

# AIAIAI TMA-2 Series headphones from £160

Jon Musgrave tries out a design with a flexible solution for choice paralysis

**CONTACT** WHO: AIAIAI **WEB:** [aiaiai.audio](http://aiaiai.audio) **KEY FEATURES** **MAX POWER:** 100mW  
**SPL:** 113dB **DRIVER:** AIAIAI S05 unit **DIAPHRAGM:** 40mm bio-cellulose diaphragm **MAGNET:** Neodymium **IMPEDANCE:** 32 Ohms, **DIMENSIONS:** 170 x 95 x 205mm, **WEIGHT:** TMA-2 206g, TMA-2 XE 199g **PRICING:** TMA-2 £200, TMA-2 XE £160





**T**MA-2 is a headphone range from Danish manufacturer AIAIAI. It offers an innovative configuration process that allows you to build your own headphones from a selection of modular parts, and comes in both wired and wireless versions.

The online configurator currently offers a choice from three speaker units each with its own frequency profile, six headbands, four earpads (both over ear and on ear), 12 cables and two hard cases. Component prices vary, but the cheapest configuration I managed was £162 and the most expensive £290, and that was for a pair with Bluetooth 5.0 connectivity. There are a number of further signature designs on offer, including ones from the likes of Ninja Tunes and KNTXT.

To keep things simple there are also six pre-configured models and it's two of these, the TMA-2 Studio and TMA-2 Studio XE, that I have on review. These are modular, much like the individually configured pairs, and if you did want to upgrade them later, all the individual parts are available from the webshop. As I found when I started playing around with them, they are also very easy to take apart and reassemble, with the headband plugging into each speaker unit and the earpads simply pushing in. Despite the fact that you can take them apart, they feel suitably robust and the overall build quality is good.

So, how do these two models compare? The TMA-2 has their flagship super comfortable memory foam earpads covered in Alcantara fabric and a microfibre headband and these make for a pretty comfortable fit. The XE meanwhile has more modest PU-covered memory foam earpads and a slimline lightweight PU and polycarbonate headband. This is slightly less comfortable, but mostly down to the thinner padding on the headband. Both ear pad designs are over-ear and closed back. They successfully reduce ambient noise and escaped sound, making them great for studio recording and DJ booth use. They are also both pretty light, so well suited to extended periods of listening.

The speaker units on both of these pairs are the same 40mm bio-cellulose diaphragm drivers with



neodymium magnets. You'd think these would sound pretty similar, but there's a clear difference and this is highlighted as part of the product description. Most obviously, the low end for the XE is more pronounced and overall the sound is more scooped in the mid range. Neither pair is particularly hyped in the high frequencies, which is great if you like to listen loud but less helpful for critical mixing and mastering. That said, I quite like their overall tonality. To my ears, the TMA-2 provides a much better overall balance than the XE and better suits a broader range of tasks.

I really like the TMA-2 modular concept, and although it's not possible to get a true sense of which components will best suit you, the product descriptions for the two

review configurations are pretty accurate. Overall, they are great for recording, DJing and general listening, though I think there are more suitable headphones for mixing and mastering. **FM**

## FM VERDICT

# 8.0

**Flexible modular design at a price that won't break the bank – and they're great for recording, DJing and general listening purposes**

## THE PROS & CONS



Closed back, over-ear design suitable for recording and DJing

**Lightweight, comfortable and good for long periods of listening**

Good value

**Flexible modular design**

Good choice of alternative components



**Not ideal for critical listening**