Wireless earbuds are too wireless for me

I usually listen to music using a cheap pair of HTC headphones, for a variety of reasons that I've discussed before. But recently, I've been trying out a few pairs of Bluetooth earbuds as my full-time headphones, part of my duties as a Circuit Breaker writer, and I've come to the realization that Bluetooth headphones make me incredibly anxious.

The reason is simple. With a wired pair of headphones, there's a physical tether linking my phone to my ears. So long as there's music flowing through the cables, I can be safe and secure knowing that my phone is three feet away on the other end, right where I expect it to be. That cord serves as a link, a safety net that makes sure that the most important electronic device I carry around is still where it should be. Cut that cord, and suddenly my phone is a free floating entity. Sure, it could be in my pocket or on my desk, but I lose that tactile sense of knowing for sure, the subtle tension of the cord from the weight of my phone that lets me instinctively know that things are where they're supposed to be.

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Similarly, the connection to my phone helps me keep track of my headphones themselves. If my earbuds fall out of my ears because I'm running to catch a train, I can be reassured that my headphones are dangling somewhere near my feet, waiting for me to place them back in my ears once I've caught my breath. With the Bluetooth earbuds, I spend my time half in fear that

I’ll drop the smaller and more expensive buds or lose them entangled in a scarf.

I’ll admit that some of these problems are inherent to the specific type of Bluetooth headphones I’m using – wireless earbuds that are still connected by a wire. Truly wireless buds, like Apple’s AirPods don’t have vestigial cords to worry about, and over-ear models are basically impossible to lose track of or fall off.

There are other benefits to the wire, too

There are other benefits to the wire, too. It makes fishing my slippery, glass-backed iPhone out of my pocket a little easier by giving me a guide wire to pull on, and there’s the unlikely, last-chance backup that the headphone cord may save my phone in the event that I drop it. I never have to worry about charging them, and even the best wireless headphones around can’t hold a candle to the plug and play convenience of a good old-fashioned headphone jack (or slightly more awkward 3.5mm to Lightning cable adapter, in my case.)

Don’t get me wrong, I understand the benefits of a wireless pair of headphones too. I love not having to maneuver the cable around my coat’s buttons, and they’re infinitely preferable for when I’m at the gym.

A good reminder of some of the sacrifices advances in technology ask of us

I realize that I’m probably an edge case, and that for most people, these advantages far outweigh the problems that I personally have with the technology. But with headphones continuing to evolve and things only getting more complicated in the future, it’s still interesting that the most technologically cutting-edge solution isn’t always the best one, at least for me. And even if this is more of my refusal to adapt to wireless technology, it’s also been a good reminder of some of the sacrifices advances in technology ask of us.

But despite all that, it’s not even a question that once I finish my Bluetooth testing, I’ll definitely be turning back to my wired headphones’ security blanket. Even if there are better options out there.

https://www.theverge.com/circuitbreaker/2018/2/18/17021304/wireless-earbuds-wired-cord-bluetooth-issues