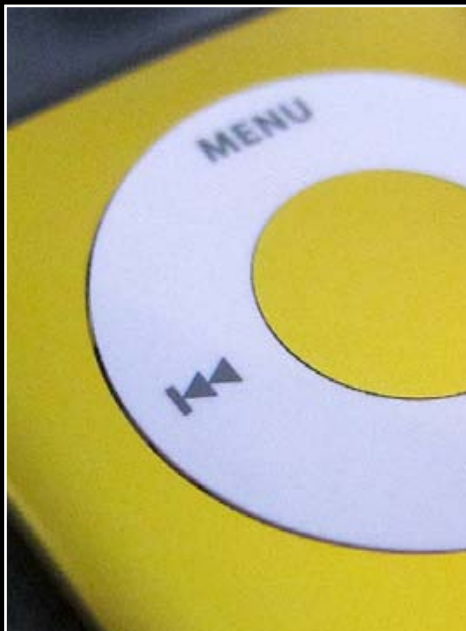


Why Cases Matter

Are iPods and iPhones invulnerable? Hardly. Apple's museum-class designs have frequently used amazingly scratchable materials, including polished metals and soft plastics that can start to look old and tarnished after only a day or two of unprotected use. Though today's aluminum iPod nanos and iPod shuffles are more resilient than the plastic iPhone 3G/3GS bodies and stainless steel-backed classics and touches, they can all still dent, scuff, and break if they're not covered. We strongly recommend clear protective film or cases for those who care about keeping their iPods or iPhones in resellable condition; waterproof cases are also offered for rain, splash, and dive safety.



Sore Spots

iPod shuffles, classics, and touches all have scratchable steel backs, while some nanos have Click Wheel gaps, and iPhone 3G/3GS have crack-prone plastic bodies and scratch-prone metal bezels. Though glass iPod and iPhone screens are strong, they still do scratch and chip; film is a great and easy way to limit damage.

Choosing Your Case

iLounge receives more cases for evaluation than any other type of accessory, and we've seen everything from \$5 rubber sleeves to multi-hundred-dollar designs. Since there are thousands of cases out there, we can't review them all, but we can point you towards great options and help you evaluate others you might find in stores. Here's what we look for when we rate cases.

Materials

Metal is the strongest material, but rubber is the most accommodating. Pick a look you like, then check the protection and price.



Front

The best cases protect the device's screen, controls, and metal face or bezel while leaving them usable; lazier designs leave the screen or controls exposed, or cover them in an unusable way. Most companies now include film that prevents gouges and chips in glass or plastic screens and controls; others use integrated clear plastic covers that are okay, too.



Bottom

Partially open bottoms are now very common on iPod and iPhone cases; they let you connect to speakers and cables without hassles. The best cases come with optional bottom covers.





Back and Sides

Virtually every iPod case covers the entire back and both sides, save for the occasional tiny wrist strap hole. iPhone and iPod nano cases almost always leave the camera exposed, plus holes for the iPhone's ringer switch. Smart companies have found ways to cover these parts with rubber or clear thin plastic, but they're in the minority; openings are common.



Top

Almost every iPod case makes an attempt to cover at least the top corners, typically more; iPhone cases are often left partly open. We strongly prefer designs that cover the whole top save the headphone port; rubber can be used for the whole case or just to cover a switch or button on top.



Pack-Ins + Value

Most plastic and rubber cases sell for \$20-\$25 without belt clips, video stands, lanyards, or other frills; real leather and thick metal cases can sell for more. Great plastic cases include a lot for \$25; poor ones include little for \$30.

Plastic Cases



Though most of the top iPod and iPhone cases are featured earlier in this Guide, here are a handful of others that have caught our attention in the past year. Agent18's rubber FlowerVest series is available across multiple iPods (1, \$25-\$30), with colorful flowers all across the back and lightly on the front. DLO's SoftShell (2, \$20) uses a relatively recent case innovation - hydrocarbon plastic - to offer a protective, slightly flexible shell with an attractive diamond-like pattern on the back; iPod touch and iPhone versions are available. Similar technology is used to make iSkin's Vibes (3, \$30) cases, which offer colorful and interestingly etched translucent body frames; iPhone 3G/3GS versions are available from iSkin as "Solo" for the same price. Faux carbon fiber and black chrome meet in Griffin's Elan Form Graphite (4, \$35), the most visually striking of a large number of Elan Form cases that permit full accessory compatibility by sliding apart into two pieces. Rubber meets the road in Case-Mate's inexpensive tire-tread-styled Vroom cases (5, \$15), and DLO's Jam Jacket Game (6, \$20) thickens the iPod touch with two rear grips and a strap for easier, comfortable gaming.



Leather Cases



Rarely are cases as eye-catching or customizable as leather designs. Leading the pack in offering user choice is A.B. Sutton, which offers kidskin leather Slip Cases (1, \$88+) for every iPhone and iPod save the shuffle. The designs can be monogrammed in various fonts and patterns, color-selected down to the thread, then had in several styles - full-body sleeves (2, \$58+) are even available. Sena Cases offers a wide variety of designs in its LeatherSkin series, including the side-stitched Sarach (3, \$60), which comes in 5 colors; Sena's WalletBook (4, \$52) is a flip case that holds ID cards and an iPhone at once. Argentina's Vaja has produced numerous color-customizable iPhone and iPod cases, but has faded somewhat from the radar in 2009; its luxurious leather-coated iVolution hardshells (5, \$85+) are beautiful but expensive. Case-Mate offers more affordable versions called Signature Leather Cases (6, \$35). Marware offers the fairly priced C.E.O. Premiere (7, \$40), as well: two cases in one nice set.





Ultimate Ears 700

Noise Isolating Earphones



ultimate ears™

how music is meant to be heard

www.ultimateears.com



Stickers + Film



There's a big difference between stickers and film: stickers decorate your iPod or iPhone with gaps in protection, while clear film protects your iPod or iPhone without regard for decoration. In the sticker department, MusicSkins (1, \$15) adds art or photos - including your own custom submissions - to the body of your device, leaving the screen, top, and bottom exposed. TatSkinz (2, \$15) offers similar stickers with different art and no user customization, while GelaSkins (3, \$15) has lots of art, custom-submitted options, and matching iPhone/iPod touch unlock screen images. Oten's DomeSkin (4, \$15) is different from the others in that its surfaces are puffy rather than flat, but don't wrap around the sides of devices. By comparison, if you're looking for clear film protectors, NLU Products' BodyGuardz (5, \$25) provide nearly complete coverage for any iPhone or iPod, packing two protector sets into each box; Power Support's Crystal Film Set (6, \$15) includes two of the best screen covers we've tested, and FullBodyFilms' Protection Pack (7, \$17) bundles one BodyGuardz with two high-quality screen guards.



Grab Bag Gifts



Still better than any competitor, Griffin's desk-decluttering Simplifi (\$70, 1) stylishly combines card readers (SD, xD, MS, CF) with a two-port USB hub and an iPod/iPhone computer dock; its Navigate (\$60, 2) adds an FM radio and remote to any iPod or iPhone, with an App Store app called iFM for those who want extra control. Those needing composite video-out from an iPod or iPhone can use Dexim's AV Dock Station (\$70, 3), which includes a dock, remote, AV cables, and power supply at a low total price. Touchpensys' Zero II Stylus (\$13, 4) lets users with long fingernails "touch" their iPhone and iPod touch screens with a precise tube, and attach it with adhesive to the device's back. Storage Appliance's Clickfree Transformer (5, \$50) turns an iPod into a super easy backup drive for your computer, while Elgato's Turbo.264 and 264.HD (\$100-\$150, 6) speed a Mac's encoding of H.264-format videos. Streaming Networks' iRecord Pro (\$260, 7) transforms VCR or TV content into iPod format.





Give Life: Batteries



Though our top battery pick is still Just Mobile's Gum Pro (shown in the earlier iPod touch section), many other options let iPods or iPhones run for hours after their internal batteries give out. PhoneSuit's MiLi (1, \$80) adds 1.5x additional life to an iPhone or iPhone 3G, taking the form of a backpack that adds a little thickness and height, in your choice of 8 color combinations. FastMac's iV Universal (2, \$100) works with all iPhone models and iPod touch, adding even more power (2x+) and a camera-assisting bright light; it's bigger than MiLi and similar other backpacks. The new P-Flip from Dexim (3, \$55) has as much juice as MiLi, in the form of a folding stand that can be plugged in to support tabletop upright or side-mounted iPhone use; its BluePack S3 (4, \$70) has extra power and charging add-ons. Both are sold by RichardSolo, as well. Kensington's lower-capacity Travel Battery Pack and Charger (5, \$70) doubles the power of the iPhone 3G/3GS, and works with iPods, too; it has a USB plug built in for easy charging and turns the iPhone into a reclining video viewer. Gum Plus (6, \$80) is a premium-priced version of Just Mobile's \$60 Gum Pro, a sexy aluminum shell with 3.3x the iPhone 3G's battery power.

Gifts to Hunt For



While most items in this Guide are easy to find in local stores, others are a little more obscure at this point and will require a little Google searching and online ordering. DLO's iBoom Jukebox (1, \$200) is a very nice, eye-catching speaker system with a special remote control, capable of displaying your music library in list form on its own screen. Ozaki's i Pill (2, \$13) and SwitchEasy's ThumbTacks (3, \$13) are both tiny microphones that work with 2008-2009 iPods, enabling them to record audio at least as well as the fifth-generation iPod nano and iPhones can with their integrated mics. i Pill's a little better. Joby's Gorillamobile (\$4, \$40) is a novel tripod for iPhone 3G/3GS users that can mount the phone on your choice of angles, and even attach to poles and pipes for interesting perspectives, while Griffin's Clarifi (5, \$35) is specific to the iPhone 3G, giving it a dramatically sharper lens for close-up shots. Luxa2's H1-Touch (6, \$50) and Just Mobile's Xtand (7, \$40) are aluminum stands that hold your iPhone or iPod touch in your choice of positions; the pricier H1-Touch is more versatile and works with more devices.





Luxury Gifts



From high-end to affordable luxury, companies have found many ways to glam up iPods and iPhones. On the "wow" scale is U.K.-based Stuart Hughes' Platinum & Diamond iPhone 3GS (1, £24,495), with 230 grams of platinum coating and 53 VVS1 diamonds atop the rear Apple logo; a version with diamonds on the front bezel and Home button sells for £14,995. DEOS's Earphone Covers (2) range from \$4,500 to \$60,000 per pair depending on the number and type of gems they include, ranging from Swarovski crystals to diamonds. More affordable are Gilty Couture's gold and Swarovski cases for iPod classic (3, \$135-\$175), which use silver or gold plated metal, and are also sold for older iPod and iPhone models. Miniot's iWood series (4, €80-€120) is sold for the iPod classic, touch, and iPhone families, each case made from real, hand-sculpted wood - typically one of several different options. Rebel Scholar's high-end plastic case (5, \$100) was designed by Hong Kong illustrator Jasper Wong, while Coveroo (6, \$50) etches Incase shells with colored artwork, and Etchamac (7) etches iPods themselves for \$30-\$80.



Gifts for Kids

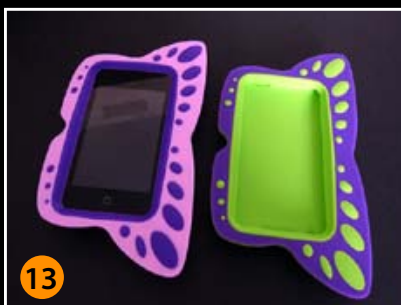


Though the market for kid-friendly iPod add-ons hasn't been tapped fully, it's getting better. One of the best items of 2009 is iHome's iH15 (1, \$60), a steal of a cube-shaped speaker system that changes colors while you watch, shifting through blue, purple, pink, red, orange, and yellow, or staying permanently on any color you prefer. Kids needing a durable, good-sounding portable speaker will find Altec Lansing's Orbit MP3 iM237 (2, \$40) to be a convenient little option, capable of running for 24 hours on three AAA batteries, and bundled with a carrying case and wrist strap. Memorex has created the Mi4019 (3, \$40) as an ultra-budget but nice, small bedroom clock and speaker with an integrated FM radio; kids love its top flap and glossy body. Also from Memorex is the miniMove mi3x (4, \$50), a tiny purse-shaped boombox with a large top handle, a remote, a radio, and decent sound. Our top game picks for kids are earlier in the Guide; parents should note that iPod nanos include Apple's Maze (5), Vortex (6), and Solitaire (7) for free, but iPod touch has many more free games in the App Store.





