

## A SONIC WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

## Cambridge Yoyo (S) £150

**FOR** Big, satisfying sound; balanced presentation; NFC

**AGAINST** Quite weighty; gesture control can be erratic



**Wool and hi-fi** never used to go together. It was somewhat unpredictable, therefore, that the arrival of Bluetooth speakers also heralded a gaggle of natural fibre-laden portables.

### Part of a trend

Joining Scandinavian brands and fellow natural-fabric lovers Libratone and Vifa, the Cambridge Yoyo (S) sports a jacket of wool. And lovely and cosy it looks, too. For the record, the yarn is by Yorkshire weavers Marton Mills, and it's worsted wool (meaning, of course, that all the fibres run in the same direction).

One question that springs to mind whenever we encounter fabric-covered hi-fi is, of course, 'why?' Cambridge says its bespoke fabric is 'acoustically transparent' as well as 'treated to repel dirt, water and unnecessary wear and tear'. Reasonable answers, we think.

### Ample componentry

Even though the (S) in its model name stands for small, the Yoyo is one of the larger portables at its price, hence its ability to house a long list of audio wizardry. The built-in amplification drives a pair of full-range speakers, a subwoofer and - round the back - a passive radiator. In addition to Bluetooth (with the option of NFC), connectivity options comprise an aux-in and a USB port, which is also ready to charge ailing mobile devices. The Yoyo (S) claims it will play for an impressive 14 hours - less, of course, should you have to decant some of that energy to your phone.

Talking of audio wizardry, the Yoyo (S) is magic. What we're talking about here is gesture control - swipe your hand from left to right across, but not touching, the control panel and music starts playing. Repeat the movement to skip track. Reverse direction and the music stops. This is great fun, although we did

Gesture control is fun, but you can access most features via the top panel

"Swipe your hand from left to right across the control panel and music starts playing"

occasionally find we unintentionally initiated a request - when, for example, picking up a playing Yoyo. How frequently you use this feature probably relates to how often you combine your music listening with a bit of messy food prep. You will, though, demonstrate it every time someone calls round - that we can guarantee.

You can also access the bulk of the Yoyo (S)'s features via its top-situated control panel, which is smartly rubberised, though the black-on-black icons aren't the easiest to make out.

### A fine line

First tester out of the woolly blanket is Leonard Cohen's *You Want It Darker*, and the result is fine. And we mean fine as in 'excellent' not fine as in 'adequate'. The Yoyo (S) determinedly propels the bass-line, staying musical and taut. Cohen's voice sounds great, too - good detail helps expose the ridges of emotion in his baritone and this demonstrative delivery grabs, and holds, your attention.

The Yoyo's top end is as sweet as its lower end is melodious. Sharp treble is too common in portable Bluetooth

Cambridge says the woollen coating has been treated to repel dirt and water



### KEY FEATURES



Wool finish



Gesture control



Phone charging

speakers, but Cambridge's tuning team keeps things sounding pleasant with even dynamically challenged MP3s. We'd like a little more top-end sparkle but, on the other hand, the tuning makes sense - this speaker will no doubt spend many of its waking hours playing background tunes.

It might be happy in the background, but crank the volume and it will go nice and loud, remaining impressively composed and becoming the musical life and soul of a party. Sonically, it resembles the big-sounding JBL Charge 2+.

Promoted as portable, the Cambridge Audio Yoyo (S) is just that. But its one kilo-plus weight means it's easier to port it around the rooms of your house than tuck into the pockets of your rucksack.

Wherever you listen to it, the Yoyo will offer a big, detailed, rich sound. We sense a lot of thought has gone into this unit, and the care and attention has paid dividends.

### WHAT HI-FI? says

Rating ★★★★★

SOUND	★★★★★
FEATURES	★★★★★
BUILD	★★★★★

**VERDICT** An accomplished portable Bluetooth speaker - the extensive feature list and smart woollen jacket are bonuses

