

How to modify ear buds to use with your T-mics

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Advanced Bionics' exclusive T-mic is a wonderful invention that enables us to use regular headphones and telephones without any adapters or special programs. On-ear or over-the-ear headphones work great. But if you've ever wanted to use those small ear buds, and also block most of the outside noise, you can modify ear buds to fit right onto the T-mic.



Whenever I buy ear buds, I think that my implants can't be as good as normal hearing. Perhaps they aren't, but better ear buds continue to surprise me by surpassing my expectations. You have at least \$50,000 worth of hardware on each ear, and you will probably spend a couple hundred dollars on an iPod. Life is too short to use lousy earbuds. My current favorite is the Klipsch S4. It's cheaper than a spare battery or T-mic, and also cheaper than your iPod. Don't try to save money here! One final benefit of using this model is that I've tested the tubing, and everything fits nicely. The S4i version adds controls for some iPods and iPhones.

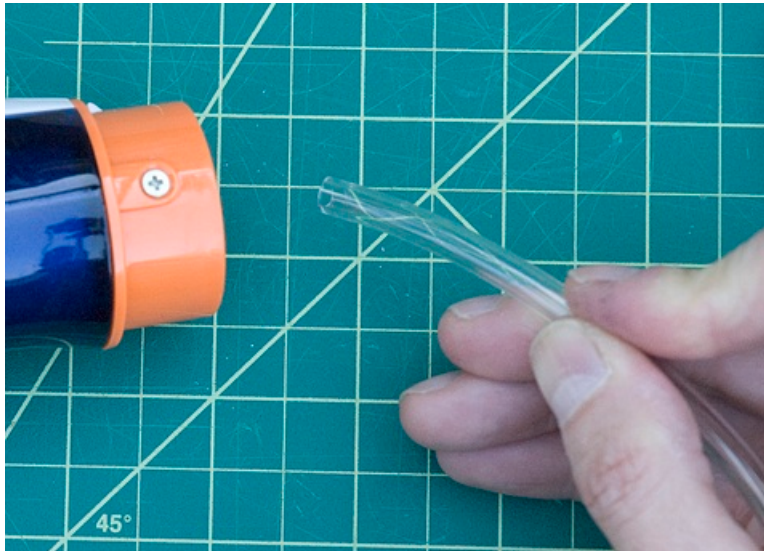
The ear buds come with removable silicone tips, with different sizes for different ears.



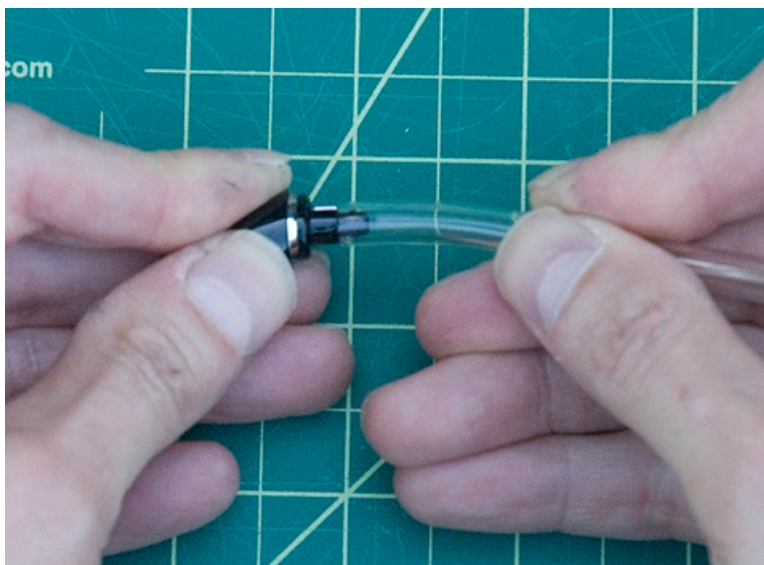
Take the tips off. You won't need them.