Speakers made for kids include iPanda and iBoo (8), which evolve Speakal's prior, oddly colored iPigs into different forms. The \$140 iPanda has five speakers inside and sounds very good by kids' speaker standards, including a down-firing subwoofer in its belly and touch-sensitive ear volume controls. iBoo is \$90 and loses some of the sound quality, but has a glowing blue light in its undercarriage and, like iPanda, includes a remote control. Vestalife's Firefly (9, \$130), Mantis (10, \$180) and Ladybug II (\$11, \$100) are cool globe-shaped speakers that unfold their wings to reveal iPod/iPhone Docks. Ozaki's furry iMini Pet (12, \$99) comes in bear, panda, frog, dog, or lion versions, each furry and animated like a Chuck E. Cheese robot with a speaker cube in its lap. The animals vary in good looks, and the speakers are only okay, but they're cute toys. Incipio's cute Lab Butterfly (13) and Fire Engine (14) cases cost \$25 each, and transform the somewhat delicate iPod touch into comparatively resilient forms for girls and boys, adding lots of rubber to each of the touch's sides for both grip and anti-drop purposes.



IPOD CLICK WHEEL GAMES

"Click Wheel iPods" - specifically the old fifth-generation iPod, the iPod classic, and third-, fourth-, and fifth-generation iPod nanos - are capable of playing what Apple calls "iPod Click Wheel Games." Now found under the App Store part of the iTunes Store's black navigation bar, these games almost all sell for \$5. Apple stopped releasing new Click Wheel titles six months ago, pushing fans to iPod touch.


B

Gameloft Real Soccer 2009

Six real stadiums, 290 teams, and 10 leagues are the "real" stars of this European-style football title, which uses one button to handle all passing and kicking action, and the Click Wheel as a joystick.


B

Electronic Arts Tiger Woods

Tiger and four other real golfers star in this recreation of six PGA courses, complete with changing winds, simplified 3-D camera tracking and a timing-sensitive swing meter. Flat players are its big weak point.


B+

Gameloft Wonder Blocks

With backdrops taken from seven man-made wonders of the world, this block-stacking game rewards you for turning pieces properly and getting them to specified heights; it also has a tangram mode.


B

Gameloft Asphalt 4


B+

Apple Inc. Reversi


B

Sandlot Slyder Adventures

WARNING: "IPOD GAMES" ARE IPOD-SPECIFIC.

Unfortunately, there are no guarantees that the games listed here will work on future Click Wheel iPods, and they're guaranteed not to work on iPod touches, iPhones, Apple TVs, or computers. Separate versions of some of these titles have been released for the iPhone/iPod touch platform, and must be purchased separately, often at a higher price. We've rated those titles separately.

IPOD CLICK WHEEL GAME REPORT CARD

Developer	Title	Summary	Rating
Apple	Chinese Checkers	A rare \$1 title, and 1-6 player classic ball-moving board game.	B
Apple	iQuiz (aka iPod Quiz)	Now included with iPod classic; a movie/music trivia game.	A-
Apple	Maze	Built into nano 4G, a ball zips through accelerometer mazes.	B
Apple	Reversi	Also known as Othello, multiple skins share Chinese Checkers' art.	B+
Apple	Texas Hold'em	A poker variant where players bet on limited hands.	B-
Apple	Vortex	Included with iPod classic and nano, break blocks in a well.	B+
D2C Games	Chalkboard S. Baseball	A weird baseball game with ugly art and dull gameplay.	C-
Disney	Pirates of the Caribbean	Overhead view sailing, shooting enemies and doing quests.	B+
Electronic Arts	Mahjong	The classic Chinese tile-matching game, with nice interface.	A-
Electronic Arts	Mini Golf	Cartoony, mediocre miniature golf for kids.	C-
Electronic Arts	Monopoly	A very good rendition of the board game, made simple.	B+
Electronic Arts	Royal Solitaire	Somewhat overdone cartoony version of 10 solitaire games.	B
Electronic Arts	Scrabble	A so-so rendition of the classic word-making board game.	B-
Electronic Arts	Spore Origins	The good first fifth of the recent evolution of life simulation.	B
Electronic Arts	Sudoku (Num-pre)	A very good take on Japan's popular number puzzler.	B+
Electronic Arts	Tetris	Attractively presented block-dropping title with OK controls.	B
Electronic Arts	The Sims Bowling	A decent bowling game with Sims art and customization.	B-
Electronic Arts	The Sims DJ	Try to keep Sims characters dancing to iPod music. What?	B-
Electronic Arts	The Sims Pool	A good pool game with Sims art and audio.	B
Electronic Arts	Tiger Woods PGA Tour	Though not iPhone-level, this is the iPod's best golf title.	B
Electronic Arts	Trivial Pursuit	Sleepy port of the 1980s trivia board game phenomenon.	B-
Electronic Arts	Yahtzee	Another EA board game port, here a dice-rolling yawner.	C
FreshGames	Cubis 2	Match colored blocks by shooting new ones onto a grid.	B
Gameloft S.A.	Asphalt 4	The iPod's best driving game, though not up to iPhone snuff.	B
Gameloft S.A.	Block Breaker Deluxe	A brick, paddle, and ball game with powerups and a story.	B
Gameloft S.A.	Brain Challenge	Clone of Nintendo's Brain Age, with timed mental exercises.	A-
Gameloft S.A.	Bubble Bash!	Clone of Taito's Puzzle Bobble; you match colored balls.	B
Gameloft S.A.	Chess & Backgammon	Two classic board games, with multiple art styles for each.	B
Gameloft S.A.	CSI: Miami	Based on TV show, use forensics to solve a short crime.	C+
Gameloft S.A.	Lost	Based on TV show, wander island on light-action missions.	C+
Gameloft S.A.	Mystery Mansion Pinball	A decent pinball title with above-average graphics, sounds.	B-
Gameloft S.A.	Naval Battle	Battleship clone, but with nice structure, graphics and audio.	B+
Gameloft S.A.	Real Soccer 2009	A good port of Gameloft's soccer title, also made for iPhone.	B
Gameloft S.A.	Uno	Surprisingly fun, exciting version of the classic card game.	A-
Gameloft S.A.	Wonder Blocks	Hugely similar to Ngmoco's Topple for iPhone, but more cheery.	B+
Hudson Soft	Bomberman	Good version of the old console maze game with bombs.	B
Hudson Soft	Lode Runner	The classic computer platform game is reborn with little charm.	C
MTV/Harmonix	Phase	Simple rhythm/tapping game by developers of Rock Band.	B+
Namco	Ms. Pac-Man	Mediocre version of classic dot-munching arcade game.	C-
Namco	Pac-Man	Even worse version of classic dot-munching arcade game.	D+
Namco	Pole Position: Remix	Mediocre remake of classic arcade racing game.	C+
Namco	Star Trigon	Clean translation of simple but challenging arcade puzzler.	B+
Namco	Tamagotchi AroundWld.	The 1990s raise-a-pocket-pet fad, with an adventure twist.	B
PopCap Games	Bejeweled	Match three or more gems of a kind on an 8x8 grid.	B-
PopCap Games	Peggle	Fantastically addictive mix of pachinko and pinball.	A
PopCap Games	Zuma	Match three balls as they spiral closer to your cannon.	B-
Sandlot Games	Slyder Adventures	Click Wheel rotate levels to make a ball pass through mazes. Cute.	B
Sega of America	Sonic the Hedgehog	Near-perfect port of Sega Genesis game, except controls.	B+
Sony BMG	Musika	An "Interactive Visualizer" and a simple tapping/music game.	B
Square Enix	Crystal Defenders	Final Fantasy-inspired, a good iPod tower defense strategy game.	B+
Square Enix	Song Summoner	A strategy role-playing game; make soldiers using music.	B+

2009

Best of the Year Awards



Our Best of the Year awards recognize the products, programs, and people that most improved the way users enjoy their iPods and iPhones. In addition to iLounge's editorial selections, based on hands-on testing of hundreds of new products released over the last 12 months, our Readers' Choice Awards enabled readers to vote for the year's best Apple device, as well as top third-party accessory, application, and game developers. With thousands of votes and iLounge testing hours logged, here are 2009's results. Congratulations to all the winners!

iPod shuffle Case of the Year



Core Cases **Aluminum Jackets**

iPod shuffle cases haven't proved popular in the past, but some cases are surely better than others. Core's Aluminum Jackets stand out not just because they were the first to add colored metal to the third-generation iPod shuffle, but also because the color choices are stronger than Apple's, and at \$20 for three, a better deal, too.

Runners Up

Incipio **Lab**
Loop Dermashot
\$10

Scosche
TapStick
\$30

iPod nano Case of the Year



SwitchEasy **CapsuleThins**

Though it has limited the color options relative to last year's model, SwitchEasy's **CapsuleThins** remain superbly-equipped, great-looking cases at a reasonable price of \$20 a piece. Each case includes a video stand, headphone adapter, two sets of film and Dock protectors, and a Dock Adapter; no other case does as much for so little.


Runners Up

Griffin
iClear Shade
\$25

SwitchEasy
Cubes
\$13


iLounge Members of the Year

rockmyplimsoul
got soap?



Join Date: Jan 2006
Location: In The Garage
Posts: 3,623

As a workaround, you can add smart criteria to these playlists that will fix the issue. Simply add the line "Playlist -- Is -- Music" (where *Music* is the general iTunes Library folder for all your music). Since this folder cannot itself be sync'd to your iPod, you're essentially breaking the Live Updating (on the iPod) feature of smart playlists. But it should get the playlist content and sort order to match iTunes. It's not a permanent solution, and Apple does need to fix this!



Cogito, ergo iPod
(I think, therefore iPod)

lost.fm

CJMNews, Code Monkey, Dan Woods, Galley, RockMyPlimSoul + S2_Mac

Six members of the iLounge community have gone above and beyond in 2009, offering help and unique perspectives to our Discussion Forums and Comments. We - and other readers - thank you.

iPod classic Case of the Year



SwitchEasy **CapsuleClassic**

All but ignored by Apple and developers, the iPod classic has seen very few new case releases in 2009, and even fewer notable ones. CapsuleClassic applies the exact same formula as CapsuleThins, loading up a package with tons of goodies for only a slightly higher \$25 price, and offering either clear or black versions, both great.

Runners Up

Aquarius
iJacket classic
\$16

Belkin
Clear Acrylic Case
\$30

iPod touch Case of the Year



DLO **VideoShell**

Highly protective and reasonably priced, DLO's \$20 VideoShell is one of several DLO cases that all struck us as potential Case of the Year options this year; this one's great in that it has a fold-out stand in back that lets the 2008-2009 touches stand up for widescreen video viewing, Cover Flow navigation, or web browsing. Clean design.

Runners Up

iSkin
Vibes
\$30

Speck
CandyShell
\$35

Apple Product of the Year - Editors' Choice



iPhone OS 3.0

More than any individual new piece of hardware, iPhone OS 3.0 dramatically improved the user experience for iPhone and iPod touch owners.

Apple Product of the Year - Readers' Choice



iPhone 3GS

Was it the 32GB version? The new camera? Or the speedier chips? Maybe all three. Readers picked the \$199/\$299 3GS over iPod touch and OS 3.0.

iPhone 3G/3GS Case of the Year



Speck **CandyShell**

What started out as a good case became truly great in mid-2009 when Speck released smarter, more neutral colors for the \$35 CandyShell, using complementary inner rubber and outer hard shell tones. Hugely protective and packed with screen film, this is a case we use ourselves daily.

Runners Up

DLO
SoftShell
\$20

FastMac **TruePower**
iV Universal
\$100

iPhone Headset of the Year



iVoice **Diamond-X Dual-Mic**

Though no Bluetooth headset we tested this year eclipsed the noise-cancelling of the awesome 2008 Aliph Jawbone, the \$99 Diamond-X impressed us by adding the ability to tell you the names or numbers of incoming callers; 5.5 hours of talk time and four colors are also impressive.

