

# Weird and wacky: Inventors show off their devices

April 6 2011

---



French Jean Marc Batard presents his invention a vertical garden which allows elderly people to garden. It can also be used by people who love gardening but cannot bend down at the 39th International Exhibition of Inventions, New Techniques and Products, in Geneva, Switzerland, Wednesday, April 6, 2011. 765 exhibitors from 45 countries are presenting around 1000 products at the 39th International Exhibition of Inventions, which runs from April 6-10. (AP Photo/Keystone, Salvatore Di Nolfi)

They say there's a gadget for just about everything. That now includes boots which detect radiation and a kangaroo tail for weary humans who'd like a rest but can't be bothered to sit down.

These and a thousand other devices went on display Wednesday at the world's biggest inventions fair, where exhibitors from 45 countries showed off their weird and wacky designs in Geneva in the hope of attracting investors or buyers.

Peyman Sarhadi of Iran showed off his "super smart boot," which he hopes will become the Swiss army knife of footwear.

Equipped with sensors, it collects data on air temperature, humidity, location and the wearer's blood pressure, and then sends the information to a base camp. It can heat or cool the feet and can also measure radiation levels, a feat that might be useful given Iran's reputed nuclear ambitions - peaceful or otherwise.

Sarhadi claims the boot is already being tested by the Iranian army.

"It's useful," Sarhadi said in a remarkably understated sales pitch.

Emanuele Lopopolo of Italy presented a portable backrest that allows its wearer to take a break from standing by leaning back onto a telescopic pole.

"The kangaroo can rest its weight on its tail, so we've made the same thing for humans," he said, reclining at a 60-degree angle while passing spectators did their best not to trip over the pole.

Miracle tinctures and obscure industrial equipment aside, visitors may find the most useful inventions include a mouthwash-dispensing toothbrush, a braille photocopier, a foldable tandem bike and a vertical garden.

Jean-Marc Batard said the idea to build his pyramid-like garden came from his experience running a retirement home, where many elderly

people complained about not being able to pursue their love of gardening because it was too hard for them to bend down.

The Frenchman came up with a modular wooden frame that can be modified to suit the gardener's horticultural preference - and reach.

While many [inventors](#) enjoy support from their governments or universities, some have invested large sums of their own money in unlikely gadgets in the hope of someday hitting the jackpot.

"I've spent euro50,000 (\$71,500) on the prototype, now I need an investor to make it in bulk," said Roberto Capomazza, demonstrating what he claims is the fastest shrimp peeling device ever invented.

And why did he devote so much money toward developing a rather simple kitchen implement?

"I love shrimp, but I hate using my fingers to peel them," he replied.

The fair opened Wednesday and runs until April 10.

©2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Citation: Weird and wacky: Inventors show off their devices (2011, April 6) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-04-weird-wacky-inventors-devices.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.