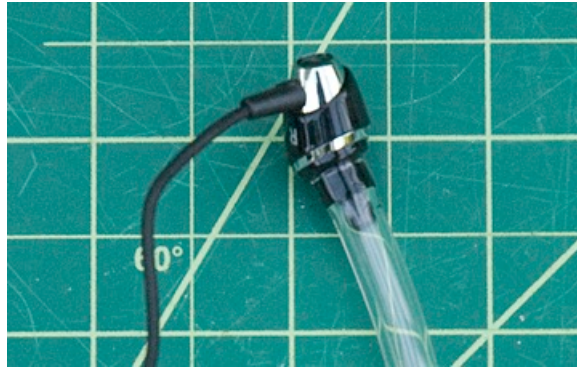
Get some ¼" PVC tubing. It's available in the plumbing department at Home Depot for \$3 for a 20-foot roll. That's a lifetime supply! Warm one end of the tube with a hair dryer for 5 seconds, turning the tubing to soften it all around.



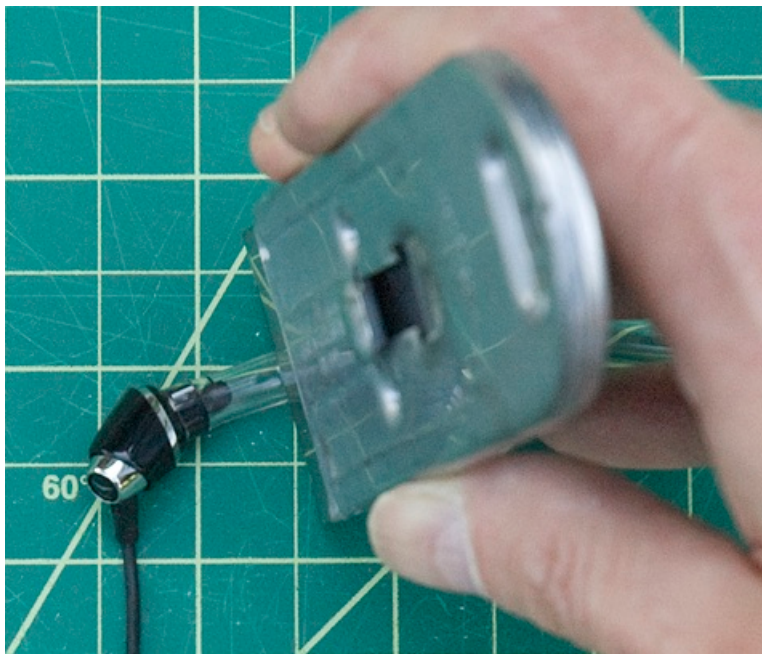
Now push the tubing onto the post of the ear bud. Don't worry – the tubing stays soft for a long time. And if it does cool down before you push it on all the way, just pull it off and warm it again.



Here is an ear bud with the tubing all the way on.



Make sure the tubing has cooled completely, and cut the tubing as straight as possible. Leave at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm) past the end of the post.





That was easy! Here is a pair of ear buds, ready to rock.



You don't have to take your processors off to put on the ear buds. With a little practice, you can hold your processor and T-mic in place on your ear, and gently push the tubing onto the T-mic. Don't force it on; it only needs to be on tight enough to hold the weight of the ear bud.



Put the ear bud on so the wire doesn't interfere with anything. I like to have the wire exit towards the front.



That's all there is to it!



## FAQ

I don't hear anything – what should I do?

- Buy an iPod and plug the ear buds into it!
- You can try them out on the headphone jack on your computer.

I love the music, but the outside sound bothers me.

- Use a program set for 100% T-mic.

Where did you get the tubing again?

- <http://tinyurl.com/44s3gpe>

I only have one implant. How can I hear both channels?

- Get another implant!
- Some devices have a mono setting.
- You might want to try a 'T' connector from the fish store.

Special thanks to Tom Hannon, whose never-ending quest for first-rate listening experiences prompted me to revisit this idea.