Runners Up

Aliph
Jawbone Prime
\$130

Griffin **SmartTalk**
With Voice Prompts
\$100

iPod Clock Radio of the Year**Memorex Mi4290**

In a year when more expensive clock radios didn't radically evolve over prior models, the affordable \$80 Mi4290's handsome design, solid sound, good FM radio and dual alarms brought a nice package to a great price point. Runners Up: iHome **iP9 Clock Radio** (\$100), iHome **iP88 Clock Radio** (\$150).

iPod + iPhone Speaker of the Year**iHome iP1 Studio Series**

Anyone can add speakers to an iPod dock, but in 2009, iHome raised the bar with iP1, which combines excellent sound with a beautiful, modern design that uses a transparent frame to maximum effect. It's not a bass machine, but it's otherwise a great \$300 system and piece of art.

Runners Up

Altec Lansing
iMT800 MIX
\$300

Boston Acoustics
i-DS3 Plus
\$499

iPhone Speakerphone of the Year**Scosche solChat 2 Speakerphone**

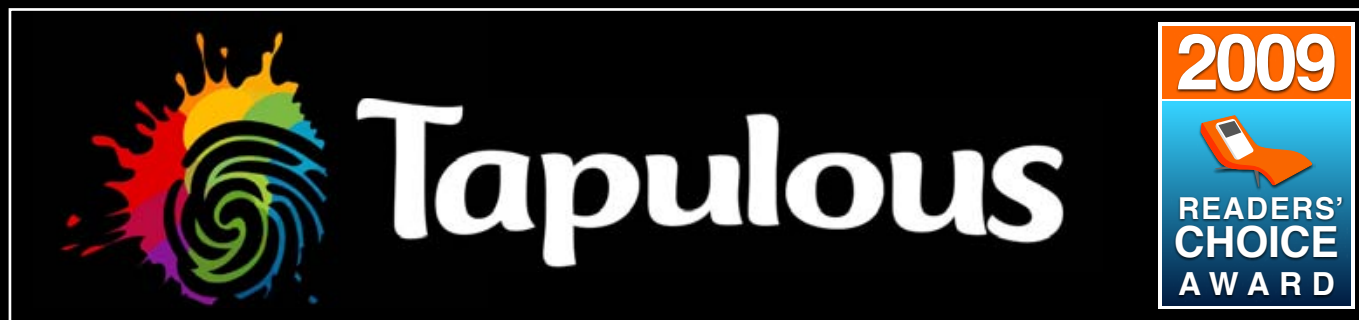
Sound quality, charging options, and sizing are the three ways that vendors have differentiated their iPhone speakerphones, and Scosche hit all the marks this year with the tiny \$100 solChat 2. It recharges from a solar panel or included charger, and sounds great on both sides of calls.

Runners Up

Iqua **Vizor Sun**
Solar Powered
\$100

Kensington **Hands-Free Visor Kit**
\$100

iPod/iPhone Game Developer of the Year - Readers' Choice

**Tapulous**

Over 8,000 readers voted to support the maker of the Tap Tap music games, which range from the mostly free Revenge titles to more recent premium versions with band-themed art and boss stages. Tapulous scored thousands of votes more than its rivals. Runners Up: **Electronic Arts**, **Gameloft**.

Headphone of the Year

**Ultimate Ears Ultimate Ears 700**

Great looks and great sound rarely intersect in the headphone world, but Ultimate Ears 700 manages to hit both with sleek chrome housings that you'd never guess could contain two tiny speakers per ear. With a more dynamic sound balance than former mini-twin-driver leader q-JAYS, only the \$230 price may be a hurdle.

Runners Up

Apple **Earphones With Remote/Mic**
\$29

Westone
Westone 3
\$400

iPod Click Wheel Game of the Year

**Square Enix Crystal Defenders**

With Click Wheel iPods all but abandoned as gaming devices, choices for this category were slim. But the well-illustrated, Final Fantasy Tactics-derived tower defense game Crystal Defenders was a noteworthy high for Click Wheel gaming, initially better optimized for the iPod than for the iPhone and iPod touch; a good value.

Runners Up

Apple
Reversi
\$1

Gameloft
Wonder Blocks
\$5

iPod/iPhone Game Developer of the Year - Editors' Choice


Gameloft

For the second year in a row, we felt that ambitious and growing game developer Gameloft was head and shoulders above its closest competitors, using genre after genre to redefine expectations for what the iPhone, iPod touch, and even Click Wheel iPods could do. Runners Up: **Electronic Arts, Ngmoco.**

iPhone/iPod touch Game of the Year

**Gameloft Modern Combat**

A console quality first-person shooter on the iPhone? Impossible, we thought. But from the 3-D engine to the controls to the voice acting and level designs, Modern Combat: Sandstorm does it all, with great weapon and vehicle scenes, levels that evoke Activision and EA military titles, and a fair \$7 price. Sequel. Soon. Please.

Runners Up

Firemint
Real Racing
\$7

MythPeople
Azkend
\$5

iPhone/iPod touch App of the Year

**Facebook/Joe Hewitt Facebook**

Flashy, no, but ubiquitous due to its value, yes. Facebook's free app is now in its third iteration, offering tools to read, write, and share photo or video content on the world's most important social network. Every iLounge editor uses this app, loves its evolution, and appreciates the price; we can't wait to see what it adds next.

Runners Up

Mobiata
FlightTrack
\$5

Skype
Skype
Free

iPod/iPhone Application Developer of the Year - Editors' and Readers' Choice

facebook

2009

READERS'
CHOICE
AWARD**Facebook / Joe Hewitt**

Facebook and developer Joe Hewitt evolved a relatively simple browser into a compelling on-the-road tool to participate with photos, videos, text, and more in a highly popular social network. Best of all, it's free, unlike numerous competing Twitter clients. Great work. Runners Up: **Bolt Creative** + **Skype**.

Car Accessory of the Year**Griffin PowerJolt Reserve**

Once again, the absence of a breakthrough "big" accessory led us to consider smarter little items with great values, and the \$40 PowerJolt Reserve hit the spot: a 500mAh rechargeable battery pack that can restore around 40% of an iPhone's juice, plus a slick car charger with a USB port for charging anything - you must self-supply a cable.

Runners Up

DLO
AuxDock
\$60

Griffin **RoadTrip
for iPhone**
\$100

Video Accessory of the Year**Elgato Turbo.264 HD**

Big-screened video add-ons for iPods and iPhones dried up in 2009, leaving only TV docks and video transcoders as accessories. The best we've seen is Turbo.264 HD, which for \$150 blazes through Mac conversions of non-iPod/iPhone videos into H.264 format; we saw nearly a 5X boost even when used with a 2008 computer.

Runners Up

Blackmagic **Video
Recorder H.264**
\$149

Streaming Networks
iRecord Pro
\$260

Accessory of the Year**Speck CandyShell Cases**

When we select the best overall accessory of the year, design, functionality, and pricing are all major considerations: we prefer to bestow our highest honor on products that are attractive, reasonably priced, and capable of doing exactly what users expect - maybe a little more. Though cases are a dime a dozen, really excellent ones deserve recognition, and CandyShell combines great looks with great protection, ease of removal, and a fair \$35 asking price. The iPhone 3G and iPod touch versions are both excellent.

Runners Up

iHome
iP1
\$300

Ultimate Ears
Ultimate Ears 700
\$230

Accessory Maker of the Year - Editors' + Readers' Choice

iHome

**iHome**

Given how quiet the accessory market was in 2009, choosing an Accessory Maker of the Year was a major challenge, but we agreed with our readers that iHome deserved the nod. While its iP1 and iH15 systems both wowed us on looks - true standouts - its highly competent, affordable clock radios remain the basis of its popularity.

Runners Up

Belkin
Griffin Technology
Logitech/Ultimate Ears

Where to Buy: New

Apple's retail stores almost always have the highest prices for iPods, iPhones, and accessories.

Shop around and you can save nearly \$20 on an iPod purchase - more, including tax and shipping - with huge savings on add-ons. We've done the hard footwork for you, checking late October 2009 prices at eight retailers; note that serious iPhone discounts are not offered.

iPod/Add-On	Apple	Amazon	B&H Photo	Best Buy	Fry's	J&R Music	Target	Walmart
shuffle 2GB	\$59	\$55	\$57	\$60	\$55	\$55	\$55	\$55
shuffle 4GB	\$79	\$75	\$77	\$80	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$75
nano 8GB	\$149	\$140	\$140	\$140	\$138	\$140	\$140	\$140
nano 16GB	\$179	\$170	\$170	\$170	\$173	\$170	\$170	\$170
classic 160GB	\$249	\$235	\$235	\$250	\$250	\$235	\$235	\$235
touch 8GB	\$199	\$189	\$189	\$190	\$180	\$189	\$189	\$189
touch 32GB	\$299	\$280	\$280	\$280	\$280	\$280	\$280	\$280
touch 64GB	\$399	\$380	\$385	\$380	\$380	\$394	\$380	\$380
Altec iMT800	\$300	\$229	\$300	N/A	N/A	\$300	N/A	N/A
Etymotic hf5	N/A	\$115	\$115	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
iHome iP9	\$100	\$80	\$78	\$100	N/A	\$85	\$95	N/A
JBL On Stage 400P	\$230	\$220	\$212	\$200	N/A	\$250	N/A	N/A
Free Shipping Storefronts	\$50+ Int'l	\$30+ No	Yes NYC	Some US/UK	No US	No NYC	No US	No Int'l

Apple Store

Has exclusives on engraved + certain colored iPods, sells iPhones, but offers no discounts, and restock fee is high.

Amazon.com

Often has best deal on add-ons, many iPods. Free shipping, often no sales tax. Prices change with some frequency.

B&H Photo Video

Reputable NY-based electronics dealer for decades, has good iPod prices, aggressive add-ons + hard-to-find items.

Best Buy

Some exclusive add-ons, but rarely good prices except on sale. Sells iPhones. Beware of return hassles and hijinks.

Fry's

Recently aggressive on iPod pricing again. Return hassles, poor service at store, but online is OK. Weak add-ons.

J&R Music World

Another NYC-based retailer; aggressive iPod pricing for locals but weak add-on prices and no free shipping.

Target

Some iPod deals and tends to stock quality budget/low-end add-ons quite well. Returns are easy if you're local.

Walmart

Aggressive prices on certain iPod models, but shipping is extra. Sells junk accessories. Also sells iPhone 3GS.

Exclusives

Certain iPod colors are only available directly from the Apple Store, and the number has actually expanded in 2009. In the past, the charitable Product (RED) iPod nano and shuffle models were Apple Store exclusives; this year, both the red fifth-generation iPod nano and the non-charitable yellow iPod nano are not stocked elsewhere. Each is available in 8GB and 16GB capacities from Apple's online and mall locations. Additionally, the Special Edition \$99 stainless steel 4GB iPod shuffle is sold only at Apple Stores; all of the less expensive \$59 and \$79 colors are sold everywhere. As has been the case over the last several years, certain third-party accessories are now being stocked only by Apple as time-limited exclusives - sometimes for six months - but these items typically sell at a steep premium relative to their value.



