

# DJ

DJ MAG™

LIVING & BREATHING DANCE MUSIC!

North America

# Lauren Flax

Intention is everything

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### At a glance

#### MINUENDO EARPLUGS

£130

• [minuendo.com](http://minuendo.com)

BUILD QUALITY	8.0
EASE OF USE	8.0
FEATURES	10.0
VALUE FOR MONEY	8.0
SOUND QUALITY	10.0

#### Hype

Adjustable attenuation is a game-changer for performers.

#### Gripe

Too bulky for use in crowded situations.

**Minuendo has upped the bar with its adjustable attenuation slider, but there are still improvements to be made.**

**Verdict 8.8/10**

## Now Hear This

*We check out Minuendo's new lossless adjustable earplugs, which aim to change the game with their innovative attenuation sliders*

There's nothing better than hearing our favourite tunes pumped through a crisp, loud soundsystem — however, this comes at a cost. According to research conducted by the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID), as of 2020, there were 12 million adults in the UK suffering with some form of hearing loss — that's one in five of us — while over 7 million (one in eight) were suffering from tinnitus. A 2015 study conducted by Help Musicians UK also found that musicians are four times more likely to suffer hearing damage than your average citizen. Awareness around hearing loss has improved in recent years, and with it, the options for hearing protection. There are

lots of products on the market, usually offering a single level of attenuation. These come in earbud formats, similar to in-ear headphones, or custom-moulded plugs, where imprints of the entrance to the ear canal are taken in order to ensure they fit perfectly and provide a firm seal. This latter option is widely considered the best, but isn't cheap.

Enter Minuendo, a Norwegian company aiming to raise the bar in ear protection with the creation of the world's only stepless, variable passive hi-fi filter — that means quality sound with adjustable attenuation. The Minuendo design is simple but stylish; black and shaped like a teardrop, with a small silver ring surrounding a logo

on the outward face, which is also magnetised to keep the plugs connected while not in use. Minuendo provides 11 different sizes of detachable tip to fit inside the ear, including eight silicone and three foam options. Users are advised to choose a tip that provides the tightest seal, as this will offer the best frequency response and protection (Minuendo recommends the triple-flanged silicone option). However, comfort is also important if you're wearing them for extended periods, and we found one of the foam options was best for this, while still feeling snug and sealed. The accompanying info sheet informs us this means slightly more bass will bleed through. On top of each plug is a slider to adjust the attenuation level. When positioned at the rear, the slider is considered 'open' and offers a -7dB reduction. Moving the slider forwards increases the level of protection, up to a maximum of -25dB when in the fully forward 'closed' position.

So, what are they like in use? For studio sessions or performances which require little movement, the Minuendos are a great option. The filter itself works well, with great frequency response and a subtle but noticeable dip in volume as the slider is pushed forwards. The adjustable

attenuation is a real winner. Having a single set of plugs that can be used to monitor in different environments is a game-changer, and they allow for neat tricks such as increasing the attenuation slightly in one ear if a sound source is louder on one side. Though we found the company's claim of "unmatched comfort" to be unrealistic when compared to moulded plugs, once we'd identified the best tip, they were comfortable enough for several hours of use, though they did become tiring over particularly extended periods, such as a whole night of clubbing. For DJs, they are slightly less practical. Though they were comfortable to wear with headphones (in this case, the industry-standard on-ear Sennheiser HD 25s), we found the outer edge of the plugs would catch on the earpads when taking them on and off rapidly, as is quite common in a live DJing situation. Being aware of this, however, it wasn't too much of an adjustment to be a bit more careful with our headphones. Ultimately, Minuendo's original tech adds a new and worthy option to the range of ear protection that is currently on offer.

