work in a contact center? Then these are the headsets for you. They work seamlessly with your computer and desk phone, offer a quick-disconnect cable to make it easy to get up from your desk, and feature integrated calling controls with advanced call handling. The unique design provides lasting comfort for those long shifts. Not to mention their audio performance, which is crisp and clear.

- Outstanding audio quality
- Unbeatable noise reduction
- Designed for all-day comfort
- On-ear busy indicator
- Easy setup and tuning
- Single-ear/dual-ear wired options
- Flexible connection options
- Quick-disconnect cable for mobility
- White LED: Link status
- Red LED: Outgoing call
Cisco Headset 561 and 562 (with Single Base)

Are you the kind of person who can’t sit still? Then take a long look at these full-featured, wireless headsets. They perform equally well in an office or contact center, with your computer or your desk phone. They’re so comfortable you forget you’re wearing them. Plus, with their extended wireless range, you can get up, move around your workplace, and stay connected without the hassle of cables.
Cisco Headset 561 and 562 (with Multi Base)

If you frequently use more devices than you can count, the Cisco Headset 561 and 562 pair with a Multi-Base to make a great tag-team. The Multi-Base enables you to connect your headset with your computer, mobile devices, and desk phone, and easily switch between them. Of course, these headsets also provide the lasting comfort, premium audio, and extended range you need to get things done in any workspace.
Cisco Headset 730

If you do business in the office, at home, or on the go, the Cisco Headset 730 is designed for you. The boom-less microphone design, Bluetooth connection, and active noise cancellation ensures you always stay connected and productive from anywhere. The Headset 730 also has premium speakers and customizable audio offering an exceptional music experience for personal use.

- Premium audio with Clear Voice technology
- Bluetooth 5.0, USB, or 3.5mm connections
- Active noise cancellation (ANC)
- Boom-less microphone design
- Enterprise-grade security
- On-ear controls
- Integrated presence LED light
- 20 hours talk time with ANC
- Customizable audio
- Cisco Headsets mobile app
- All-day comfort

Platinum
Carbon Black
Learn more

That's your quick primer on business headsets. We hope you found it helpful. Remember, when looking for a great-sounding headset that improves your listening experience, increases productive, and is effortless to manage, Cisco is a clear choice. We've been a long-time leader in business communication and we continue to create the most intelligent and intuitive collaboration experiences possible.

Visit cisco.com/go/headsets to learn more