

SURVIVAL GUIDE

How to buy blank media

NOW that most computers come standard with a disc recorder, choosing the correct media to use for burning is important. The type of recorder you choose when buying your computer will influence your choice of media.

Lower-end computers generally ship with CD-RW/DVD drives. These units are capable of writing to CD-R and CD-RW media, but not DVDs.

CD-Rs can hold about 700MB of data and are compatible with CD players.

Higher-end computers now come with DVD-RW drives capable of writing to DVD media and can hold a maximum 4.7GB.

Some DVD-RW drives also come as DL (double layer), which means you can write 4.7GB of data to each side of the DVD. This effectively doubles your storage capacity.

Some media is "write" once, "read" many (R); others are write many, read many (RW).

RW media is always more expensive than R media — typically 40 per cent more — so deciding on the purpose of the burn is important.

If you want to keep rewriting data on to the same disc you'll need to choose RW. If you just want to archive data, you'll need only R media.

If you plan to use your burnt DVDs in consumer players, use DVD-Rs, not RWs.

When buying blank media you'll also need to decide about buying in bulk.

For example, if you buy 50 blank DVD-Rs on a spindle you'll pay about 70c a DVD. If you buy them in a five-pack, expect to pay \$1 a DVD. Individually, DVD-Rs can cost \$2.50.

DL media is more expensive, about \$6 a disc.

DANNY GOROG

gorogsguide.blogspot.com



▲ Nifty 120GB storage bin

What: portable USB hard drive
Price: \$349 (120GB)
www.westerndigital.com

WESTERN Digital's Passport Drive is a very nifty, ultra-portable hard drive that gives users 120GB of storage space for their files. This tidily built model connects via a USB 2.0 port and has a super-quick track-to-track seek time of 2ms on average. It also has a very fast read time of 12ms. No power adaptor is needed on most PCs or notebooks, so road warriors will find Western Digital's latest portable drive fast, ultra-compact and nicely priced.

Dave Bullard and Peter Familiari bring you the best of the latest products

► Crammed with techno magic

What: outdoor speakers
Price: \$399-\$1099
Qualifi: 1800 24 24 26
www.jamo.com.au

DANISH speaker brand Jamo's (pronounced Yay-Mo) huge range of indoor speakers has now been followed up with a neat series of outdoor/indoor models that are nicely priced, look cool and are crammed full of techno magic. The I/O A2 speakers come in three sizes, each carrying a novel mounting bracket and a dual reflex port to fine-tune the speaker into the cabinet.



◀ Hear this: radio or your iPod

What: water-resistant portable sound system
Price: \$49.95
Gadget King: 9510 8000
www.gadgetking.com.au

A BIT of a chameleon this one. At first glance it looks like a splash-proof portable AM/FM radio. But open it up and it will hold and play your iPod or MP3 player using its built-in speaker and amplifier. User-friendliness is assured with all the controls neatly decked out across the front panel. They include tuning, volume and AM/FM switching dials. Available in blue, pink, green, grey and pink/chrome.



▲ Puppy love

What: robotic pet
Price: \$99.99
Funtastic: 1800 660 655
www.funtastic.com.au

THE latest version of the robotic Tekno Puppy is twice as smart as the Mk1 version. His eyes glow in different colours to display several programmed emotions and Tekno also barks, pants, whines or whimpers to show you what he's feeling. Sound sensors inside this toy react to voices, clapping hands or snapping fingers — any of which make it respond with one of up to 20 phrases.



▲ Sitting proudly on top

What: high-definition set-top box
Price: \$699
Castel Electronics: 1300 733 962
www.castel.com.au

ONCE you couldn't get a whiff of a high-definition set-top box for less than \$1100. These days plenty of models cost less than \$899, but how many have the cachet value of the Toshiba brand or some of its useful features? The HD-C26H is every inch a top-notch unit able to deliver 1080i lines of resolution. It also has an HDMI connection and Dolby Digital sound, and supports Teletext.

connect

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