AppleCare & Gift Cards

Easy to buy and unquestionably useful, **AppleCare** (\$39-69) extends your iPod or iPhone's warranty for two years, useful given high failure rates of some recent models. And **iTunes Gift Cards** (\$15 and up) or **Amazon Gift Certificates** let you give the gift of music or video choice.



iLounge's iPod Buying Advice

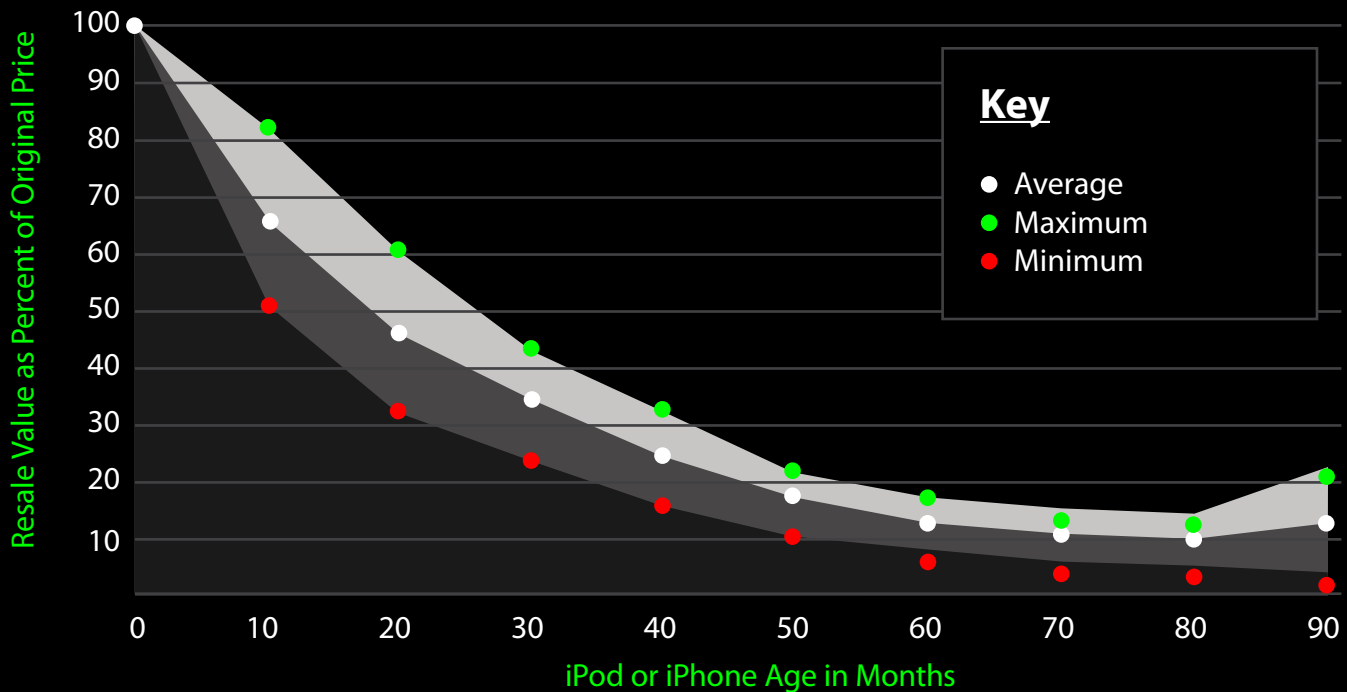
Shop online, except when iPods are newly released. These days, you'll almost always get a better deal from an online merchant than from a physical store - Apple included. But when new iPods come out, Apple's the first place to look.

Save by waiting. Early in an iPod's life, \$5-10 off is great, but months later, you may save \$30.

Consider refurbished units. Unfortunately, defective iPods and iPhones are fairly common, but someone else's bad device has (probably) been fixed and is waiting to be resold to you through the Apple Store's Special Deals section at a big discount. AT&T also offers iPhone refurb, often at \$50-\$100 below new prices.

How to Buy/Sell: Used

On historic average, iPods lose half of their initial value after 18 months, but units sold on eBay with their original boxes, manuals, and pack-ins in great condition fare better than ones in rough shape with fewer frills. We've spent years tracking prices for working order iPods and iPhones; here's the pricing curve that you can use to estimate your device's price from the date of release.



Brand New	6 Months	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	6 Years	7 Years
100%	70%	60%	40%	27%	19%	15%	10%	9%
\$299	\$209	\$179	\$120	\$81	\$57	\$45	\$30	\$27
\$199	\$139	\$119	\$80	\$54	\$38	\$30	\$20	\$18
\$99	\$69	\$59	\$40	\$27	\$19	\$15	\$10	\$9

The Chart Roughly Reflects an iPod's or iPhone's Value Over Time

Selling prices are much higher for boxed, perfect condition iPods than ones that are scratched, engraved, or non-functional; prices for unlocked iPhones are higher than for locked ones. As a general rule, iPod models that haven't been replaced with identically useful versions - such as the second-generation iPod shuffle, replaced by the buttonless third-generation model - tend to hold their value better, and rarer models, such as the first iPods and iPod minis, held value better than more common sequels. Specific prices for individual models are on the following pages.

Every Discontinued iPod + iPhone, Detailed with eBay Prices

On the pages that follow, you'll see every discontinued iPod and iPhone model, along with its capacities, stated battery life, features and original price. Since several factors can influence the used value, we've listed each one's new features, pack-ins, and major issues/problems, along with late October 2009's average eBay selling price for each specific model number. Different models can denote small or large changes, so check your model - it's on the box back or bottom.

iPhone (1G)



6-2007

4/8/16 GB - 7-24 Hr Battery
Phone - Music - Video - Internet
\$399-\$599 US

Breakthroughs: Apple's first mobile phone, combining a multi-touch widescreen iPod, quad-band GSM phone, and EDGE/Wi-Fi Internet device in a metal and glass enclosure.

Pack-Ins: Stereo headset with microphone, iPhone Dock, USB Power Adapter, USB Cable, cleaning cloth.

Issues: Initially limited storage capacity at high prices, slow EDGE data speeds, and reliability problems. Phones are sold locked, and without support for third-party applications.

eBay Values:

4GB (MA501LL/A)	\$161.10
8GB (MA712LL/A)	\$177.64
16GB (MB384LL/A)	\$251.25

Our Advice: Buying Used

Once every two or so years, Apple replaces a popular model with something new that's not as good in some way. The result is that older models are still worth considering. This year, Apple removed control buttons from the third-generation iPod shuffle, making earlier models valuable, while 2008's iPods discontinued support for popular charging accessories. Similarly, other early iPods often offer greater compatibility with older, less expensive video and recording accessories. Before making a purchase, we'd advise used iPod buyers to factor in the cost of a replacement battery (see iLounge's **Free iPod + iPhone Book**), the warranty, and the cool factor of having something new. You decide whether new or used is best for you.

Our Advice: Selling Used

Nine iLounge tips to max out your sale.

- **June = New iPhones, September = New iPods.** After a refresh, old models lose \$\$\$.
- **Include the model number in the title.**
- **Indicate quality in the listing.** If you say "as-is," expect to get less.
- **Use Apple's official photo on the search page.** For some reason, this helps prices.
- **Keep your box and pack-ins.** People pay more when you sell everything together.
- **Don't bundle other add-ons.** They won't help your price and can be sold separately.
- **Include photos of all the included items.** People want to know what they're getting.
- **Do not include "Windows/Mac" in title.**
- **Charge reasonable shipping.** You'll get much less if you overcharge.



iPod (1G)

10-2001

5/10GB - 10 Hr Battery
Music - Data
\$399-\$499 US

Breakthroughs: Apple's original cigarette pack-sized 5GB music player uses intuitive five buttons and moving wheel controls plus an easy-to-read white backlit screen, features iconic clear/white plastic and polished steel case design. Works as FireWire hard disk with Mac computers.

Pack-Ins: FireWire-to-FireWire cable, original FireWire wall charger, original iPod earphones.

Issues: High price, Mac only, limited battery life. Retrospectively fewer add-ons than newer iPod models.

eBay Values:

5GB (M8513LL/A, M8541LL/A, M8697LL/A)	\$89.88
10GB (M8709LL/A)	\$71.62



iPod (2G)

7-2002

10/20GB - 10 Hr Battery
Music - Data
\$399-\$499 US

Breakthroughs: Moving scroll wheel replaced with touch-sensitive surface. Separate PC versions introduced, enabling PC users with FireWire ports to transfer music with MusicMatch software, use as a hard disk. Peak capacity upped to 20GB with old 5GB falling to \$299.

Pack-Ins: FireWire cable, wall charger, original iPod earphones, carrying case, remote control.

Issues: High price, FireWire standard isn't PC-friendly, limited battery life.

eBay Values:

10GB (M8737LL/A, M8740LL/A)	\$34.46
20GB (M8738LL/A, M8741LL/A)	\$38.08



iPod (3G)

4-2003

10/15/20/30/40GB - 8 Hr Battery
Music - Photos* - Games* - Data
\$299-\$499 US

Breakthroughs: Touch-sensitive buttons, thinner casings, USB support, top + bottom accessory ports, photo transfer and audio recording add-ons, big drives, games.

Pack-Ins: FireWire cable & adapter, wall charger, and 2003 iPod earphones. Some include dock, case, and remote.

Issues: Weaker batteries, screen backlight variations.

eBay Values: 10GB (M8976LL/A)	\$26.72
15GB (with Dock, M8946LL/A)	\$30.38
15GB (w/o Dock, M9460LL/A)	\$31.67
20GB (M9244LL/A)	\$45.56
30GB (M8948LL/A)	\$55.00
40GB (M9245LL/A)	\$57.50

iPod mini

(1G)



2-2004

4GB - 8 Hr Battery
Music - Games* - Data
\$249 US

Breakthroughs: Microdrive storage creates smallest iPods ever, now with 5 body colors and tiny Click Wheel controller, integrating all buttons into one surface.

Pack-Ins: 2003 iPod earphones, belt clip, USB and FireWire cables, wall charger.

Issues: Low capacity per dollar, limited battery life, not designed for use with photo sync or recorder add-ons.

eBay Values: 4GB, silver (M9160LL/A) \$35.57
4GB, blue (M9436LL/A) \$38.97
4GB, pink (M9435LL/A) \$38.34
4GB, green (M9434LL/A) \$32.11
4GB, gold (M9437LL/A) \$36.20

iPod

(4G/U2)



7/10-2004

20/40GB - 12 Hr Battery
Music - Photos* - Games* - Data
\$299-\$399 US

Breakthroughs: Replaces separate touch-sensitive buttons and wheel of third-generation iPod with iPod mini's Click Wheel controls, improves battery life, adds USB cable. Black and red U2 iPod offered for the first time as an alternative to the classic white full-sized iPod.

Pack-Ins: 2003 iPod earphones, USB and FireWire cables, wall charger. Dock included with high-end model.

Issues: Slight cheapening of prior iPods' looks.

eBay Values:
20GB (M9282LL/A) \$46.75
U2 (M9787LL/A) \$47.29
40GB (M9268LL/A) \$65.50

iPod photo

(aka iPod 4G with color)



10-2004

20/30/40/60GB - 15 Hr Battery
Music - Photo - Games* - Data
\$499-\$599 US

Breakthroughs: Takes iPod 4G, improves battery, adds color screen for photo display. Higher peak storage capacity.

Pack-Ins: 2003 iPod earphones, USB cable, wall charger. Dock, AV cable, FireWire cable included with certain models.

Issues: Photo sync is slow, display requires add-ons.

eBay Values: 20GB (Color, MA079LL/A) \$50.63
20GB U2 (Color, MA127LL/A) \$74.45
60GB (Color, M9830LL/A) \$74.00
30GB (Photo, M9829LL/A) \$55.75
40GB (Photo, M9585LL/A) \$63.17
60GB (Photo/10-04, M9586LL/A) \$67.71
60GB (Photo/2-05, M9830LL/A) \$65.11

iPod shuffle

(1G)



1-2005

512MB /1GB - 12 Hr Battery
Music - Data
\$99-\$149 US

Breakthroughs: A complete digital music player in the space of a pack of chewing gum, with simple USB plug. Designed to be worn, features ultra-simplified controls with a large play button surrounded by track skip and volume buttons. "Shuffle" mode plays music out of order.

Pack-Ins: 2003 iPod earphones, lanyard necklace.

Issues: Screenless interface falls below competitors' lowest-end offerings, highly limited storage capacity, no iPod accessory compatibility.

eBay Values:

512MB (M9724LL/A)	\$13.85
1GB (M9725LL/A)	\$24.86

iPod mini

(2G)



2-2005

4/6 GB - 18 Hr Battery
Music - Games* - Data
\$199-\$249 US

Breakthroughs: Radically improved battery performance and lower price than prior mini; brighter body colors.

Pack-Ins: USB cable, belt clip, 2003 iPod earphones.

Issues: No longer includes wall charger, value still so-so.

eBay Values:

4GB Silver (M9800LL/A)	\$43.33
4GB Blue (M9802LL/A)	\$38.39
4GB Pink (M9804LL/A)	\$39.81
4GB Green (M9806LL/A)	\$41.50
6GB Silver (M9801LL/A)	\$44.22
6GB Blue (M9803LL/A)	\$40.84
6GB Pink (M9805LL/A)	\$43.24
6GB Green (M9807LL/A)	\$42.00

iPod nano

(1G)



9-2005

1/2/4 GB - 14 Hr Battery
Music - Photos* - Games* - Data
\$149-\$249 US

Breakthroughs: Thinnest iPod ever, now with mini-besting color screen and photo display feature.

