

Gadgets: A reliable GPS at a good price

July 16 2009, By Gregg Ellman

One of the most common gadget questions I get (especially during the holiday season) is "Which GPS unit should I buy?"

For the most part GPS units have become very affordable and are most often loaded with extra features, such as Bluetooth functions for cell phones and the ability to play music and movies.

But what is most important is how well the unit helps users get where they need to be, how easy the device is to use and how much it costs.

The Garmin 265T is a great choice for all the above. Featuring a 3.5-inch flat screen, the unit works flawlessly. Many competitors on the market today feature a bigger screen. But the size didn't matter to me, especially since I was using it for travel.

I took the Garmin 265T on a few trips around the country recently, and at every stop it found where I needed to go in seconds. When I needed to find a choice of restaurants, everything within my area popped up on request.

All the necessary turns and directions are shown on the display along. Directions also are voiced aloud by a female, computerized voice, which I selected from the many audio options. Adjusting the volume also is simple.

The screen automatically adjusts from daylight to nighttime use, and the unit gives very accurate estimates of driving time. It also posted the

speed limit alongside my actual speed -- though I chose to ignore this advice.

Other features include a [lithium battery](#) good for about four hours of use; maps pre-loaded for North America, Puerto Rico and Hawaii and a car window mounting adapter and car power adapter.

There are many more features packed into the unit. But for what a GPS unit is supposed to do, this is as good as any I've seen.

The 265T sells for \$219. If you want the bigger 4.3-inch screen, go for the 265WT for about \$50 more.

Details: garmin.com

Nick Kelsh, photographer and author of "How to Photograph Your Baby," has introduced a new instructional DVD to help parents create well-composed baby photos.

The DVD looks at common photography mistakes made by parents and shows how change those habits to produce inspiring images of the young subjects. Tips include how to use natural light, getting the proper distance from the subject, and taking more photos.

Digital photography and the declining cost of storage media make it easy to take multiple photos with no added cost.

Kelsh recommends keeping your finger on the shutter. "The more photos you snap, the greater the odds for an album filled with priceless images," he says.

"Many people don't realize how many thousands of photos professional photographers take just to get the few really good ones we see in Sports Illustrated, Time Magazine and even our favorite daily newspapers.

"Simplicity is really the secret ingredient to creating a great photo of your child," says Kelsh in a recent press release. He emphasizes that taking great pictures of your kids requires little-to-no technical background in photography. "As a parent, you have 24/7 access to your child and the most precious moments occur in the home -- not in a photographer's studio. This DVD was created to help you prepare for those moments, capture memories effortlessly and compose images that you will be proud to share for years to come."

Details: The "How to Photograph Your Baby" DVD is available now at howtophotographyourbaby.com for \$24.95.

A new product from Charge4All, the Portable Charging Mat lets users charge up to four devices at once. A great feature is its energy efficiency since it uses a single power source.

Users can charge most any portable electronic devices including digital cameras, cell phones, MP3 players and Bluetooth devices.

The multi-charger comes with an AC adaptor and has an on/off switch with an indicator light. After hooking up a device to be charged, it will lie safely on a silicon mat, which also rolls up for easy storage.

Included are four charging ports along with five popular smart plugs for devices, including Mini USB, Micro USB, Samsung SCH, LG Chocolate and iPods or iPhones. If these options don't meet your needs, the company sells up to 29 different smart plugs at its Web site, along with a

car charging adapter.

The company advises against using this charger for laptop computers or other high-current devices.

Details: charge4all.net , \$39.95

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