

'The tech I couldn't live without'



Want to know what a gadget guru really rates? We asked our expert Lindsay Calder for her desert island tech – the top 10 gizmos she loves above all others

1 DEVOLO DLAN 500 WI-FI NETWORK KIT

Without doubt, this is the most useful gadget I've tested. Simply plug these wi-fi extenders into plug sockets and they use your home's electric wiring to extend the range of wi-fi throughout the house. After years of living with wi-fi cold spots (sitting on the stairs to get online), I'm now connected from the basement to the loft. Kit with two plugs, £109.99, Maplin



2 NOW TV BOX

When I first used this little internet box, I thought it was amazing. You plug it into the television to watch catch-up channels and YouTube, and it also offers contract-free Sky packages, such as Entertainment, for only £6.99 a month. Then I discovered I could also stream through the Now TV app on three other devices, including my phone and tablet. As a result, I binge-watched all seven series of *Mad Men*. Nothing to do with a secret crush on charmer Roger Sterling, of course... Box, £14.99, Now TV



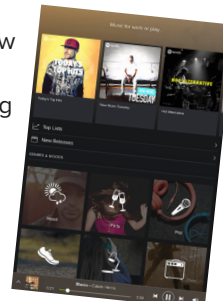
3 KINDLE VOYAGE

I was one of those people who thought an e-reader could never replace a real book, but I have been totally won over. If you finish your holiday read quickly, there are thousands that you can access in an instant – you just need wi-fi. Downloading a bestseller in one touch, as I sat in a taverna in Crete last year was fantastic. The Kindle Voyage is a bit of a splurge, but it's worth it, as it adapts to any light conditions, from day to night, making it ideal for gripping reads. £169.99, Amazon



4 SPOTIFY

During some building work last year, we put about 20 years worth of CDs into storage. But I don't miss them as, since subscribing to the music streaming service Spotify, I can listen to anything I like via wi-fi speakers, using the iPad to play DJ. Okay, it costs £9.99 a month for the premium service that works with my speakers, but I've blown that on plenty of embarrassing CDs. And I can now browse new releases, rather than just singing along to Duran Duran. Premium, free 30-day trial, then £9.99 a month, Spotify



8 BOSCH ATHLET

Being generally loathe to vacuum the stairs, what with unplugging the cable and carting the thing about, dustballs are a common sight in my house. Then I tried this lightweight cordless cleaner and began vacuuming at the drop of a crumb. As it's ready to go, you don't think twice about using it. It's powerful, handles dust well and weighs only 3kg, so is perfect for older users. My mum loves hers! Bosch BCH625KTGB Athlet, £229, John Lewis



5 EPSON V550 PHOTO SCANNER

Many printers double up as scanners now but, for me, a dedicated photo scanner was worth every penny. Researching my family history, I amassed boxes of old photographs. This scanner – which also scans negatives and slides – reproduced perfect digital images to save on my computer. This photo of my grandparents, taken in Glasgow in 1929, is my favourite. £199.99, Epson



6 TOSHIBA CHROMEBOOK 2

In winter, my home office is like a walk-in freezer, but I used to be stuck there, chained to my desktop computer. This gadget was my saviour. Chromebooks are light, cheap and super-fast because they don't have much storage – instead your documents are automatically stored in Google's Cloud. You need wi-fi to use one effectively, although you can save documents to work on offline. Standard version, £189.99, Currys



7 CANON POWERSHOT G7 X

Snapping away on my smartphone on holiday (taking pictures of cute dogs, plates of squid, you name it), I've often drained the battery without realising and been left in the lurch, unable to make a call. I had an early version of this Canon years ago (pre-smartphones), and the latest one takes very high quality photos – to rival a DSLR camera – so I can use my phone for, er, phoning! £388, Jessops



9 IPAD AIR

The iPad deserves a medal, as it allows me to chat with my mum over a cup of tea – me at my table in London and Mum at hers in Scotland. But it's not only FaceTime video calling that's been a godsend – since my mum was given hers, she googles like a fiend, catches up on TV via iPlayer and emails me photos of the garden. From £319, Apple



10 IPOD SHUFFLE

My lovely dad Tom passed away in March, aged 83, after suffering from Lewy body disease, a form of dementia. Every day, almost to the end of his life, he listened to his favourite music on his iPod Shuffle. Clipped on to his collar, it kept him relaxed and happy, while Mum did chores around the house. £40, Apple



Photos: Paul Buller