

Gadgets: Smart sweeper maps territory to clean

September 15 2017, by Gregg Ellman, Gregg Ellman



Deebot

Once you prepare your house for vacuuming, the only thing left to do to clean your floors and carpet is to press a button. From there, the Deebot R95 robotic vacuum cleaner takes over and does the work.

I own one of the other robotic vacuums, and while it does a good job, it often gets hung up in areas such as high carpet, tangled with cords, or stuck between my kitchen table chairs.

The Deebot came with precise instructions on how to operate it, including a specific first run procedure. The process includes setting up a Wi-Fi connection to its app, which works with the vacuum to set up a floor plan map using Smart Navi technology for an unobstructed course around your house. Since the mapping had to be set up, the instructions explicitly suggested I follow the vacuum for the initial voyage to make sure it didn't get stuck anywhere. You can start with the full course of your entire home or just a few rooms and add more as you go.

In the past, I thought it was cool to have a robot vacuum, but now (as Deebot said I would) I find myself opening the app to watch the map and see where the vacuum is. Why? Because I can.

The app even lets you start and stop the vacuum from anywhere. If you have the Alexa voice assistant close by, you can ask her to start the cleaning.

The Deebot (13.9-by-13.9-by-4 inches, 10.6 pounds) has left and right handed rotor brushes to help get most everything in its way. A dust bin collects what you don't want so you'll have to empty it like you would any other vacuum.

A base is its home and charging station. If your vacuum road course isn't finished before the battery runs out, it's smart enough to return to get a charge and then complete its chore. The run time is about 90 minutes before a charge is needed.

When I engaged a conversation with friends who were against having a robotic vacuum, I asked how well their existing [vacuum](#) gets under beds for dog hair. The answer was zero, but with the Deebot, it's 100 percent.

www.ecovacs.com \$549.99

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Blue Microphone's new Satellite wireless noise-canceling headphones are promoted as the first with a built-in amp along with two separate pairs of drivers.

What does that mean to anyone who wants a great sounding headphone? This makes it one-stop shopping, no need to look any further than the Satellite's if you're headphone shopping.

I knew they were as great as advertised after a few seconds of listening. And, they have a great modern look. So I went digging around to find out what makes the sound come to life.

According to Blue, the Satellite over-the-head headphones uses two separate drivers in each ear-cup. One is dedicated to high-fidelity audio, and the other for noise canceling.

The sound system is listed on the Blue website as a "Patent pending 4-driver system featuring two custom 44mm ultra-responsive Blue dynamic drivers for audio and two dedicated 30mm drivers for active noise canceling."

The dual drivers allow the audio's sound to stay at high-quality levels, while the noise canceling technology removes unwanted noise.

Blue has built the headphones with an analog audiophile amplifier to give you an incredible hi-fi sound.

The Satellites have a built-in, rechargeable batteries, which are rated to last for 24 hours of straight wireless sound or 8 hours of hi-fi sound using the active noise canceling.

A USB charging cable connects directly to the ear cup. There's a button for power, pairing, the amplifiers, and noise-calling on or off.

Often headphones I try feel great on my head for the first few minutes but often turn into an uncomfortable feeling. I placed the Satellites on my head before I boarded a recent flight and didn't remove them until I got to baggage claim, about 3 hours later.

To me, an airplane is the best location for testing noise-canceling and these passed the test with the highest grades possible.

With the holidays not far off, I'd put this as a solid contender for any gift list.

www.bluedesigns.com \$399.99

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Emergency prep

With all the hurricanes hitting land these days, combined with the portable electronic world we live in, it's a good idea to have an extra set (or 2) of USB charging cables and portable batteries packed, charged

and ready to grab at a moment's notice.

All portable batteries are not the same. Some have more charging ports than others, and the amperage on the ports can be different, even if they look identical. Many of today's tablets (iPad for example) need a 2.1A USB port for regular charging. They will charge on the other 1A USB port but at a considerably slower rate.

The battery is measured by mAh (milliampere hours). For the most part, the higher the mAh number, the more charges you'll get; bigger is better.

Keep in mind, even though the packaging on the battery say's you'll get a certain number of charges per battery cycle, that's not always correct. You have to take into account how powerful your device is since not all portable gadgets require the same amount of charging power.

My advice is to get at least 10,000 mAh along with 2 USB ports, 1 of which is 2.1A and a few extra cables. Even a pair of cheap \$5 earbuds can be a great investment for an emergency kit or include the earbuds, which came with your device and most people never use.

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