

Solar Headphones

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Agencies

A pair of headphones that can harness solar power to charge mobile devices when you are on [the move](#) has been designed in the United Kingdom. Andrew Anderson, a Glasgow-based designer, launched the OnBeat headphones on crowdfunding site Kickstarter and hopes to have them on sale by early next year.

The headphone band is fitted with a flexible solar cell with a charge capacity of 0.55 watts.

“The headphones have an integrated flexible solar cell that covers the full headband which capture solar energy whilst out and about,” Anderson said on Kickstarter. “The energy is stored in two light-weight Lithium Ion batteries held within the two ear cups for a balanced weight and fit on the head.

“For those rainy days we have also developed the headphones to be able to be charged via USB directly from your computer or mains socket,” he said.

Anderson hopes to raise £200,000 to get the headphones into production. “We are still working on the design and prototype. We need to improve the headphones — people want to know about noise cancellation,” he told the BBC.

He admitted that his father Frank had come up with the idea “It’s really simple — you would think it had already been done. You can buy solar chargers for phones but the thing is it’s like you’re carrying two phones around,” he said.

The idea of using renewable sources to charge devices is proving popular among developers. Many inventors have been looking at harnessing the energy generated by walking too. One project seeking crowdfunding via Kickstarter in the US is a shoe insole that can be used to charge batteries. A walk of between 2.5-5 miles is required to charge an average iPhone battery, says the team at Solepower, which developed the prototype at Carnegie Mellon University.

“We developed a proof-of-concept prototype for lighting up shoes so students could easily see where they were walking at night,” say its website.

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