Pack-Ins: USB cable, 2003 iPod earphones, dock adapter, simple carrying case (added late 2005).

Issues: Lower battery life and storage capacity than same-priced minis, highly scratchable body, no top add-on port.

eBay Values:

1GB Black (MA352LL/A)	\$28.17
1GB White (MA350LL/A)	\$29.69
2GB Black (MA099LL/A)	\$30.15
2GB White (MA004LL/A)	\$32.60
4GB Black (MA107LL/A)	\$48.12
4GB White (MA005LL/A)	\$44.38

iPod (5G)



10-2005

30/60 GB - 14-20 Hr Battery
Music - Photos - Games - Data
\$299-\$399 US

Breakthroughs: Screen size boosted to 2.5", video and downloadable game playback added. Interface modestly improved.

Pack-Ins: iPod earphones, USB cable, simple case.

Issues: Short video play time, limited formats. Abandons top-mounted accessories, obsoleting many top add-ons.

eBay Values:

30GB White (MA002LL/A)	\$71.75
30GB Black (MA146LL/A)	\$66.99
U2 (MA452LL/A)	\$92.50
60GB White (MA003LL/A)	\$84.83
60GB Black (MA147LL/A)	\$93.70

iPod nano (2G)



9-2006

2/4/8 GB - 24 Hr Battery
Music - Photos - Games* - Data
\$149-\$249 US

Breakthroughs: Thinner and less scratchable nano in 6 colors. Much-improved battery, new voice recording feature.

Pack-Ins: USB cable, 2006 iPod earphones.

Issues: Color limited by price, old nano add-on problems.

eBay Values: 2GB Silver (MA477LL/A)	\$37.16
4GB Silver (MA426LL/A)	\$52.39
4GB Blue (MA428LL/A)	\$56.94
4GB Pink (MA489LL/A)	\$59.49
4GB Green (MA487LL/A)	\$61.64
4GB Red (MA725LL/A)	\$60.57
8GB Black (MA497LL/A)	\$70.50
8GB Red (MA899LL/A)	\$70.66

iPod (5.5G)



9-2006

30/80 GB - 14-20 Hr Battery
Music - Photos - Games - Data
\$249-\$349 US

Breakthroughs: Brighter screen, better video battery life, search feature, superior prices for capacities, highest capacity yet in the iPod family.

Pack-Ins: 2006 iPod earphones, USB cable, simple case.

Issues: Limited video formats, screen size still small by comparison with other portable video devices.

eBay Values:

E30GB White (MA444LL/A)	\$80.50
E30GB Black (MA446LL/A)	\$85.00
E30GB U2 (MA664LL/A)	\$106.79
E80GB White (MA448LL/A)	\$102.30
E80GB Black (MA450LL/A)	\$110.06

iPod shuffle

(2G-2006 Colors)

(2G-2007 Colors)

(2G-2008 Colors)



11-2006

1/2 GB - 12 Hr Battery

Music - Data

\$79 US (1GB), Later \$49 - \$69

Breakthroughs: Apple's smallest, most wearable iPod to date, available in multiple colors (five per season), each with a rear belt clip. Metal replaces prior model's plastic.

Pack-Ins: 2003 or 2007 iPod earphones, USB dock.

Issues: Most sound distortion in family; least accessory support. Can't charge and play audio at the same time.

eBay Values: 1GB Silver 11/06 (MA564LL/A)	\$30.66
1GB Blue 11/06 (MA949LL/A)	\$32.39
1GB Green 11/06 (MA951LL/A)	\$28.16
1GB Orange 11/06 (MA953LL/A)	\$29.88
1GB Pink 11/06 (MA947LL/A)	\$27.27
1GB Silver 9/07 (MB225LL/A)	\$30.66
1GB Blue 9/07 (MB227LL/A)	\$33.58
1GB Green 9/07 (MB229LL/A)	\$30.77
1GB Purple 9/07 (MB233LL/A)	\$32.81
1GB Red 9/07 (MB231LL/A)	\$36.76
2GB Silver 3/08 (MB518LL/A)	\$33.00
2GB Blue 3/08 (MB520LL/A)	\$39.44
2GB Green 3/08 (MB522LL/A)	\$35.45
2GB Purple 3/08 (MB526LL/A)	\$37.63
2GB Red 3/08 (MB524LL/A)	\$42.50
1GB Silver 9/08 (MB225LL/A)	\$30.66
1GB Blue 9/08 (MB815LL/A)	\$33.71
1GB Green 9/08 (MB813LL/A)	\$33.77
1GB Pink 9/08 (MB811LL/A)	\$30.67
1GB Red 9/08 (MB817LL/A)	\$37.23
2GB Silver 9/08 (MB518LL/A)	\$33.00
2GB Blue 9/08 (MB683LL/A)	\$37.97
2GB Green 9/08 (MB685LL/A)	\$36.23
2GB Pink 9/08 (MB681LL/A)	\$36.57
2GB Red 9/08 (MB779LL/A)	\$43.34

Apple TV

(40GB/160GB)



2-2007

40/160 GB

Music - Video - Photos

\$299-\$399 US, Later \$229-\$329

Breakthroughs: First standalone high-definition (720p) iTunes video player; first iTunes family device capable of streaming video from a computer, first with true on-screen menuing interface for browsing media content.

Pack-Ins: Apple Remote, power cable.

Issues: Only useful with HDTVs, limited features, buggy software, user interface became clunky in mid-cycle.

eBay Values: 40GB (MA711LL/A)	\$134.50
160GB (MB189LL/A)	\$169.88

iPod classic

(80GB/120GB/160GB)



9-2007

80/160 GB - 30-40 Hr Battery
Music - Video - Games - Data
\$249-\$349 US
9-2008 120GB Model \$249 US

Breakthroughs: First hard disk iPod with metal face, new interface, dramatically better audio, battery life and storage capacity for the prices. New interface with Cover Flow.

Pack-Ins: iPod earphones, USB cable.

Issues: Screen comparatively outdated. Lost compatibility with all prior video accessories.

eBay Values:

80GB Silver (MB029LL/A)	\$113.93
80GB Black (MB147LL/A)	\$112.42
160GB Silver (MB145LL/A)	\$183.90
160GB Black (MB150LL/A)	\$185.25
120GB Silver (MB562LL/A)	\$151.52
120GB Black (MB565LL/A)	\$150.60

iPod nano

(3G)



9-2007

4/8 GB - 24 Hr Battery
Music - Video - Games - Data
\$149-\$199 US

Breakthroughs: First nano with video and true game abilities, using same resolution screen and UI as classic.

Pack-Ins: USB cable, iPod earphones.

Issues: Color limited by price, body shape a little odd.

eBay Values:

4GB Silver (MA978LL/A)	\$57.56
8GB Silver (MA980LL/A)	\$72.00
8GB Blue (MB249LL/A)	\$64.05
8GB Green (MB253LL/A)	\$69.71
8GB Black (MB261LL/A)	\$68.62
8GB Red (MB257LL/A)	\$83.70
8GB Pink (MB453LL/A)	\$72.50

iPod touch

(1G)



9-2007

8/16/32GB - 22 Hr Battery
Music - Video - Games - Internet
\$299-\$499 US

Breakthroughs: First iPod with Wi-Fi, multi-touch, Internet access, and iPhone OS, gaining ability to download music and games, read e-mail, browse web.

Pack-Ins: iPod earphones, USB cable, stand, cloth.

Issues: Screen quality issues. Higher price, much lower storage capacity, lower battery life, and lower audio quality than iPod classic. Paid \$10-\$20 software updates required to add new system software.

eBay Values:

8GB (MA623LL/A)	\$110.50
16GB (MA627LL/A)	\$135.50
32GB (MB376LL/A)	\$187.25

iPhone 3G



6-2008

8/16GB - 24 Hr Battery
Phone - Music - Video - Internet
\$199-\$299 US, Later \$99 US (8GB)
With 16GB Model Discontinued

Breakthroughs: Faster second-generation update to original iPhone, adding support for third-party apps, dramatically expanding international distribution and compatibility with 3G cellular networks.

Pack-Ins: Stereo Headset with microphone, USB Power Adapter, USB Cable, cleaning cloth, SIM removal tool.

Issues: Cheaper-looking and -feeling plastic casing than prior iPhone, weak battery life for 3G calling and data services. Primarily sold locked to specific carriers for \$199/\$299 prices; unlocked retail prices are considerably higher, reflecting a carrier subsidy of roughly \$400.

eBay Values:

8GB Black (MB702LL/A)	\$275.67
8GB Black, Unlocked (MB702LL/A)	\$307.43
16GB Black (MB704LL/A)	\$390.40
16GB Black, Unlocked (MB704LL/A)	\$408.86
16GB White (MB705LL/A)	\$365.00
16GB White, Unlocked (MB705LL/A)	\$393.36

iPod nano (4G)



9-2008

8/16 GB - 24 Hr Battery
Music - Video - Games - Data
\$149-\$199 US

Note: A limited number of 4GB fourth-generation iPod nanos were manufactured before the product's launch date, when Apple decided at the last minute to sell 8GB and 16GB models instead. These 4GB units were quietly sold off by the company in various non-U.S. territories for roughly \$129 each, and are not included here.

Breakthroughs: Nine colors available for each capacity; first nano to include accelerometer.

Pack-Ins: USB cable, iPod earphones.

Issues: Dull knife body shape, incompatible with FireWire.

eBay Values:

8GB Silver (MB598LL/A)	\$83.33
8GB Black (MB754LL/A)	\$85.74
8GB Blue (MB732LL/A)	\$82.50
8GB Purple (MB739LL/A)	\$87.50
8GB Pink (MB735LL/A)	\$86.05
8GB Red (MB751LL/A)	\$84.81
8GB Orange (MB742LL/A)	\$76.18
8GB Yellow (MB748LL/A)	\$76.78
8GB Green (MA745LL/A)	\$80.72
16GB Silver (MB903LL/A)	\$110.86
16GB Black (MB918LL/A)	\$119.04
16GB Blue (MB905LL/A)	\$107.40
16GB Purple (MB909LL/A)	\$111.50
16GB Pink (MB907LL/A)	\$115.10
16GB Red (MB917LL/A)	\$123.00
16GB Orange (MB911LL/A)	\$117.63
16GB Yellow (MB915LL/A)	\$103.53
16GB Green (MA913LL/A)	\$109.13

iPod touch

(2G)



9-2008

8/16/32GB - 30 Hr Battery
Music - Video - Games - Internet
\$229-\$499 US, Later \$199 (8GB)
With 16/32GB Discontinued

Breakthroughs: First iPod with integrated speaker, Nike + iPod wireless built-in, free support for third-party apps, new headphone port with microphone support.

Pack-Ins: iPod earphones, USB cable, cleaning cloth.

Issues: Still relatively low storage capacity for prices, battery life doesn't yet rival iPod classic. Incompatible with FireWire charging accessories. Requires paid software updates from Apple, ranging from \$5-\$10. Almost indistinguishable from late 2009 32/64GB models.

eBay Values:

8GB (MB528LL/A)	\$122.41
16GB (MB531LL/A)	\$172.18
32GB (MB533LL/A)	\$222.34

Follow iLounge With

[RSS](#)
[Twitter](#)
[Facebook](#)

Click any button above to launch the website.

Know Your Colors

There may be only 11 official colors in today's iPod and iPhone lineup, but there are substantial variations, even in the same year, between what Apple calls "silver," "black," "pink," "red," or "blue," just to name a few. Our color comparison guide shows you all of the major iPod and iPhone models released since 2001, with notes on what makes each unique.



Silver: Apple's New White

First debuted in the iPod family with iPod mini (1), silver was always accompanied in iPods by white controls - continuing with the second-generation iPod nano (2) and the second-gen iPod shuffle (3). The original iPhone (4) blended silver and black on its rear casing, but the white color scheme was preserved for the third-gen iPod nano (5), and introduced to full-sized iPods with the iPod classic in 2007 (6). In 2008, Apple's fourth-gen iPod nano (7) was the first iPod to replace all white elements with black, which continued with the glossy silver fifth-gen model (8). The 2009 third-gen shuffle comes in a matte aluminum version (9), as well as chrome stainless steel (10).

