

Grundig G6 Aviator

Big Performance, Little Package, Low Cost

By Larry Van Horn, N5FPW

Recently while visiting with the Grove Enterprises staff, one of our technicians was singing the praises of the Grundig G6 Aviator portable. "It has one of the best SW sensitivities I have seen," she said.

Well, it is a low end \$100 portable, so how good could it really be? We decided to take one home and perform an *MT First Look* test on this small footprint portable.

❖ Inside the Box

The first thing I noticed when I took the radio out of the box was its size. Dimensions are 5 inches (127mm) x 3 inches (76.2 mm) x 1.2 inches (30.48 mm) and it weighs 9 oz. (255.1 grams), excluding the two batteries. This radio can easily be thrown into a briefcase or purse for travel.

Accessories included in the box include a carrying pouch, operating manual, warranty card, AC adapter/charger, supplementary antenna, and a carrying strap.

The manual was okay. I have not been a big fan of Eton/Grundig receiver manuals in recent years. For instance, there is no explanation for the beginner on the basics of shortwave listening. They tell you to do a

Google search. The typeset is a bit small due to the small size of the manual itself, but at least the G6 manual is in black ink (not gray as in the Satellit 750).

❖ On-the-Air Testing

During our testing we used the venerable Sony 2010 as our bench mark receiver. The first noticeable difference was in FM broadcast band reception. The G6 definitely beat the 2010 hands down, even when using the whip antenna.

Overall, I was very surprised at this receiver's sensitivity. Shortwave sensitivity was almost equal to my 2010. It was pulling out some interesting stations from within the HF utility bands, voice and digital. AM reception was reasonable (see negative below).

The receiver has good audio, one of the best I have tested in this price category. Even given the small size of the speaker, it was interesting to hear decent audio from such a small package. As I expected, there was a noticeable improvement in audio when I used earphones versus the speaker. Like many of the Grundig/Eton portables, you can select mono or stereo reception via the earphone jack.

What really surprised me about the G6 was the fact that they included SSB reception capability at this price range. However, receiver selectivity, especially for SSB reception, was a bit disappointing. There appears to be only one bandwidth available, and it is shared by both the AM and SSB modes. On the other hand, I was particularly pleased with the FM selectivity, which is usually an afterthought in this price range.

This is a dual conversion receiver. While that is good, we noticed more images when we connected it to an external antenna as compared to the same setup for the Sony 2010. If you connect an external antenna to this radio, I

TABLE 1: GRUNDIG G6

Manufacturer Specs/Key Features

Frequency Coverage:
LW/MW/SW: 150-29999 kHz (steps selectable depending on jog switch position); AM steps selectable for either 9 or 10 kHz spacing.
FM Band: 87.5-108.0 MHz (76.0 MHz selectable for outside the US and Canada)

Conversion: Dual conversion
Bandwidths: One bandwidth AM/SSB
Freq/Meter Conversion: LCD signal strength meter

Attenuator: None

Tuning Options

Digital frequency readout / manual tuning knob
Auto up/down buttons
Keyboard direct frequency entry
Auto search
Auto tuning storage for FM band

Memory Locations

700 memories arranged in 100 pages; each page holds seven memories. SSB selection is not stored.

Clock function:

12/24 hour selectable

Sleep time direct entry 0-99 minutes

Three programmable alarms

Audio Control:

Push button (31 levels selectable by user)

Tone select:

News/music switch, FM stereo bass (earphones only)

Backlighting:

Display backlight

Antennas

Telescopic antenna for FM and shortwave

Built-in ferrite bar antenna for LW/AM

External antenna jack

External Jacks

Earphone jack (stereo on FM) and

Antenna jack; both 3.5 mm diameter

Power Source

Battery 2 AA batteries;

External power: DC 4.5V, center pin positive

Includes AC-DC 4.5V 300 mA adapter



Overall rating: 2 and 1/4 stars

MT FIRST LOOK RATING (0-10 SCALE)

Audio Quality.....	4
Audio Levels.....	5
Back light/Display.....	6
Battery Life.....	6
Dynamic Range.....	5
Ease of use.....	6
Feature Set.....	5
Keyboard/Button/Control Layout.....	5
Sensitivity: AM-5, FM-6, SW AM-5, SW SSB-4	
Selectivity.....	4
Overall Construction.....	6
Overall Reception.....	6
Overall Manual.....	4



highly recommend adding the capability to attenuate some of the incoming signal to reduce the problem of the strong signal overload that the radio will experience.

Finally, for those who like tuning around, there was no chugging when tuning the G6 like you have with the older Sony.

❖ The G6 Negatives

As I have said many times in these *First Look* columns, no radio is perfect. Keeping in mind that we are talking about a \$100.00 portable, the G6 does have a few skeletons in its closet.

Tuning SSB signals is a bit better with this radio than some other models we have tested. There is a SSB button on the front of the receiver. When you press that button you will be able to decode the SSB transmission, but you will have to use the front panel tun-

ing wheel to fine tune the SSB signal. There is no USB/LSB, so it will not be obvious which sideband you have selected.

Another negative that I noted when testing SSB reception was an AGC action that was way too fast, so some of the stronger stations were a bit distorted on signal peaks.

One thing that can make the Grundig G6 radio more difficult to use is the much smaller display screen, especially if you are sight-impaired.

AM reception compared to the Sony was not as good, and this was probably the result of a smaller ferrite loop coil inside the radio as compared to the 2010. And the external antenna on the G6 only works on the shortwave/FM bands, so AM broadcast band reception is not

as good as on the other two radios.

I did note a bit of synthesizer noise while tuning around, but I have not seen it mentioned by others who own the radio, so it may have been unique to the model I tested.

Table 1 is a listing of manufacture specs and key features.

❖ Bottom Line

As I mentioned in my past reviews, manufacturers have come a long way in the last decade in improving under \$100 portable radios, and that was quite evident when we tested this radio.

The Grundig G6 will have a wide appeal to the traveler. You get a lot of bang for the buck using this radio, including SSB reception.

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Grundig G-6

POWERFUL

PORTABLE



- AM, FM-stereo, Aircraft Band (117-137 MHz) and LW/Shortwave (150-29999 KHz)
- Set 9/10 KHz AM tuning; set FM tuning range
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