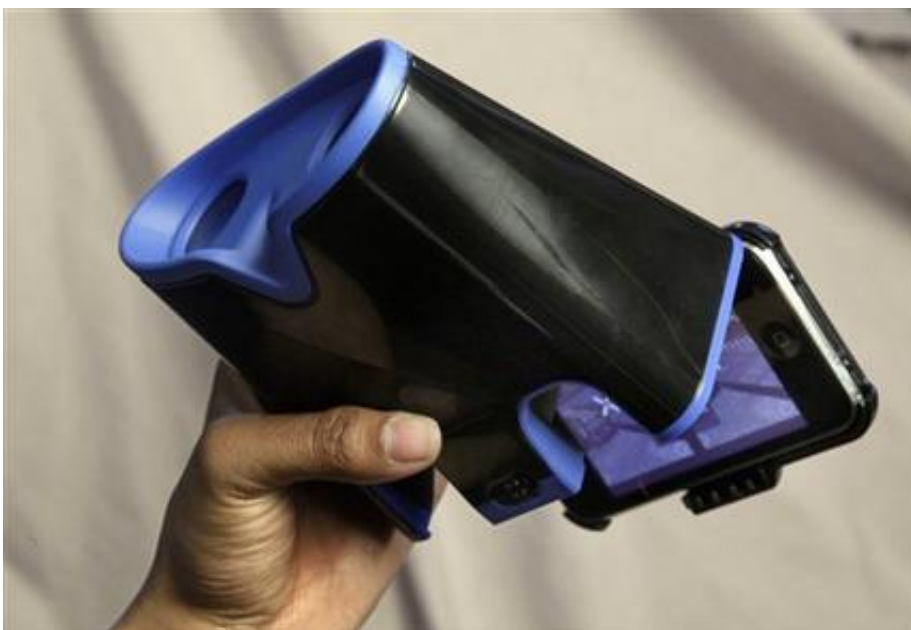


Review: Hasbro My3D turns iPhone into 3-D cinema

April 7 2011, By BARBARA ORTUTAY , AP Technology Writer



A Hasbro My3D is shown in this photo, in New York Wednesday, April 6, 2011. (AP Photo/Richard Drew)

(AP) -- Nintendo just launched the 3DS, a handheld game device with a 3-D screen. But you don't need to spend \$249 for 3-D gaming on the go: \$35 will do. That's the price of an attachment Hasbro is selling that adds depth to the screen of an iPhone or iPod Touch.

Unfortunately, the Hasbro My3D isn't a slim pair of glasses. It looks more like a weird set of toy binoculars. You snap the Apple device into a

holder on one end and look through the other.

It's a fun diversion aimed mostly at kids. It can wow grown-ups too, but I'm not sure anyone will use this much in the long run. It's hardly \$35 worth of plastic, but it might be \$35 worth of entertainment.

The roots of the My3D go way back: it's basically a slight update of the stereoscope, which was first demonstrated in 1851. This two-lens device delighted Victorians with still 3-D photos of landscapes. The View-Master is another later-day successor to the stereoscope.

The View-Master, of course, never worked with applications and movies, but the My3D does. It's used with specially written apps like as "Sharks," which immerses users in a shark-filled underwater scene, and "Sector 17," an outer-space shooter. These are all free to download for now from the iTunes Store, though Hasbro does plan to start charging for some of them later this spring. Until June, the viewers are only available from Target stores.

To start, I downloaded a free app called My3Dpresents, which serves as a sort of introduction. The app includes trailers for My3D games and six current and upcoming 3-D movies, including "Kung Fu Panda 2," "Megamind" and "Smurf'd." (However, Hasbro Inc. hasn't promised that full 3-D movies will be available.)

To reach the iPhone's touch screen, you insert your thumbs into two holes at the bottom of the My3D. But many of the games also use the phone's [motion sensor](#). I played a simple little game called "Bubble Bolt," which has you tilting the [iPhone](#) to guide a goldfish inside a bubble through increasingly complex obstacle courses and into a pond waiting at the end. To my co-workers, this must have been a sight - I was looking into a pair of binoculars with no lenses while bobbing and tilting my head to control something only I could see. In "Sector 17," attacking

spaceships can come from any angle, so I had to twist and turn on my swivel chair to look up, down and behind me.

This aspect of the game was perhaps even more engaging than the apparent depth of the screen, which I had some trouble perceiving. Like many people, my 3-D vision isn't perfect because of an eye condition, but I had an easier time enjoying the My3D than a 3-D movie in a theater.

On my iPhone 3GS, the images were a bit pixelated. That's because the My3D presents two side-by-side images on the screen, one for each eye. This halves the apparent resolution of the screen. The iPhone 4 and the latest version of the iPod Touch have higher-resolution displays, so the image in the My3D stays crisp and clear - clearer, in fact, than that on the Nintendo 3DS screen in 3-D mode.

That said, the two devices are in different leagues and neither serves to replace the other. The Nintendo 3DS, which went on sale in the U.S. last month, has a 3-D camera and comes with controls for far more complex games than the My3D can play. None of the My3D games held my admittedly short attention span for very long, but I'd be curious to see what else developers will come up with. Later this summer, Nintendo plans to start streaming Netflix content to the 3DS.

Sprint Nextel Corp., AT&T Inc. and others are planning to sell smartphones with 3DS-style screens soon, so Hasbro's My3D might be a short-lived novelty. Until then, though, it's worth a shot, especially if you don't mind looking a little comical peering into a plastic viewfinder navigating 3-D worlds visible only to you. For subway rides and dentist offices, it's probably best to stick to "Angry Birds" and other 2-D games.

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