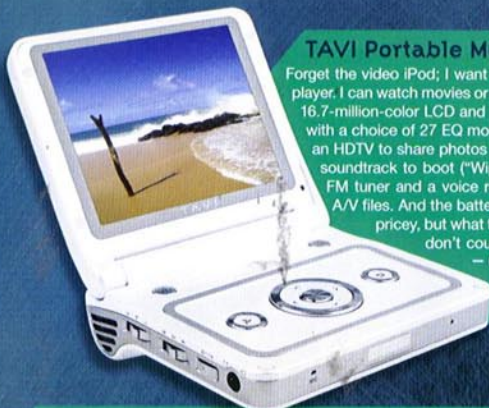


# WIRED GADGET LAB

THE COOLEST (AND, UH, WEIRDEST) GIZMOS IN THE UNIVERSE — PLUNDERED FROM OUR TREASURE CHEST OF WEEKLY ONLINE PRODUCT REVIEWS



## TAVI Portable Multimedia Center

Forget the video iPod; I want TAVI's 20-Gbyte clamshell media player. I can watch movies or home videos on its crisp 3.5-inch, 16.7-million-color LCD and listen to music in virtual surround with a choice of 27 EQ modes. I can even plug the TAVI into an HDTV to share photos of my Hawaiian vacation — with a soundtrack to boot ("Wipe Out," perhaps). It also has an FM tuner and a voice recorder. The TAVI supports most A/V files. And the battery lasts about six hours. Sure, it's pricey, but what the heck, I've been good (er, if you don't count those Torrents I downloaded).

— Greta Lorge

Retail: \$400 // [tavi.com](http://tavi.com)

RATING  
10 | 10

## Motorola SLVR L7 Cell Phone

Packing this black beauty makes me feel like a pimp. I find myself leaving it out on my desk so coworkers can compliment me. "Slick phone," they say. "Yeah, it's a'ight," I reply. Translation: Most other handsets look like a mangled candy bar next to this sexed-up model. It sports a cam that shoots VGA stills and lo-res video, and it has the usual Moto software, iTunes compatibility, and half a gig of memory to hold songs. Batteries drain fast when you play music. But the SLVR's style mixed with the iPod's harmony? What could be better? — Ken Lin

Retail: \$200 with two-year Cingular plan // [motorola.com](http://motorola.com)

RATING  
9 | 10



## BrightFeet Lighted Slippers

When something goes bump in the night at our house, it's usually my toe. Now these slippers illuminate my path and save my precious piggies. Battery-powered LEDs in these scuffs activate the moment I slip into them and brighten the hallway up to 25 feet ahead. My gripes: They're sorely lacking in style, and if you stand still for too long, the built-in timer shuts off the headlights. It's no fun having to do the Energizer Bunny shuffle while rocking a baby to sleep. — Jennifer Hillner

Retail: \$40 // [brightfeetslippers.com](http://brightfeetslippers.com)

RATING  
8 | 10



## Ion Portable DJ Station

You can't beat turntables for DJing, but I was willing to try out this cross-fading CD boombox. It includes dual CD decks, a mixer with an effects processor, and a microphone for urging party people to wave their hands in the air, wave 'em like they just don't care. But the lack of a fine-touch jog wheel on the CD drives makes true beat matching between the players damn near impossible. The rig also choked and required a reboot if I paused a CD too long for cueing. The Ion just isn't meant for a serious DJ.

— Andrew Casden

Retail: \$300 // [ion-audio.com](http://ion-audio.com)

RATING  
5 | 10



## Swash S600-EW Toilet Seat

I'm working my way through *Encyclopedia Britannica* in the bathroom. Ever since I outfitted my toilet with this electric seat, I never want to get off the pot. It runs your bottom through the equivalent of a car wash — heating, spraying, and blow-drying. Getting the device ready for duty (!) meant connecting the seat to the water supply and power line. A warning: Setting the water and heat to max power made it feel like someone washed my tuchus with lava and dried it with a blowtorch. Once the adjustments were right, the experience was so pleasant that now I almost always sit down to pee. — James Lee

RATING  
9 | 10

Retail: \$900 // [brondell.com](http://brondell.com)

## Headbanger Audio Universal Ear Subs

Boom! Boom! Boom! Am I in a nightclub? The bass on these earphones — produced by an amplified subwoofer — makes for one heart-thumping audio ride. And the high volume coming from the sealed buds drowns out street noise, rocking me out of this world. Jamming through the morning rush, I nearly got run over by a bus. One drawback is that the subwoofer requires a bulky 1.7-ounce AAA-powered battery pack. And the absence of a variable bass-control knob has rendered me partially deaf. — Lisa Katayama

Retail: \$20 // [headbangeraudio.com](http://headbangeraudio.com)

RATING  
8 | 10



## "Shocking Liar" Lie Detector

Remember when the Imperial interrogation droid questioned Han Solo in *The Empire Strikes Back*? I found myself in a similar predicament with this electric-shock lie detector. I strapped it in my hand, calibrated the machine, and had a colleague question me. Apparently I don't know my name, gender, or hair color, because the Shocking Liar jolted me after each response. In fact, it zapped me even when I wasn't asked a question at all. My constant flinching entertained my coworkers, but this gag device's lie detection is worthless.

— Roger Thomasson

Retail: \$30 // [shockingfun.com](http://shockingfun.com)

RATING  
2 | 10



## ZyXEL AG-225H Wi-Fi Finder and USB Adapter

On the slow-moving road to seamless wireless coverage, I can't help but whine, "Are we there yet?" In the meantime, this key-fob Wi-Fi finder comforts me by quickly identifying 802.11a, b, and g hot spots at the flick of a switch. The ZyXEL displays local signal strength, number of available connections, and which of them are password protected. At my wine-country cottage, the ZyXEL even detected signals that my ThinkPad missed. There's no backlight, but that's OK. I'm just about ready to ditch the cubicle and do my laptopting in the park. — Erika Stalder

Retail: \$100 // [zyxel.com](http://zyxel.com)

RATING  
9 | 10

