

2002 gift guide

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EPSON STYLUS PHOTO 820

Digital cameras let you skip all that tedious scanning to send pictures to your friends, but now you've got quite the opposite problem. You can't frame a floppy disc. Your desktop is cluttered and your memory's tied up. You've got stacks of photo CDs. And Grandma still thinks you're talking about peanut butter when you tell her you'll send her a GIF from your last birthday. The **Epson Stylus Photo 820** prints perfectly dazzling images, provided you use high-end glossy paper and you give them time to dry before manhandling. Bleeding all the way to the edges for a borderless picture worthy of hanging up or mailing out, the Epson prints a full-color photo in about two minutes. (That last edge slows it down and the paper seems jammed, but just let it be.) It also spits over ten B&W's per minute. The low cost of the printer itself is only challenged by the high cost of new ink. The five-color cartridge runs \$19.75 and once you've exhausted only one column, you're forced to replace the whole thing. Black is sold separately for \$24.26. I made it through only 18 8x10 prints of a single shot before my blue was too low to continue. But if you're using the 820 for documents as well, you should get decent life out of each cartridge. www.Epson.com, \$99.

HOMEDICS PARASPA DELUXE

Newsflash: Hippy Foot—that rough, calloused, flaky condition acquired by years of pacing Shakedown without shoes—is reversible. So is Desk Elbow, Scrubber's Knee and Landscaping Hands. Maybe it sounds girly, but in private there's no denying how much fun a paraffin bath can be, or how easy. You plug the unit in, melt the wax, lower the temperature, and start coating body parts. A few days of dipping can undo years of damage. The only problem is patience. They say you should wait 15 minutes before peeling the dried wax and repeating, but I never made it that long even when I did bother to use the enhancing baggies. As soon as the wax was solid, I was sliding it right off. The **ParaSpa Deluxe** comes with 60 plastic liners and six pounds of hypoallergenic wax (reusable as long as you're the only one germinating it up.). Two-pound wax refills and 20 liners run \$19.99. www.Homedics.com, \$49.99.



HOMEDICS FOOT PRO ULTRA

Speaking of feet... Under the desk or in front of the couch, the **Foot Pro Ultra** is like two, actually three, machines in one. On the massage setting, two bumpy platforms vibrate even the hard-to-reach arches of the feet. There's not much difference between the Hi and Lo setting; both are ticklish at first, but ultimately relaxing for pretty much the whole leg. The infrared heater doesn't really get "hot" per se, but it acts as an excellent foot warmer on a cold day. Use simultaneously for a heat massage. The buttons are big and accessible enough that you won't even have to bend over to operate it. Oh lazy day! www.Homedics.com, \$29.99.



HOMEDICS BUBBLE SPA

They say the **Bubble Spa** is intended for "soaking in the tub with a good book, glass of wine and scented candles." The truth is that even on the lowest of its two settings the jet stream is too powerful and the motor too loud for that kind of activity. Not to say it isn't relaxing, just not in that quiet, romantic, subtle kind of way. I tried attaching it to the side of the tub instead of the bottom and this took it down a notch, but there's nothing I can suggest that will stop your neighbors from thinking you're sandblasting or super kinky. www.Homedics.com, \$59.99.



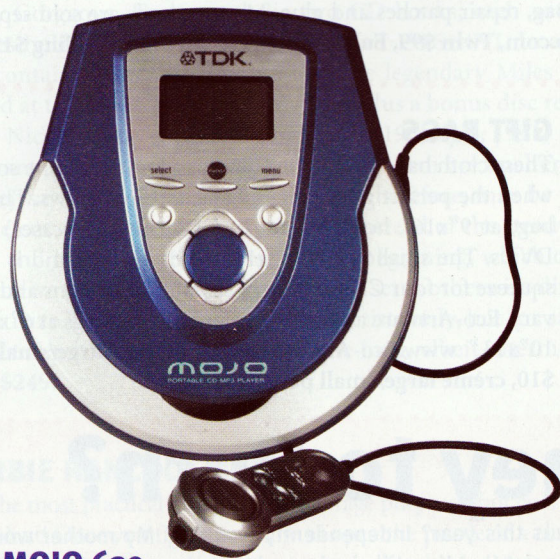
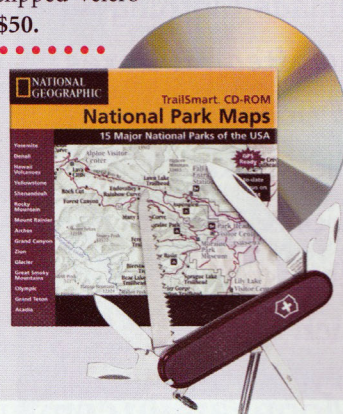
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SWISS ARMY GOLF SET

"Old golfers never die, they just lose their balls." If you felt your funny bone tingle, you'll probably dig the Swiss Army golfer's gift set. The sleek, convenient **GolfTool** includes a divot repairer, groove cleaner and ball marker as well as some of the classic Swiss Army features, like a knife, bottle opener, scissors, tweezers and toothpick. The package comes with clipped Velcro case and three Wilson balls. www.SwissArmy.com, \$50.

SWISS ARMY HIKER SET

For those who'd rather lug a backpack than a bag of clubs, Victorinox also offers the hiker's gift set. The **Hiker Pocketknife** is your standard Swiss Army fare: two knives, can and bottle openers, screwdrivers, saw, and, of course, tweezers and toothpick. The package includes a belt-looped case and a TrailSmart CD-ROM by National Geographic. The disc features interactive maps and camping/hiking information for 15 national parks, mostly in the West. It's exceptionally easy to navigate and the system allows you to plot, print and save potential adventures. www.SwissArmy.com, \$40.



TDK MOJO 620

A little on the bulky side, this CD-MP3 player can't compete with the pocketability of the iPod or whatever tinier technology has been invented in the last 30 seconds, but what it lacks in size it more than makes up for in features. With software like Logo Editor, Navitrak, and LyricSync, the **Mojo 620's** four-line backlit LCD display is equipped to display a personalized image at startup and will not only read the track title and artist, but will stream each song's lyrics as they play. That is, if you've got the time and wherever with to set up your Mojo to do such things. In order to take full advantage, you first have to convert all of your music files to Mojo's FIF system, then manually add the lyrics. The ReFlex clip remote isn't compatible with these aspects since it lacks an LCD, which also means that accessing the equalizer and other menu/navigation functions either requires adept push count memorization or dealing with the component itself. But once you've gone to the trouble to organize, the Mojo lets you create playlists and select songs by title, artist, or genre. www.TDK.com, \$149.

AMPHONY MODEL 1000 2.4 GHZ DIGITAL WIRELESS HEADPHONES

Hate to hit pause mid-song? Want loud pristine sound while your cohabitants sleep peacefully? Just like the feel of warm cozies on your earlobes while you veg out in front of the tube? **Amphony's Digital Wireless Headphones** are nothing short of amazing. Go on, you can say killer cans this time without getting slapped! Transferring 3 Mbps (3 million bits per second) with a range of 200 feet unobstructed/ 50 feet between walls, you can wander around the house with these things on and never lose even a note to noise, provided you steer clear of running the microwave. The transmitter comes with an AC adapter and a dual RCA cable that connects to your audio source (receiver, equalizer, television) and leaves one additional slot for future RangeBooster modules (available fall 2003). The headphones themselves use two AA batteries for approximately 100 hours use. www.Amphony.com, \$129.

