

NewerTechnology Charge & Sync+

iPhone+iPod battery and charger • \$39



review by Bill Palmer [email](#) [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)

NewerTechnology has a track record of taking expensive functionality and bringing it down to a breakthrough price point, as best demonstrated by the company's \$19 iPhone-specific earbuds two years ago, at a time when it was difficult to find such a product for less than triple digits. Here in 2010, where anything beyond lame snap-on batteries will cost you sixty dollars or (much) more, here comes the descriptively if not-so-catchily named Charge & Sync+ which offers battery brick functionality for forty bucks.

As you might expect, the price point brings some compromises with it. While the \$129 ZAGGspaq offers a mind-blowing 6000 mAh of battery life, and form-fitting battery cradles typically offer 1800 to 3300 mAh, the Charge & Sync+ offers a mere 1400, putting it barely above the svelte Juice Pack Air battery case. What 1400 mAh means is that the Charge & Sync+ will not-quite-double your iPhone's battery life, or if your iPhone's battery is dead to begin with, not quite charge it up to full. For this price, I'll take it.

Further attempting to push the value quotient, the Charge & Sync+ not only comes with an iPhone/iPod connector cable (several more expensive batteries inexplicably don't), the cable is actually built in to the brick. Unfortunately this is an instance of a product outsmarting itself, as extending the cable requires undoing the kind of plastic trap door that you'd have to pop open to change the AA batteries in an alarm clock; not something you want to be fiddling with every time you go to use the product. And in a head scratching move, the built in electrical prongs can't be extended until the cable has been unwrapped – meaning you have to go through all the trap door hoopla just to charge up the brick itself, let alone connect it to your device. It's nice that they've included separate tips for charging mini and micro USB devices, but the cable implementation is so befuzzled that I'd rather have seen them go with a simple USB port and a separate cable. As such it's a three star product that gets bumped up half a star for being a good value play despite the flawed concept.