

## A Review of the Tecsun S-8800 Receiver by Phil Ireland



Many thanks to Garry Cratt from Tecsun Radios Australia for supplying the radio for review. Please visit their website [www.tecsunradios.com.au](http://www.tecsunradios.com.au) for details of this and other radios and support a business which supports the shortwave radio community.

I've had the opportunity to give this radio a considerable workout over the last few weeks and from the outset I must say that I'm more than satisfied by the performance and useability of this receiver. I base my reviews on actually listening to received stations and don't give much notice to specifications, preferring to use them as a guide only. After all, if you can't hear a station, there's not much chance for the radio, atmospheric conditions notwithstanding.

With the above said, I tested the radio on shortwave, medium wave and FM and I'm pleased to say that I was delighted by the performance on all bands. Much has been said on line that medium wave is somewhat deaf with the S-8800 however it hasn't been the case with the unit I've reviewed. Perhaps Tecsun has upgraded the unit from earlier radios in answer to unfavourable reviews of medium wave performance. I was able to receive my marker stations (ABC Western Victoria on 594 khz, 2CH Sydney on 1170 khz and 2GN Goulburn on 1368 khz, all stations difficult to receive from my QTH.) Coupling the radio with the excellent PK Loop inductive antenna really lifted the performance to better than my dedicated high performance medium wave receivers. Of a night, there is a plethora of medium wave stations with 909 khz, China being received easily. So I give the radio a tick here.

Shortwave is where the radio really shines and stations are easily received with just the telescopic antenna. There is provision for external antennas should they be desired. SSB capabilities are excellent and with a wide range of DSP filters for both AM and SSB, ECSS reception is possible. Listening to Ozyradio on 5045 khz and 4KZ on 5055 khz shows just what the radio can do on the telescopic antenna. A synchronous detector would've been nice but I don't think the DSP chips that are used in the current radios allow for a successful result. Using SSB does the job just as well. Here I give the radio another big tick!

On FM, the listener is rewarded with just what the DSP chip is capable of, excellent sensitivity and selectivity and superb audio. Only yesterday I was able to receive Noumea on 93 Mhz via sporadic reception with careful positioning of the telescopic antenna and most of the Sydney Commercial outlets are heard, that's a distance of 200 or so kms. Again I'd have to give the radio a big tick.

So features of the radio are numerous, many of which are adequately explained by viewing on YouTube and internet sites so I won't go into detail here suffice to say that the radio is mostly intuitive to use. As I'm not a big user of memory functions, preferring to directly input required frequencies, the radio does allow for automatic easy tuning that will allocate received stations to the memories which is a big plus if you are travelling with the radio. What is a huge bonus is the ability to control the radio by an infrared remote control. This is a big step forward by Tecsun with this radio, earlier models were somewhat cumbersome to tune, not so with the S-8800. Build quality is good and the finish is what you expect from Tecsun but with all radios out of China, QC can be an issue however with Tecsun, thankfully this is a rare problem. Something to keep in the back of your mind anyway.



So in summary, no radio is perfect but this one is pretty good all round!

Pros: Easy to use with many useful features especially the DSP filters.

Great audio.

Excellent performance on all bands especially SW and FM.

Runs on 2 rechargeable batteries which give reasonable run time.

Controllable with a very useful remote control allowing for direct frequency input.

Well built.

DSP Architecture

Cons: Remote control can be easily misplaced making the ease of use cumbersome.

**No Synchronous detector however ECSS can be used to dig tough stations out.**

**No Air band which is available on other Tecsun Radios**

**No FM RDS capabilities which, for some reason only known to Tecsun, isn't available on any of their radios. Other brands using the same chipset offer RDS. Not a deal breaker but nice to have non the less.**

**So is this radio perfect? No, but it does a good job! Keep in mind that no portable radio can compare with the performance of a good Communications Receiver connected to a good antenna system but if you want a radio that does perform well, can be carried around, sounds good then consider the Tecsun S-8800. I'd be surprised if you're disappointed with it.**

**I hope you've found the review helpful and please contact Garry Cratt for more information of this radio.**

**Cheers..... Phil VK2GJF**