1 2 3 9 10
4 5 6 7 8



White: Once Apple's Favorite, Now Not

From 2001 through early 2004, the only iPod color was white. The identical-looking first- and second-generation iPods (1) introduced the ultra pure white color under a thick clear plastic layer, which was slimmed for the third-generation iPod (2); this model featured touch-sensitive red glowing buttons. Gray was added as a Click Wheel color for the fourth-generation iPod (3), contrasting the silver and white iPod mini above; the same color scheme stuck for the first-generation iPod shuffle (4) and first-generation iPod nano (5). The final white iPod, 2005's fifth-generation (6), served as inspiration for the glossy white iPhone 3G (7) in mid-2008, and identical 3GS in 2009.

1 2 3
4 5 6 7

Blue + Purple: Boyish Tones

Blue was a popular iPod mini color (1). Far stronger were the second-gen nano (2) and shuffle (3), while the third-gen nano (4) and color-matched shuffle (5) were muted.

A light purple shuffle (6) debuted, then Apple released a rich purple (8) nano, with a medium blue (7) nano and matching shuffle; the third-gen blue shuffle (9) was mini-like, and fifth-gen blue (10) and purple (11) nanos were darker.

1	2	4	7	8	
3	5	6	9	10	11



Green: Perennially Popular

Apple's first iPod mini came in a fine green, which the second-gen mini (1) made a bit more vivid. The second-gen nano (2) and matching shuffle (3) were a hint more yellow in tone, while the third-gen nano (4) and shuffle (5) were blue-tinted. Apple's fourth-gen iPod nano (6) increased the color intensity of the second-gen version; its third-gen shuffle (7) was similar, and fifth-gen nano (8) a pine color.

1	2	3	5
4	6	8	7



Pink: Always a Draw For Girls

Pink first appeared in the iPod mini, becoming more intense in the second-gen mini (1). Some units turned out even darker due to manufacturing issues. Hot pink second-gen iPod nanos (2) and shuffles (3) seized on this saturation, but the third-gen nano (4) went lighter - closer to the mini. The 4G nano (5) was the strongest hot pink, while the third-gen shuffle (6) went rosy, and the 5G nano (7) to dark pink.

4	6	3	
1	2	5	7





Red: Apple's Charitable iPods

Apple's (PRODUCT) Red iPods started with the surprising launch of the second-gen red iPod nano (1) in 2006. The rich color was nearly as strong as possible, changing dramatically for the cranberry third-generation nano (2) and second-generation shuffle (3) in 2007. The original tone re-appeared in the 4G nano (4) and 2008 shuffle (5), disappearing from the shuffle family in late 2009, but continuing in the somewhat darker fifth-generation nano (6).

1 2 4 6
3 5



Gold, Yellow + Orange: Wildcards

Supposedly the least popular iPod color ever, Apple's gold iPod mini (1) was the only color to be discontinued after its first generation; only aftermarket gold-coated iPods have come close to its muted, lifeless tone. In 2007, Apple released an orange iPod shuffle (2), then used that color for a fourth-gen iPod nano (3) in 2008, darkening it slightly for the 5G model (5) in 2009. It also released a bright yellow 4G nano (4), preserved for the 5G model (6).

1 4 6
2 3 5



Black: The Future of iPods?

Black started with the glossy black/red U2 iPod (1), then was offered for the iPod nano (2) and 5G iPod (3). The second nano (4) and first iPod classic (5) used jet black metal, while the 3G nano (6) shifted to charcoal gray "black," also the bezel of iPod touch (7). iPhone 3G + 3GS (8) went glossy jet black, while 2008/9 iPod classics are charcoal (9), matching the 4G nano (10), 3G shuffle (12), and glossy 5G nano (13). iPod touch (11) is now black and chrome.

3 1 5 9 7 11
2 4 6 10 13 12 8

Polished Steel: The Other Half

Starting with the original iPod (1), every full-sized iPod - including today's classic (2) - has featured a polished stainless steel back, attracting hairline scratches within seconds of exiting its box. The same shell has been used on first- and third-generation iPod nanos, too. Only the fifth-generation U2 iPod (3) altered the bright silver metal to a better and more resilient mirrored black.

1 2 3



Chrome: A Classy Accent

Designed to justify \$500-\$600 prices, the original iPhone (1) didn't just have the silver body of an expensive Mac computer; it added a chrome Apple icon, ring around the camera, and front bezel to really play up its value. Even though the iPhone 3G (2) lost the silver body, it kept the other chrome parts as touches of class. Then the second-gen iPod touch (3) received a chrome bezel, too.

3
1 2

Plastics: White, Gray, or Black

The plastics in Apple's otherwise metal iPods always follow one rule - thus far - they're only white, gray, or black. iPod minis (1) mixed white and gray on their tops and bottoms, but the colored (2) and silver (3) second-gen nanos went pure white, while the black second-gen (4) was pure black. Fourth-gen nanos (5) were all white except the silver (6) and black (7), which used jet black plastic instead.

1 5 2 6 3 7 4



The Color Chart

Divided by model and roughly by year, the complete color history of the iPod and iPhone families is shown below. While the evolution of the full-sized iPod - now iPod classic - is as plain as can be, the iPod mini, nano, and shuffle have exploded with colors, starting with light tones and eventually reaching 2008's heightened levels of saturation. We replicate them all here.

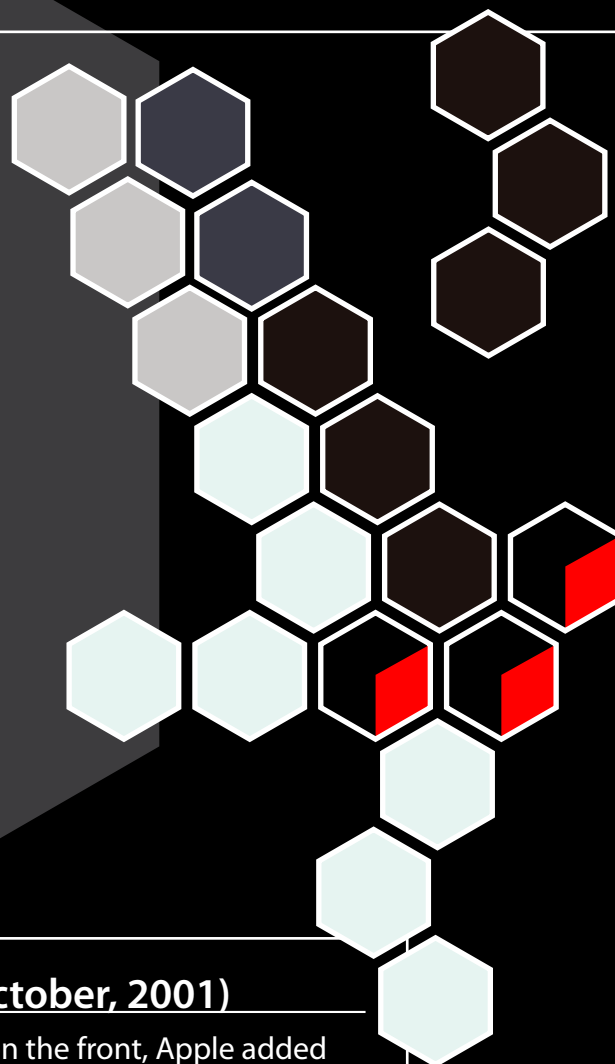


iPod shuffle (January, 2005)

All white at first, the second-gen shuffle was re-released in more colors than any other same-bodied iPod model. The third-gen shuffle is the first to include an all chrome stainless version.

iPod touch (September, 2007)

Black on front, chrome in back, touch lost its early charcoal bezel for a chrome one.



iPod + iPod classic (October, 2001)

Originally pure white plastic on the front, Apple added black and red U2 versions, then an all-black version. When the iPod was renamed iPod classic, the company dropped white plastic in favor of silver metal, and shifted the black iPod to black metal, then to a dark charcoal gray. Every version's back is polished metal.

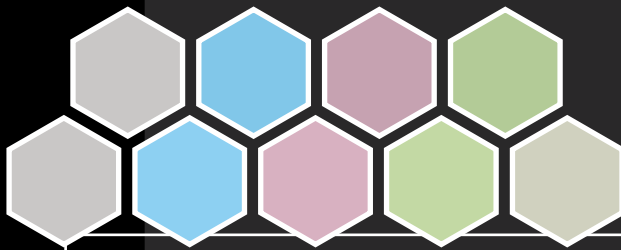
iPod nano (September, 2005)

Generally Apple's most colorful model in any given year, iPod nano started in plain white and black versions as an ode to full-sized iPods, then expanded to six-color lineups before hitting the current nine-color spectrum. Though Apple has shifted back and forth from chrome backs to fully anodized aluminum bodies, it has always picked colors more intense than the older iPod mini's, even when it experimented with more muted tones in 2007 and early 2008. The late 2008 color lineup was intense, and inspired some darker polished aluminum versions in late 2009, which look different from all other iPods.



iPod mini (February, 2004)

Apple's first experiment with an all-aluminum, colored iPod was a massive success, with only one color - a weak gold - proving unpopular. The iPod mini was discontinued in favor of the nano in late 2005, inspiring its later color options.



iPhone (June, 2007)

The height of Apple design at its introduction, iPhone was color-neutral from the front, chrome-rimmed but substantially black to avoid drawing the eye from the screen. Its silver metal and matte black plastic body went to glossy white or black plastic in 2008 with the introduction of iPhone 3G, preserving the face and chrome bezel, while switching plastic buttons to chrome to restore lost class. iPhone 3GS preserves the same colors and body design.



This was a slow year for add-on releases, but quality improved.

Between the economy, continued iPhone-related engineering challenges, and a new industry focus on software - apps - the iPod and iPhone accessory business quieted down a lot in 2009. Prominent developers froze new products as they decided whether to custom-build iPod touch and iPhone interfaces, while others left the market altogether, unable to create hardware or software to Apple's specs.

The good news is that the fewer products that have emerged in 2009 have generally been noteworthy: better values, better designs, or better features than their predecessors. Most of the accessories here work with both iPods and iPhones, though a few are still for iPods only. Because of confusing version changes, our advice is to research return policies before you buy anything, just in case there's an unexpected surprise in the box.





Table of Contents

Speakers: The Big Picture + Four Categories	106
Car Accessories	114
Earphones + Remote	116
Cases: Why Cases Matter + Choosing A Case	121
Plastic Cases, Leather Cases, Stickers + Film	124
Grab Bag Gifts	127
Give Life: Batteries	129
Gifts to Hunt For	130
Luxury Gifts	131
Gifts for Kids, Including iPod Click Wheel Games	132
Best of the Year Awards	136

Speakers: The Big Picture

Literally hundreds - probably thousands - of speakers have been designed with iPod and iPhone docks since the release of the first Dock Connector-equipped iPod in 2003. Most have been released by no-name companies and quickly forgotten; comparatively few have come from truly excellent audio and/or design firms. Our Buyers' Guide focuses on models that represent good to great values for their prices, separating speakers into the four general categories spotlighted here. We primarily recommend systems that have been shielded for both iPod- and iPhone-compatibility unless no worthy iPhone-compatible alternative has become available.



Clocks + Clock Radios

Ranging in price from \$50 to \$500, the sweet spot for these clock-equipped speakers is in the \$80 to \$150 range. To fall into this category, a speaker needs to have a fairly readable clock screen on its face; most have integrated FM radio tuners, some include AM tuners, and relatively few also include HD Radio tuners, which have not proved popular.

All-in-One Table Speakers

The broadest speaker category includes numerous models from \$100 to \$300 that are designed to sit on a desk, dresser, or bookshelf, with little more than a single power cable dangling from the back, and an iPod/iPhone dock in front or on top. Varying widely in features and design, the sweet spots here are in the \$150 to \$300 range; clock screens are either not included or almost trivially small.



Portable Speakers

Due to their small sizes and typically low prices, these systems can and do serve as table speakers, but are really made to be carried around and used wherever you need a little music. Since many portables are priced in the sub-\$100 level, with some poor-sounding ones as low as \$50, we include some in our Gifts For Kids section. The sweet spot for price is roughly \$150-\$200.



Premium Audio Systems

With prices starting at \$350, these units range from seriously upgraded all-in-one table speakers to complex wired and/or wireless multi-component systems, sometimes with a dock built into one speaker. Typically, the prices help developers to include superior speakers, more sophisticated electronics, or classier enclosure designs than are found in sub-\$300 alternatives, however, the chance of a specific model having all three is low. Our top picks typically have two.



