

Gadgets on the go

June 25 2010, By Gregg Ellman



Mophie Dual USB Wall Charger

Today's electronic gadgets get better and smaller, creating a perfect combination for travelers.

The multiple chargers required for those devices on the road add up, taking up valuable (and expensive) suitcase real estate.

When it comes to traveling accessories for charging most devices, Mophie has the answer for your needs.

Many of today's portables can charge via USB and this is why the Mophie Dual USB Wall Charger (\$14.95) is one of my favorite travel accessories.

Equipped with a pair of USB charging ports, this pocket-sized unit has a flip-out plug to fit in any AC wall outlet and convert it into a pair of powered USB ports.

Two devices can then charge at once by connecting the USB cord, which comes with most of these devices.

If your destination is a foreign country, combine the USB wall charger with the Mophie International Adapter Travel Kit.

With this kit (\$7.95), you get three adapters to work in international power outlets enabling users to convert them to the necessary plugs we are used to in this country.

The international kit includes a carrying case to store all the adapters for the trip or to just be ready for the next one.

If your vacation also includes a rent-a-car, the Car & Wall International USB Charger (\$14.95) should be your choice.

It has a single [USB port](#) along with prongs, which flip out to plug into a wall outlet. What makes it work in a car is the 12V adapter, which swings out and rotates 270 degrees to plug in a cars power outlet.

Details: mophie.com

The Charge4All Travel Charging Folio (\$49.95) is an all-in-one charger packed into a stylish leather carrying case.

Simply plug into any wall outlet and then connect up to four devices for charging at the same time from individual adapters.

Included with the charger are five adapters (iPhone/iPod, Mini USB, Micro USB, Samsung SCH, LG Chocolate). Additional adapters are sold on the Charge4All's website.

Many users might choose to stock this up with similar plugs to charge everyone's iPods overnight at the same time.

In addition, a car charger is included to charge on the go, which can be stored inside the folio when not in use along with the AC adapter.

Details: charge4all.net

Many users want power on the go without requiring a wall outlet. The Kensington Charging Dock with Mini Battery Pack for iPhone and iPod (\$44.95) is my choice for keeping the music and videos playing.

The dock allows the media device to be charged when connected to a wall outlet, but it also includes a mini battery pack, which supplies extra hours of power to an iPhone or iPod anywhere.

The dock also has a slot for simultaneously charging the extra battery while the device is powered.

Kensington tests showed the Mini Battery Pack extends play time up to 30 hours of music; 6 hours of video; 3 hours of talk. These numbers can vary depending on the age of your device.

Syncing can also be done when the unit is docked with the included detachable USB cable.

I can see the Kensington Nightstand Charging Dock for iPhone/iPod (\$22.98) being a regular in my travel bag.

The charger has a kickstand to keep my iPod upright while charging overnight.

After downloading the free Kensington Rise & Shine Clock and Weather application, I can display my device as a nightstand alarm clock.

The app displays the time in big numbers in several options and displays the current local weather with a five-day forecast, along with the day and date.

You have the choice of dimming the display with a night setting as well as not letting it turn off in a sleep mode.

Another useful way to use the nightstand dock is to watch movies on an airplane. Why sit and hold the player for hours? Just hook up it up to this to go hands free.

Combine this with a 12V [charger](#) while in use since many airlines have power outlets at each seat.

Details: us.kensington.com

Powering up a laptop on the go requires a lot more electricity. Since I'm a Mac user, the HyperMac external battery from Sanho Electronics is all I need to keep me running.

You have your choice of four different sizes, each with a different capacity.

The choices are 222-watt hours (\$500), 150-watt hours (\$400), 100-watt hours (\$300) and 60-watt hours for \$200.

They are a bit bulky and can add a lot of weight to your travel bag; the 222-watt model is 4.7 pounds so consider this before making your purchase.

I used the 222 model on a recent flight from DFW to San Francisco while writing this story and never did I get a low power warning on my MacBook Pro.

Sanho's web site rates the high capacity model for 23.5 hours for my computer. These numbers can vary depending by computer and what you are doing (video vs. text).

The 60-watt battery (0.8 pounds) will give me 10 hours of extended computer life. To recharge the battery itself, simply plug any USB connection to a wall, car or computers port.

I'm sure there are portable battery options out there for PC's, but you might want to add years to your life by just switching to a Mac.

Details: hyperdrive.com

If AA batteries power up your gadget, the eco-friendly USBCELL AA Rechargeable Batteries (\$17.99) are the ultimate in cool when it comes to batteries.

They look like normal AA batteries until you flip open the top to expose a built-in USB connection. A side indicator lights will show when the NiMH (Nickel Metal Hydride) battery is charging, 90 percent charged, and fully charged.

A full charge is achieved in just over 5 hours.

In addition to the AA's, they also have AAA, 9V, C/D along with phone and device batteries

Details: usbcell.com

While the apps for iPhone and iPod get all the sexy coverage, BlackBerry has thousands of apps for travel that they want you to know about.

This includes free programs planning travel, getting you around while at a location, weather and finding places to dine and shop.

The Tripit Travel Organizer keeps all your travel plans on your handheld device in one place, regardless of where the travel was booked.

With Navita Translator, users can speak or type words into the Blackberry and have them translated into more than 50 languages.

If you're getting hungry or need to go shopping, apps called Poynt and WHERE will help you find both.

Details: appworld.blackberry.com

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