

George Bichescu

Getting Jacked

A Wireless Future



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Having the latest phone is a bandwagon most people feel the need to jump on. Whether you upgrade to the next best thing every year or if you skip a year or two, the iPhone is always there around September to show us something new.

In 2016, the iPhone took a **controversial leap into the future** by removing the traditional 3.5mm headphone jack from its flagship mobile device, the iPhone 7, in favour of Apple's own lighting connector being used as the primary auditory input port. This is still a "feature" 4 years on, with the iPhone 12 being revealed to have no headphone jack.

Apple wanted to display its "**courage** to move on, do something that betters all of us," Philip Schiller, senior vice-president of worldwide marketing at Apple during the announcement of the iPhone 7.

Apple went on to also release their own Bluetooth earbuds, the Apple AirPods in December of 2016 to compliment the now headphone jack free design they decided on for the iPhone 7. The decision was still a controversial one as consumers now had to

rely on using a silly adaptor that came with the iPhone 7 or **invest** in a wireless earbud to experience sound without using the in-built phone speakers.

Fast forward to 2020 and many mobile phone developers have followed suit with Apple's decision to remove the headphone jack and instead rely on the USB-C charging slot, the same way Apple uses their lighting port. This is what happens when **innovation** takes hold and we take a step towards the future, you are bound to get people copying your idea. While you are still able to get a mobile device that has a 3.5mm headphone jack, there are more flagship phone designs that are ditching the headphone jack.

A **wireless future** might seem daunting to some, but when you think about it, that wireless future is already here. When was the last time you were shackled to a wall when trying to make a phone call? Human beings **strive to be free**. What better way than to be rid of cables all together. It really depends on who you ask.



I ran a survey asking individuals their opinions on using wireless earbuds. I tried to keep my focus group between the ages of 18 and 35. I asked the question, **"Would you mind using strictly only wireless earbuds for your phone, if money was no object?"** Out of the 100 or so people I spoke to, friends, colleagues, people on the street, almost 70% of them had no issue with using strictly wireless earbuds on their mobile devices.

Price is what seems to be the common factor when the conversation of wireless technology seems to come up. The only issue that I found in my survey is that consumers would prefer not to pay the price for wireless earbuds. Which is understandable as Apple AirPods for example, retail at \$249 AUD.

There is a silver lining here. As time goes on, technology gets better and it becomes cheaper to produce. Something that is a top of the line luxury now, could become commonplace or even an expectation. This holds true with the advent of wireless earbuds. In the four years that Apple have

popularised the product, more people seem to feel that wires can just get in the way.

Apple have been able to once again popularise what was, and arguably still is, a controversial decision in removing the headphone jack from their devices. They have done this in the past with their other products in other ways, such as removing the CD-drive and ethernet port from their MacBook ranges. The decision can be seen as a step in the right direction and can help lead us into a truly wireless future.



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