

TRAVEL MOUSE

Macally Accuglide

£22 Tiny, light and accurate: for Mac users on the go

CONTACT INFO

Manufacturer www.macally.com
Latest price on TechRadar
www.techradar.com/223866

VERDICT



"A good little performer, but there's nowhere to tidily wrap up the USB cable."

This slimline, wired mouse (powered via USB) takes up next to no space in a laptop bag and is particularly good for presentation work on the road. Like all super-small mice, though, it's fiddly to use over a long period of time, so isn't the ideal solution for regular office work.

The mouse comes with three buttons – left, right and scroll-click. There's also the dragging ability of the scrollwheel. Everything works as it should. There's no need to install a software driver; the Accuglide works right out of the box. You don't even have to restart your computer.

On the downside, there's nowhere to hide the wired USB cable. We just wound it around the mouse, which is clumsy – some kind of retractable setup would've been nice. There are plenty of other tiny wired/wireless mice on the market, remember, so hunt around for one that suits. Kensington and Belkin do good ones, too.

James Ellerbeck



PORTABLE SPEAKER

Altec Lansing Orbit-MP3

£30 Small but hugely powerful MP3 speaker

CONTACT INFO

Manufacturer www.alteclansing.co.uk
Latest price on TechRadar
www.techradar.com/223825

VERDICT



"Just don't give this to a teenager prone to playing music on the bus."

This wee speaker, which can easily slip into a pocket, pumps out good sound and goes very loud, considering its size. The case is a single drum with a single driver inside that points out and up. Sound goes wherever you point the silver grille and also resonates pretty well out to the sides. Underneath is the battery bay, which holds three AAA batteries. The battery bay, grille and connecting 3.5mm input cable are all good quality.

The chrome band that rings the top edge of the design – you twist it to turn the speaker on and off – is the only weak spot in the design. It sometimes sticks and feels plasticky, although it's not a deal-breaker. Battery life is also short at 24 hours.

Given the low price, we can overlook these shortfalls. It's the sound quality that really sells this unit to us. It's excellent, and would still be excellent for speakers twice or three times the size or price. Quite when you would need to use it is another matter.

James Ellerbeck



IPOD POUCH

Macally Metro

£23 Open leather holster affords little protection

CONTACT INFO

Manufacturer www.macally.com
Latest price on TechRadar
www.techradar.com/223968

VERDICT



"As iPod sleeve designs go, we find this one a little impractical."

Macally's Metro is a leather holster for the latest (third generation) Nanos. It's an odd design: an open holster for slotting in the iPod that offers no protection for the front of the player, not even a see-through plastic sheet.

The holster attaches to a belt clip, which then attaches to a neoprene band meant to go around your arm, dangle from your belt or hang carabiner style. You can also take off the belt and loop it through the back of the holster. During the period we took this out, we never really had any peace of mind. You find yourself constantly looking out for things not to bump into. The build quality is up to Macally's standards, sure, but we think the whole premise is less than convincing. Landfill, anyone?

James Ellerbeck



SHUFFLE COVER

Shufflesome iPod Skin

£5 Customise your shuffle with these funky stickers

CONTACT INFO

Manufacturer www.shufflesome.com
Latest price on TechRadar
www.techradar.com/223927

VERDICT



"A funky range of decent shuffle covers."

Ah, the lonely shuffle. It doesn't get anywhere near the same sales as the other iPods, and has relatively few peripherals and accessories. One band of plucky graphic designers trying to redress the balance is Shufflesome, which has created a great range of many different sticker designs to paste onto them.

Applying the stickers requires a steady hand and careful eye, but they're all good quality and don't tear. We stuck one Japanese-looking set on ours; the key areas of brushed metal were covered nicely and no controls were obscured. You'll know better than us if the designs appeal; we thought the selection and aesthetics were tasteful and vibrant.

Sure, the stickers won't delight everyone – after all, the iPods look perfectly formed when naked – but for those looking for a custom design and scratch protection, then these Shufflesome stickers are worth looking at.

James Ellerbeck

