

The Best New iPod & iPhone Accessories

Add-Ons & Attachments



Here's the great thing about owning an iPod or iPhone: Long after you get your first taste of one of these delectable morsels from Apple, the flavor just keeps coming—wave after wave. And by wave, we don't mean the music, video, Web surfing, and phone-related goodness the iPod and iPhone serve up. We mean having your choice of literally thousands of tasty accessories that third-party manufacturers whip up to enhance your iPod/iPhone experience. The following are add-ons and attachments that mobile professionals can sink their teeth into.

by Blaine Flamig

Otter Products OtterBox Defender & Armor Series

BOTTOM LINE

\$29.95 to \$69.95 • www.otterbox.com

Otter Products' Defender and Armor Series cases for the iPhone and various iPods will protect your music player against the elements, including water.

OtterBox might be the funniest name of any iPod accessory line going, but Otter Products' MP3 player and PDA cases are nothing to laugh at. The company's new Defender and Armor Series protective shells include models for the iPhone, iPod touch, and iPod 3G nano. Although the Defender Series' models aren't waterproof as are the Armor Series' cases (3 feet deep for up to 30 minutes), they do sport three protective layers—including a polycarbonate skeletal surrounding and

hard-shelled polycarbonate sheet that protects against scratching—to guard against dust, dirt, and drops. The Defender iPhone case completely engulfs the phone, bundles a sturdy belt clip, and protects the entire touchscreen with a patented membrane. The Armor case for the iPhone is a bit heftier (4.5 ounces vs. 1.9 ounces) but is sand- and drop-proof and includes a rubber sealant along all four sides to add waterproof ability.



H2O Audio iN3 Waterproof Case

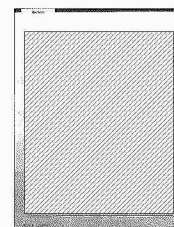
BOTTOM LINE

\$79.99 • www.h2oaudio.com

H2O Audio's new cases for iPods and iPhones are stylish, durable, and ideal companions when you step away from work for some play.

Upon our first encounter with H2O Audio several months back, we proceeded to entrust our iPod to the company's waterproof case and went for a dip. We've never regretted the decision. H2O Audio recently

put its toes back in the pool with its iN3 waterproof case for 3G nanos. The company claims the "indestructible polycarbonate plastic" case is "designed to withstand the continual pummeling of the action sports world." 'Nuff said. Waterproof up to 10 feet, the iN3 uses a Commander Scroll Wheel to navigate your player and LatchTight locking system and SealTight headphone connector to keep it dry. To feed you audio, H2O Audio has also released the new H3 Waterproof Headphones (\$49.99), which include a coiled cable, detachable earbuds, better bass response, and aquatic silencer earplug design for better comfort, seal, and noise reduction, which all adds up to being able to wear the headphones underwater longer. If you prefer dry land, H2O Audio also has a new iFR (\$39.99) ruggedized case for the iPhone that isn't waterproof but is impact resistant.



Bluetrek SurfaceSound Compact

BOTTOM LINE

\$100 • www.bluetrek.com/index.htm

The wireless SurfaceSound Compact mounts to your car's sun visor to provide hands-free ability to take and make in-car calls from an iPhone.



Road warriors who log their traveling miles mostly in the car know all about the potential hazards of constantly taking and making calls while behind the wheel. Bluetooth headsets are an option, but they usually aren't comfortable over the long haul. The SurfaceSound Compact from Blue-

trek aims to greatly simplify the call-car equation by pairing an iPhone with a hands-free Bluetooth speaker-microphone system, which you'll mount to your car's sun visor using the included clip. (You also get a mono earphone, in-vehicle charger, and USB cable.) The SurfaceSound Compact uses NXT's flat-panel speaker technology and builds in noise reduction and echo-cancellation functionality to clean up the audio the unit's 2W speaker outputs. A lithium polymer battery gives you 15 hours of rated talk time and 22 days of standby time.

DLO iBoom JukeBox

BOTTOM LINE

\$199.99 • www.dlo.com

Shaped like a jukebox from your grandparents' past, the iBoom includes an RF remote that sports an LCD for visually browsing your connected iPod.

Announced at Macworld in January, this dome-shaped speaker for dockable iPods—including the touch, classic, and 3G nano—resembles something out of your grandparents' favorite soda shop but with some modern twists. Most notably, the iBoom JukeBox bundles a RF (radio frequency) remote that works up to 100 feet away, including through walls. The remote also sports a color display for visually browsing a connected iPod. The JukeBox, which should be available as you read this, also builds buttons into the player, which outputs stereo-quality audio through dual 1-inch tweeters and dual 3-inch woofers. Beyond charging your iPod when docked, the iBoom also charges the remote, so you won't be left scrambling for batteries.



Newer Technology Hands-Free Mic & Earbuds For iPhone

BOTTOM LINE

\$19.99 • www.newertech.com

Affordably priced and boasting Bass Response technology, Newer Technology's new earbuds for the iPhone come with and without hands-free mic ability.



Newer Technology recently released six products for the iPhone, including a \$19.99 in-ear Hands-Free Mic & Earbuds. The earbuds bundle a shirt clamp to keep the 3-foot cord tidy, as well as Bass Response technology and Newer Technology's Insert-Passive Noise Reduction design, which the

company says cuts down on exterior noise. Elsewhere, the company's new Bass Response Earbuds (\$19.99) forgo the hands-free mic but offers the same audio features. If you already own earbuds, Newer Technology also has a Mic Extender For iPhone Cable (\$14.99) available that adds hands-free talking functionality. Finally, for those long car rides, the company's Auto Charger for iPhones and iPods (\$12.99) covers basic charging duties in domestic or foreign automobiles.

A GUILTY PLEASURE

PimpMyNews

BOTTOM LINE

Free • www.pimpmynews.com

If you're a news junkie or blog fanatic, PimpMyNews' 24/7 newsgathering software converts text-based entries to MP3 files.

"Talking social news application." That's how PimpMyNews describes its free text-to-speech translator, a slick Web-based and iPod-playing method for getting your daily dose of current events and blog entries. The concept is simple: PimpMyNews uses proprietary software and text-to-speech technology to automatically convert text-based news and blogs to MP3 files you can listen to on an iPod, iPhone, or other digital music player. All you need is iTunes or a podcast-gathering utility to collect the clips and transfer them. After registering an account, you can also listen online via a Web browser, share clips with others, create playlists, and more. News and blog categories include Technology, Business, World News, Politics, Entertainment, Sports, and U.S. News, and setup only takes about 10 minutes. Further, audio quality is surprisingly pleasant.