



Chord Electronics

Mojo £400

Majestic mobile DAC with a full, truly animated sound and a design that's unlike anything else available

DETAILS

- PRODUCT**
Chord Electronics Mojo
- ORIGIN**
UK
- TYPE**
Portable DAC/headphone amplifier
- WEIGHT**
180g
- DIMENSIONS**
(WxHxD)
82 x 22 x 60mm
- FEATURES**
• Inputs: 2x micro USB 2.0 B; optical; 3.5mm coaxial; micro USB 2.0 B
• Outputs: 2x 3.5mm stereo mini-jacks
- DISTRIBUTOR**
Chord Electronics Ltd.
- TELEPHONE**
01622 721444
- WEBSITE**
chordelectronics.co.uk

Effectively a cost-cut Hugo 2, the Mojo still manages to come top of the group for build quality, features and functionality. A good deal larger and heavier than everything else here, it's more of a 'crossover' product that doubles as a serious hi-fi component too. Its three illuminated globes control volume and power on/off, and you can also toggle between variable and line output. The power globe tells you the playback sampling frequency by changing colour; this takes some learning.

Inside, the Mojo sports Chord's custom FPGA-based DAC and digital filter, supporting up to 32-bit/768kHz and DSD256. There's also a chunky analogue output pumping out a claimed 3V in line-level mode. The rechargeable battery gives eight hours of listening. There's a range of inputs including a USB 2.0 micro B, optical digital in and mini 3.5mm coaxial digital in. Another micro USB feeds it

the juice from its offboard power supply, and a cable is bundled. Two headphone outputs are fitted. Mojo has the option of adding the £500 Poly streaming module (HFC 431), which provides data server, DLNA receiver, wi-fi hub, Bluetooth and SD card reader/player functionality. Overall, this is the classiest product of the group, but you do pay for it.

Sound quality

The Mojo's time on the market has done nothing to lessen its illustrious, almost aristocratic sound. Indeed, most full-size hi-fi DACs under £1,000 struggle to beat it. What really stands out is its natural musicality; it has less of a processed feel than the others, rhythmically and tonally. It makes for an extremely natural, almost analogue sound. The Nookie track is wonderfully animated, bouncing along like a big rubber ball. The Mojo is particularly adept at tracking the exact timing of the fast-looped hi-hat

IN SIGHT

- 1 3.5mm coaxial digital input
- 2 Micro USB 2.0 B port
- 3 Micro USB 2.0 B port (for charging)
- 4 Optical digital input

cymbals and snare drum hits and carries the bassline in a fluid way. At the same time, the lead piano riff sounds beautifully syncopated with the rhythm track and vocal samples. Everything slots together, and yet never sounds especially forensic or overly detailed in a 'hi-fi' way.

Its other great strength is the ability to convey the sonic 'feel' of a recording; by this I mean it doesn't render everything in the same colour. The Marillion track shows this to great effect; it's a fairly warm eighties recording and the Mojo correctly conveys this. Yet it doesn't do so by artificially colouring it; the bass guitar sounds full but tight, the keyboards are rich and sumptuous and the drum kit tight and punchy.

This makes it the best of the group at reproducing the Herbie Mann track too; tonal accuracy and rhythmic

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acuity are just what you want from jazz and the Chord certainly doesn't disappoint. It's very detailed, and this gives a more immersive sound than the rest here, allowing you to walk right into the soundstage, so to speak. Instrumental placement is excellent too, as the Benjamin Britten piece confirms. The Mojo succeeds sonically in so many ways, making mobile music a magical experience ●

Hi-Fi Choice

OUR VERDICT

SOUND QUALITY ★★★★★ **LIKE:** Great sound; packaging; functionality

VALUE FOR MONEY ★★★★★ **DISLIKE:** Nothing at the price

BUILD QUALITY ★★★★★ **WE SAY:** Mojo is still very much the connoisseur's choice

FEATURES ★★★★★

OVERALL ★★★★★

