

**Futiro Luna.** Call us shallow, but one of the things we like most about the Futiro Luna is the way it looks. The sleek black crescent is right at home next to our MacBook and black video iPod. (It also collects fingerprints just as easily as the iPod.) The form is a perfect complement to the function, which provided almost everything we wanted in a handset.

The Luna provided the best sound quality of any handset in our testing, especially in Skype-to-Skype calls. The hands-free setting routed the output through a speaker on the back, with enough volume to conduct a conversation from several feet away in a quiet room. The microphone in hands-free mode tended to drop off if we moved around too much, but remained stable otherwise.

The phone is activated by launching the Futiro app, which runs in the menubar whenever Skype is running. Scrolling through Skype

contacts, dialing a number, and bringing the Skype window to the foreground are as easy as

pressing a button on the phone's keypad. The layout of the phone is smart: When

Skype is idle, the arrow buttons move up and down the contact list, but when a call is active, the arrow buttons control the volume.

The one control we found ourselves wanting was a mute button. The cord is long enough to reach several feet away from our Mac, and the lack of a mute button seemed conspicuous. Also, very rarely, a number dialed into the keypad would fail to register with Skype. All that aside, for those who value form as much as function, the Futiro Luna is a compelling choice.

**Keyspan Cordless VoIP Phone.** This VoIP handset brings all of the convenience of a standard cordless phone to Skype, with a

few extra niceties to boot. The phone pairs with a USB receiver that plugs into your Mac. Once installed in the Applications folder, the phone's software runs in the menubar. The sound quality isn't as good as it is on the wired handsets we tested, but it's at least as good as a traditional cordless phone. The speaker gets loud enough for the phone to be held a good distance away and still be audible.

The range is impressive. Keyspan claims the phone will work at distances up to 100 feet indoors. The greatest distance that worked for us was about 70 feet, but that was with the phone at the edge of a large yard, with three or four walls and a flight of stairs separating the handset from the receiver. Battery life was equally good. We used the phone every day for the better part of a week, only charging it once with the provided USB cable. (Rechargeable batteries are included.)

Since the phone is meant to be used away from its host computer, its LCD shows call history and information from Skype's contact list. Call history works as you would expect. Unfortunately, the phone's display of contact information is flawed. Regular Skype contacts, those listed with a Skype ID, show up in the LCD by name. But SkypeOut contacts, people for whom you've listed a phone number rather than a Skype ID, are displayed by phone number only. Unless you can remember which phone number belongs to who (we can't), the info isn't much help.

The phone's receiver also seemed to interfere with a local Wi-Fi network at times. When the receiver was plugged into our MacBook, the laptop repeatedly dropped our home Wi-Fi network. Plugging the receiver into a wired Power Mac G5 upstairs



**Keyspan's cordless handset worked through walls and fences in our testing.**



**The Free-1 isn't free, but it's the least expensive of the handsets we tested.**

eliminated the problem. Despite the lack of names for SkypeOut contacts, the Keyspan Cordless VoIP Phone provides reliable access to Skype around the house.

**IPEVO Free-1.** This device stands out immediately from the other Skype handsets for the number of controls on its keypad. Though they take a little getting used to, the extra buttons allow the user to control almost every call-related aspect of Skype.

In addition to dialing, the Free-1's handset can scroll through Skype's contact list, recall Skype from the Dock, or dial the + required before the country code when you're calling internationally. Three programmable buttons at the top allow users to redial, change their Skype status, or open a chat window with a contact. And it's the only phone handset that included our wished-for mute button.

Extra controls aside, the Free-1 provided good sound quality in our testing, although not quite as good as the Futiro Luna's. The handset is small and incredibly light, making it easy to hold during long conversations. Oddly enough, the lack of weight can also make the device seem insubstantial, especially compared to the heft of the Luna.

Like the Luna and the Keyspan cordless headset, the Free-1 is activated by a separate application that must run alongside Skype. The apps for the Futiro and Keyspan headsets, however, run out of sight in the menubar. The Free-1's app runs right on the Desktop, which is a bit distracting when you're not using it to change the phone's settings.

**The bottom line.** As far as headsets, we preferred the comfort and sound quality of Logitech's Premium Notebook Headset. And while all three Skype handsets that we tested worked well, the Futiro Luna had that special combination of sleek style and user-friendly functionality that elevated it above the others.



#### LUNA

**Futiro**  
www.futiro.com  
**Price:** \$75  
**Requirements:** Mac OS 10.4.8 or later, USB, Skype

**+** Excellent sound quality. Hands-free mode allows for use as speakerphone. Gorgeous design.

**-** Handset lacks mute button. Rare input lag when dialing.



#### CORDLESS VOIP PHONE

**Keyspan**  
www.keyspan.com  
**Price:** \$79  
**Requirements:** Mac OS 10.3 or later, USB, Skype

**+** Excellent range and battery life. LCD displays call history and contact information.

**-** LCD displays some contacts as phone numbers rather than names. Possible interference with Wi-Fi networks.



#### FREE-1

**IPEVO**  
www.ipevo.com  
**Price:** \$34.99  
**Requirements:** Mac OS 10.4 or later, USB, Skype

**+** Extensive keypad allows almost full control of Skype. Good sound quality. Reasonably priced.

**-** Sound quality less impressive than the Futiro Luna.

