

Portable Amplification Systems

This paper is to explain the different options for portable amplification systems and their appropriate uses. Each system specialises in solving a different problem with their being no one-size-fits-all solution.

A note to mention is that the use of any amplified sound (music or speech) would require a TENs notice. For one-off events, these cost £25. The only park LTC own with a TENs notice is Sparrows Nest Gardens.

Speaker and Wireless Microphone System:

This type of system is good as a quick set-up option for static use and is popular with buskers. Modern versions (such as the one pictured) include Bluetooth capabilities as standard, are battery powered and come with wireless handheld mics.

Although this version comes on wheels for ease of transportation, it would not be recommended for walking tours as the speaker is relatively heavy. A speaker stand may also need to be purchased to raise the speaker to further its range, alongside a mic stand.

COST: £250-£300

PROS

- Battery powered and wireless
- Compact system with quick set-up
- Bluetooth compatible

CONS

- Only suitable for static use
- Floor mounting means range will be lower



Tour Guide System Option 1

This type of system is a very compact and light-weight system which is regularly used by tour guides. The speaker is carried by the guide on a strap.

The small nature of the speaker does negatively affect the sound quality with these speakers often sounding “tinny”. This system is good for a small-medium group of people in an informal setting with the best sound coming when the speaker is pointing directly at people.



COST: £80-£200

PROS

- Light-weight and easy to carry
- Suitable for walking tours to small groups

CONS

- Poor sound quality
- Not suitable for large groups
- Reviews say mic is fragile and prone to making sound crackly

Tour Guide System Option 2

Whilst option 1 includes one speaker, option 2 offers individual earphone sets for each listener. This gives the person giving the tour ability to communicate directly with the tour partakers.

This system gives a good sound with no disruption to wider people and would not need to have a TENS notice for use.

COST: £350-£500

PROS

- Compact
- No need for TENS notice for use

CONS

- Limited number of people can use – would be a private event
- More technical set up
- Higher potential for loss or damage of equipment