Clock Radios



Memorex **Mi4290** | \$80 | A-

If value for the dollar is your key consideration, and you don't mind giving up a few features from pricier clock radios, Mi4290 is a great option. Packing a strong FM radio, day-specific dual alarms, simple controls, and the ability to set its own clock using a connected iPod or iPhone, it's also physically attractive.

While its remote is limited and its sound quality isn't awesome, the low price and full iPhone shielding are hot.



iHome **iP9** | \$100 | A-

Now available in black, silver, blue, pink, or purple, iP9 steps up in sound and remote quality from the Mi4290, offering typical iHome features such as a highly adjustable screen dimmer, twin alarms that can be set to your chosen weekday/weekend/all week settings, and a good AM/FM radio.

iPhone shielding is the biggest change over the older, same-priced iH9; it works with 3G and 3GS, so-so with the 2007 iPhone.



Sony **ICF-C1iPMK2** | \$100 | A-

As Sony's best iPod and iPhone accessory yet, this budget AM/FM dual alarm clock radio offers good sound, nice black or white styling, and a fairly shallow depth that leaves space on your nightstand. Though its clock is on the small side and doesn't have some of the sophisticated features of more expensive alternatives, ICF-C1iPMK2 offers more bang for the buck than many of the \$100 alarm clocks we've tested in the past.



iHome **iP88** | \$150 | B

Owners of two iPhones, iPods, or a mix of each will find iP88 to be a godsend, capable of charging both devices and switching between its two iPhone-certified docks for audio. From a design standpoint, it's extremely plain - a box with metallic plastic dials and a diamond-cut front grille as its only distinctive assets - but the speakers are a little better than the ones in the lower-priced models above, and the clock screen is bigger, too.

Xtand™

Stands Above The Rest



Gum™ Plus

Browse more, play more, talk more!



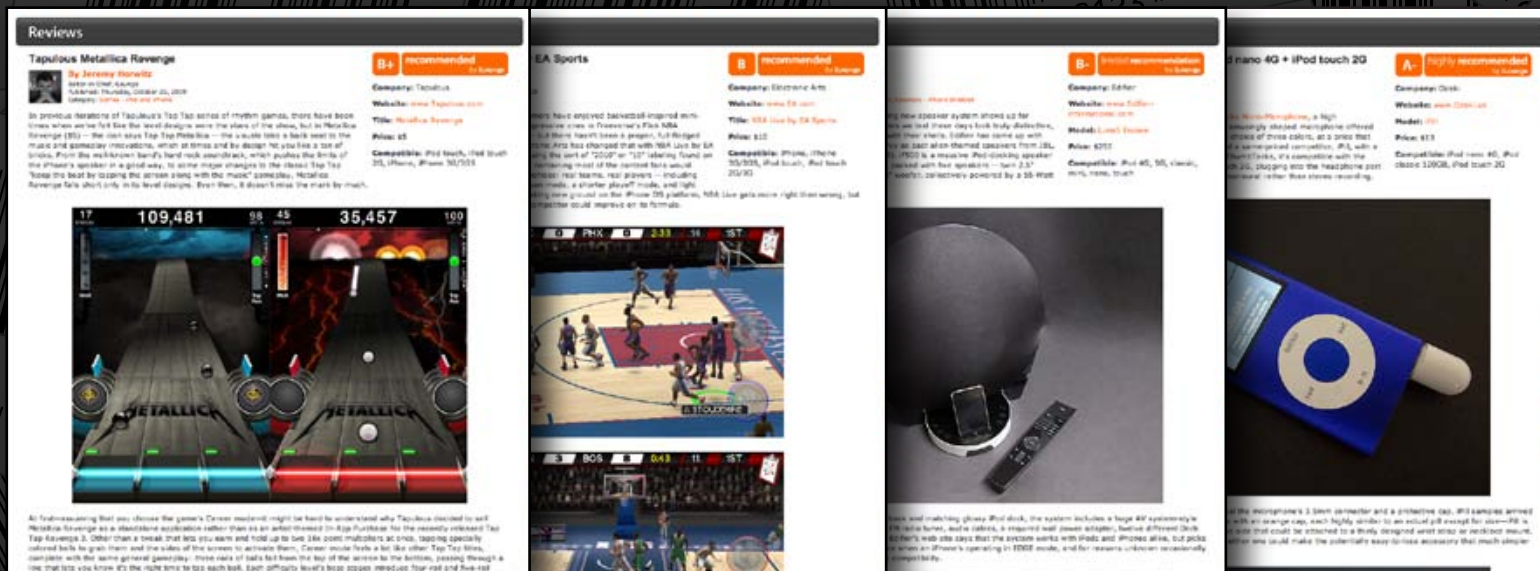
www.just-mobile.com

iPhone™ not included

©2009 by Just Mobile Ltd. All rights reserved. Just Mobile, and other Just Mobile marks are owned by Just Mobile Ltd. and may be registered. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

Need More Detail? Read Our Full Reviews!

iLounge's database of thousands of product reviews dates back to 2001, including multiple photographs of every iPod, iPhone, accessory, game, and app we've covered. Visit ilounge.com/index.php/accessories today!



SeeThru®. Clearly.*

From the folks who brought you the sweetness that is **CandyShell...**
We're happy to introduce our brand-new **SeeThru** for iPhone 3G/3GS



Taking design cues from our award-winning CandyShell, we've re-fabbed SeeThru for iPhone, and carefully crafted a slim, one-piece torpedo of sheer protection!

New SeeThru features accented openings and raised rubberized grip rim to protect your iPhone's sensitive touch pad. Fits snugly on your iPhone, highlighting its sleek design as it slides easily in and out of your purse or pockets!



+ More Spexy choices:

CandyShell for iPhone and iPod touch in rad new colors



Grippy PixelSkin for your new iPod nano with video camera!



Colorful hard shells plus stylish bags for your MacBook!



...and a heck of a lot more!

* Well, not always clear! Colored and black SeeThrus transform your white iPhone or provide a glossy halo on your black iPhone. Either way you slice it, let your Apple pride shine on!

(*) **speck**

SpeckProducts.com

All-in-One Table Speakers

\$150 | A- | Jensen JIMS-525i

We always appreciate speakers that represent a good value for the dollar, and the iPhone-friendly JIMS-525i achieves that with a low price, good sound, and a novel feature: HD Radio tuning. Previously found only in a \$500 Polk iPod system, HD Radio lets you receive higher-quality digital broadcasts from local stations, and JIMS-525i lets you save song info to easily locate at the iTunes Store.



\$250 | B+ | JBL On Stage 400P

Last year's less expensive On Stage 200ID now has a bigger, iPhone-ready brother in On Stage 400P, which packs five total speakers into a silver and black dock - the same parts found in JBL's iconic but more expensive and discontinued Radial. Thanks to a DSP chip and typically excellent JBL tuning, 400P offers rich and clean sound at any volume level, besting Bose's more expensive SoundDock Series II in every way save looks; its shape may or may not fit your needs.



\$300 | B+ | Altec Lansing iMT800 MIX

As the best-sounding \$300 audio system yet released for the iPhone due to its big, side-firing subwoofer and four nicely-tuned front-firing drivers, iMT800 MIX is also one of the wackiest-looking speakers we've tested. It's hard to find anywhere that its ghettofabulous combination of cheap-looking black and silver plastic with gold-rimmed speakers looks "right," but its power, dynamic range, and digital radio all sound good in- or outdoors; it can run off D cells.



\$300 | A- | iHome iP1 Studio Series

In a year that saw ambitious new designs all but disappear in favor of cheaper or rehashed old body casings, iP1 stood out from virtually everything as a museum-quality thing of beauty: a four-speaker audio system with a dock in center, all held together by a 1/2"-thick pane of smoked transparent plastic. Apart from the absence of a dedicated bass driver, iP1's strong sonic performance and great looks make it an ideal choice for style-conscious iPod and iPhone users.



Portable Speakers



XtremeMac **Luna Voyager** | \$80 | B

Though it's not a standout on sound quality, Luna Voyager serves a very specific purpose: it's a small book-sized, cleanly-designed speaker system that can double as a radio-less, single-alarm clock. Beautiful blue numbers alternate on the face between telling you the time or volume levels, and you can wake up from a piercing beep or music from an iPod or iPhone. One bummer: its speakers work only if you carry the small wall adapter along. Good for budget users.



Logitech **Pure-Fi Anywhere 2** | \$130 | A-

Representing the sweet spot in portable audio system performance and pricing, this system - also known as Pure-Fi-Anywhere for iPod and iPhone - combines four speaker drivers with a 10-hour rechargeable battery, carrying case, and nice remote control. With significantly cleaner, more detailed audio than in peer systems, Anywhere 2's only issues are its 13.25" width, and its tendency to drain its batteries when not in use.



JBL **On Stage IIIP** | \$170 | B+

Smaller than a Frisbee at 7.5" in diameter, the iPhone-ready On Stage IIIP achieves a nice balance between audio quality and portability, though at a higher price-to-performance ratio than Pure-Fi Anywhere 2. We'd give the sonic edge to Logitech's design, but On Stage IIIP sounds nearly as full and requires less physical storage space. You'll need to provide six AA batteries to keep it running on the road, but a power adapter and nice remote are included in the box.



Altec Lansing **inMotion MAX** | \$200 | B

The design may be polarizingly retro and large, but inMotion MAX is one of the only good portable iPod systems to include a clear digital FM radio alongside four gold paint-rimmed drivers - better than Pure-Fi 2 in sound, if not in style - and a pop-out iPod dock. There's a 3.5-hour rechargeable battery inside, and the system includes both a matching 1980s-styled remote control and power supply. It works with iPhones and iPods alike, and folds for storage.

Premium Audio Systems

\$350 | B+ | Kicker iKick iK500

If the exact opposite of meek and cute could be conjured into an iPod speaker, the iK500 would be it: a pricey, almost evil-looking all-in-one with the sort of horsepower you'd expect from a maker of loud car audio systems. Five-inch woofers - larger than the ones in most iPod audio systems - are paired with 0.75" tweeters and a 6" square reflex subwoofer to deliver very strong low-end and volume. Often sold for \$250, it's a beast if you like loud, bass-rich audio.



\$499 | B+ | Boston Acoustics i-DS3 Plus

Wireless audio took a big, smart step forward this year with the release of i-DS3 Plus, an evolution of Boston Acoustics' smaller and less expensive i-DS2 into a unit with even more sonic horsepower. The new model adds a powerful subwoofer that's color-matched to the main iPod- and iPhone-ready speaker dock, and wireless rather than depending on a cable to run between the parts. Put the sub wherever you like, and enjoy the stereo from the dock.



\$600 | B | Focal JMLab Focal XS

Some iPod audio systems are built for value; others are for style. Focal XS is designed to match the look of Apple's 2007 iMacs, adding a 6.5" bass driver in a large floor unit, and twin satellites that suspend 0.75" tweeters and 3" drivers on metal and gloss plastic perches next to any computer screen. The right speaker base includes an iPod dock for audio and synchronization, controlled via an Infrared remote. You could get the same sound for less, but not the same look.



\$600 | B+ | Bowers + Wilkins Zeppelin

Recently updated with iPhone compatibility, the 25" by 8" by 8" Zeppelin is the audio equivalent of an olympic gold medallist in fencing, rather than an ominous, Tyson-style heavyweight boxer. Unusually shaped, it packs a 5" bass driver, twin 3.5" midrange drivers and two 1" tweeters, delivering subtly clearer audio and deeper bass than typical \$300 speakers, plus much better sound at extreme levels. You're paying for the look: it's art, as much as sound.



Car Accessories

As we noted in last year's Buyers' Guide, quiet Apple engineering changes to iPods and iPhones over the years have effectively broken a number of expensive, difficult-to-install car accessories, the major reason we decided to stop recommending such high-end products to our readers: we do not want to advise people to spend hundreds or thousands of dollars on kits that may not work with their next iPods or iPhones. Instead, we focus on affordable add-ons that are compatible with current models; compatibility differences between models are found below.



Pre-2008 iPods

Charge and play audio and video with all add-ons, but 2007+ iPods have video locks, and need special cables for in-car video monitors.



