

Trading an iPod for a Walkman for a Week

Scott Campbell

Editor's Note: More an exercise in historical curiosity than a serious review, this article is still a fun read.



([BBC NEWS](#) [1]) - **When the Sony**

Walkman was launched, 30 years ago this week, it started a revolution in portable music. But how does it compare with its digital successors? BCC invited 13-year-old Scott Campbell to swap his iPod for a Walkman for a week.

My dad had told me it was the iPod of its day. He had told me it was big, but I hadn't realised he meant THAT big. It was the size of a small book. When I saw it for the first time, its colour also struck me. Nowadays gadgets come in a rainbow of colours but this was only one shade - a bland grey.

So it's not exactly the most aesthetically pleasing choice of music player. If I was browsing in a shop maybe I would have chosen something else.

From a practical point of view, the Walkman is rather cumbersome, and it is certainly not pocket-sized, unless you have large pockets. It comes with a handy belt clip screwed on to the back, yet the weight of the unit is enough to haul down a low-slung pair of combats.

When I wore it walking down the street or going into shops, I got strange looks, a mixture of surprise and curiosity, that made me a little embarrassed.

As I boarded the school bus, where I live in Aberdeenshire, I was greeted with laughter. One boy said: "No-one uses them any more." Another said: "Groovy." Yet another one quipped: "That would be hard to lose."

My friends couldn't imagine their parents using this monstrous box, but there was interest in what the thing was and how it worked.

In some classes in school they let me listen to music and one teacher recognised it and got nostalgic.

It took me three days to figure out that there was another side to the tape. That was not the only naive mistake that I made; I mistook the metal/normal switch on the Walkman for a genre-specific equaliser, but later I discovered that it was in fact

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used to switch between two different types of cassette.

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