2008 iPods

Play audio with all add-ons, but do not charge from some older cables, and have video locks. Special cables are needed for in-car video.



Original iPhone

Loud audio interference can interrupt music, and video is locked, too. Charges fine from iPod cables, but puts up a nag screen with many.



iPhone 3G/3GS

Less audio interference except in EDGE mode. Locked video. Charges only with 2008+ cables, puts up nag screens for even more old add-ons.

Charge iPods + iPhones



Griffin PowerDuo Reserve

A brilliant \$60 pairing of car and wall chargers with a spare battery that can be plugged into either one and kept where you need it. Cut either charger to save \$20; you supply cables.

Charge iPods+ iPhones



Contour rE-Charge Universal

This \$40 accessory has twin USB ports to charge two devices at once from either a wall or a car outlet. One iPod- or iPhone-to-USB cable is included; you supply the second one.

Use Older Car Add-Ons



Griffin Charge Converter FW

Owners of car and home accessories that won't charge newer iPods or iPhones can use this \$30 adapter, which adapts FireWire-based Dock Connector add-ons for USB, audio, and video.

Cut Alternator Whine



Griffin Noise-Reducing Cable

If you have a car with an auxiliary input and have heard a high-pitched squeal in your music, this \$20 cable can run from your iPhone or iPod headphone port, eliminating the whine.

Window Mount

**Griffin WindowSeat**

Shipped with cradles for the iPhone, iPhone 3G/3GS and iPod touch, this \$30 mount suctions to a car windshield by default, but can also be used with an included adhesive pad to attach to a dashboard.

Vent Mount

**DLO VentMounts (iPhone/iPod)**

Sold in separate \$25 versions for iPhone, iPhone 3G and iPod touch, the cradle holds your device in front of a car's air vent, then separates to serve as an open belt clip holster when you're on the go.

Dashboard Mount

**Kensington WindShield/Vent**

For \$40, you get a flexible windshield arm mount and a separate vent mount for this passive audio-amplifying cradle, which works with all three iPhone models to let you hear their speakers.

Custom Mount

**ProClip Padded Holder w/ Tilt**

Deluxe but highly vehicle- and device-specific, this \$35 holder joins with a \$30 ProClip car mount to provide a soft, safe iPod or iPhone holder that tilts and swivels onto any angle. A pricey favorite.

Charge, Mount + Aux

**DLO AuxDock for iPod**

Though it's only for iPods, not iPhones, this \$60 combination mount, charger, and Aux-out audio adapter offers great sound quality and a flexible, attractive design. Formerly called TransDock Direct, it's part of a generally good family of audio-out mounts and chargers.

Charge, Aux + Remote

**Kensington LiquidAUX**

Like AuxDock without the mount, this \$80 kit handles iPod and iPhone line-level audio output and charging through a nice fabric-jacketed cable, adding a clean-looking, steering wheel-ready RF remote control. An extension cable is included for audio to adjust for different cars.

Charge, Mount + FM

**Griffin RoadTrip with SmartScan**

Owners of cars with radios as their only iPod or iPhone input option will find the latest \$100 version of RoadTrip - specifically the iPhone one - to be a solid fusion of FM transmitter, mount, and charger in an attractive and flexible package. It can be had for \$65 with careful shopping.

Handsfree Speakerphone

**Contour Surface Sound Compact**

Though solChat 2 trumps it in frills, SurfaceSound Compact is a great rechargeable speaker, microphone, and Bluetooth system. Mounted on a car visor, it lets you safely answer calls while driving, and can be used inside, or charged with packed-in accessories. A 15-hour battery beats solChat's.

Earphones + Remotes

Earphones are the single most important accessory you can buy to improve the quality of your iPod or iPhone music experience, but over the past year, they've become more complicated. New

iPods and the iPhone 3GS support a three-button, in-line remote control, which Apple made mandatory for the third-generation iPod shuffle, while encouraging developers to release pricier remote-equipped versions of their earphones. We're concerned about both the pricing and reliability of remote-equipped earphones, and recommend traditional remote-less designs for the time being. Full reviews of these and dozens of other models can be found on the iLounge web site, along with a five-part Complete Guide to Earphones, including detailed, helpful explanations.



Quality Budget In-Ears



A-
\$50

Sony
MDR-EX75

A little more expensive than buying a spare pair of Apple earphones, MDR-EX75 adds silicone tips for fantastic isolation, and offers expanded dynamic range; you'll hear superior bass and more midrange detail than with the buds that Apple supplies. A carrying case and special cable that splits in the middle are included with the black and silver earpieces.



Metal Bass Superstar



B+
\$120

v-moda
Vibe II

Building on successful prior Vibe and Vibe Duo models, Vibe II takes the "earphone as jewelry" concept a step forward, using faux-jewelled, real metal enclosures for bass-heavy single-driver earpieces. Silver/red or black/silver versions are available, each with fabric cables and optional ear hooks that help with stability during workouts. A mic and control button are built in to each pair.



High Detail + Isolation



A-
\$149

Etymotic
hf5

Sold in black, blue, or red versions, hf5 is a microphone-less version of the award-winning hf2, and the lowest-priced variant on the award-winning ER-4P. This heritage speaks to hf5's superb high-frequency and midrange detail, slightly punchier than in the ER-4P, and its tight, non-aggressive bass. A great, comfortable earpiece to reveal secrets in songs, at an aggressive price.



Active Noise Blocking



B+
\$170

Audio-Tech.
ATH-ANC3

Battery-aided active noise cancellation is primarily found in earcups, but ATH-ANC3 offers an in-ear option that legitimately reduces noise even further than strong passive noise isolators such as Etymotic's hf5. You'll give up a little in the detail department relative to hf5, and certainly won't rival the q-JAYS, but engine growls and ambient noises will fade away.

Sound Differences. Except for the shuffle, which has audible signaling tones and a higher base static level, today's iPods and iPhones all sound great - suitable for listening with premium earphones.



Tiny Double-Drivers

**A**

\$179

**JAYS
q-JAYS**

We really, really like what Sweden's JAYS has accomplished: its \$99 d-JAYS are great for their price, and its \$179 q-JAYS are better - tied for the smallest two-drivers-per-ear headphones we've seen, with better bass and overall performance than Etymotic's similarly-priced hf5. Amazingly light, they fit any ear, thanks to seven included sets of silicone tips, including XX-small.



Chrome Double-Drivers

**A-**

\$230

**Ultimate
Ears 700**

Small and beautiful with a shiny chrome gloss, UE's 700 is probably the company's best-looking and most comfortable earphone to date - just as small as q-JAYS, but with slightly higher highs and lower lows. You'll need to decide whether the more dynamic sound is worth the premium, but we love listening to and looking at these; all they're missing are an in-line mic and remote.



Bassy Triple-Drivers

**A-**

\$400

**Westone
Westone 3**

Audiophile bass fans, your earphone has arrived. Westone 3 uses three drivers to deliver sound as detailed as the SE530, but with a decided low-end skew that's Bose-like - the equivalent of turning a subwoofer up to one or two steps shy of its peak. The result is rich, live concert-like music that draws you in with its warmth, but hides some of the details obvious in the Shures.



Simply the Best Overall

**A**

\$500

**Shure
SE530**

For several years running, SE530 has been the top pick of iLounge's editors, and remains our favorite "price no object" earphone today. With three drivers per ear tuned better than Westone's and other competitors, SE530 offers greater comfort, now including coated foam tips, and presently unbeaten sound quality across the board. If you can afford them, do it.



The Underwater Option


A-
\$60

**H2O Audio
Surge**

The best waterproof earphones we've ever tested, safe for rainy runs or swimming at depths of up to 12 feet. Surge has the snugest fit and best bass of any water-safe earphones.



Wireless Stereo Is Here


B
\$100

**Altec 903
BackBeat**

Ready for Bluetooth stereo streaming audio from iPhone 3G/3GS and iPod touch 2G, 903 also has a mic for phone calls, a seven-hour battery, and up to 60 feet of wireless range.



Hi-Fi Noise Cancellers


A
\$220

**Audio-Tech.
ATH-ANC7b**

Mildly tweaked from the prior model, ATH-ANC7b offers more bang for the buck than any other active noise-cancelling earcup we've heard; great sound, fit, and 40-hour run times.



Bigger Noise Cancellers


B+
\$299

**Bose Quiet
Comfort 15**

Similar to Bose's prior QC2, QC15 is similarly bassy, offering larger earcups and 5-10% better noise reduction than ANC7b. The differences aren't worth the price premium.



Sleek, Affordable Metals


B+
\$80

**Maximo
iP-HS5**

Metal earphones with a good in-line mic and single-button play/call controller. Good sound for the price; less stylish than v-moda's Vibes.



Budget Noise Cancellers


B+
\$179

**Phitek M10
Blackbox**

Sold for less than most active noise-cancellers, M10 is from the same company that makes headphones for Audio-Technica and others.



Cool Entry-Level Bassers


B+
\$40

**Radius
Atomic Bass**

With nice, clean bass for the price, these Japanese earphones twist into place in your canals and use strain-relieving cables.



Clean Single-Drivers


B+
\$120

**AKG
K 340**

They're not sexy, but K 340's controlled bass and treble are great by single-driver standards, outstripping Shures and v-modas sold for \$120.

Keep In Line. Most 2008-2009 iPod and iPhone models now support new three-button in-line remote controls and microphones. Released in December 2008, Apple's basic \$29 model, **Earphones with Remote and Mic**, fuse the remote to Apple's old iPod Earphones below your right ear; the classy, sleeker \$79 **In-Ear Headphones with Remote and Mic** improve clarity but are surprisingly bass-deficient. While the mic feature works with all iPhones, both it and the remote work fully with 2008-2009 iPod nanos, classics and touches, plus the iPhone 3GS, to pause or change tracks and volume. The 32/64GB touch and iPhone 3GS include the \$29 model; iPod shuffle includes a mic-less version that preserves the remote's three buttons, which are required to control the device. Alternatives are below.



Remotes, Explained

A Simple, Clean Remote

iPod shuffle Buttons

Another In-Line Remote



Button Adapters & Remotes

B+
\$20

Belkin HP Adapter

Apple has encouraged third-party developers to create licensed iPod and iPhone 3-button remotes, adapters, and headphones, with simple adapters typically starting at a sad \$20 price point and climbing from there; remote-equipped headphones also add a \$20 premium to prior remote-less models. You can decide whether the three buttons are worth it.

Designed originally for the third-gen iPod shuffle but also compatible with new iPods and iPhone 3GS, Belkin's Headphone Adapter adds a long, pill-like remote control to any pair of headphones you already have, and works flawlessly to control volume and tracks. There's no microphone, and the \$20 price is steep for something so simple, but it's nice.

B
\$18

Ozaki iCommand

Only for the shuffle, iCommand adds a little to the width and depth of the iPod, plus an inch on its top, with three tiny buttons on its sides. A toggle-styled set of two is for volume; the multifunction play/pause/track button is on the other side. Slightly less expensive than the Belkin version, Ozaki's take also feels a bit cheaper, but shuffle owners will find the buttons easy to use.

B
\$20

Scosche TapLine

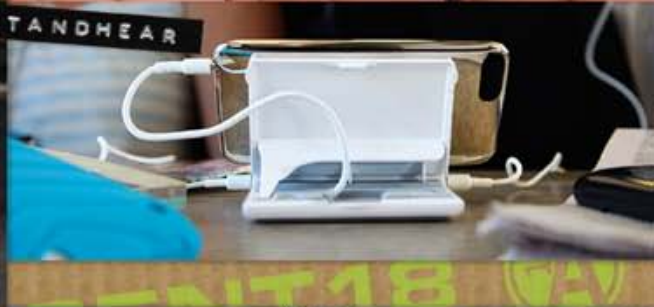
Like Belkin's design, Scosche's TapLine maintains a fairly steep price for a small piece of cable and three buttons, which maintain the same Apple-like array of volume up, play/pause, and volume down. TapLine's buttons don't feel quite as good as Belkin's, and there's still no microphone to be found here, but the differences between the models aren't huge, and it works just fine.



SHOCK SHIELD



SLIMSHIELD



STANDHEAR



CLEARSHIELD



SLIMSHIELD LIMITED



MACBOOK AIR



ECOSHIELD



AGENT18

Premium Electronics Protection
for your iPhone, iPod, & Mac
www.agent18.com