

NOVEMBER 13, 2006

# TIME

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:  
A 48-PAGE  
SPECIAL SECTION  
**THE BEST  
INVENTIONS  
OF 2006**

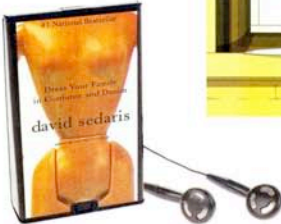
WEB SHOPPING

GUIDE 2006



**For the Decorator**  
The colorful Karsson Blocks Clock, \$88 at [chiaso.com](http://chiaso.com), purveyor of modern looks for the home (including great rugs), is a work of DIY functional sculpture. You can hang the 2-in. cubes any which way you like, using nails or the double-sided sticky pads that come with the set. The timepiece runs on a single AA battery.

**For the Commuter**  
Playway's audiobooks aren't designed for digital-media mavens with iPods who are accustomed to downloading content off the net. They're pocket-size and preloaded for people who just want to press Play and go. The collection includes more than 200 titles—new fiction, literary classics, books for kids, how-tos, humor—for \$30 to \$55 each, earbuds included. Visit [store.playwaydigital.com](http://store.playwaydigital.com).



**For the Officemate**  
[Quincyshop.com](http://Quincyshop.com) has an eye for goofy desk accessories, like this 4-in. robot pencil sharpener, \$6. It winds up as you whittle, then takes a walk when you're done. [Thinkgeek.com](http://Thinkgeek.com) also sells it, plus a \$5 plastic ninja attack gun perfect for cube warfare.

Shopping for presents is a big job. Fortunately, the Web is even bigger. Let it make your holidays jollier, and easier



**For the Bird Watcher**  
We can confirm that you will sound like a partridge and a turkookee with these elegant birdcalls—\$75 for the set at [uncommongoods.com](http://uncommongoods.com)—but we can't guarantee the real deal will show up. Dive deeper into the subject with *Bird Songs*, \$45 at [chroniclebooks.com](http://chroniclebooks.com). The illustrated hardcover has a built-in audio player that holds 250 recordings of real chirps and trills.

**For The Do-It-Yourselfer**  
The Bionic Wrench from Loggerhead Tools—\$33 for an 8-in. ricket-plated version at [gametwade.com](http://gametwade.com)—won't slip even on stripped nuts and bolts, and it multiplies your gripping power to make the task at hand less, well, wrenching. When you squeeze the handle, the six gripping heads close in for a tight fit.

BY MARYANNE MURRAY BUECHNER

## cool

## gifts



**For the New Parents**  
At [sparkability.com](http://sparkability.com), click Baby Gear to find the Philips DECT monitor, \$200. It's designed not to interfere with other household devices and scrambles the signal, so neighbors can't listen in. The receiver tracks room temperature and works as a two-way radio, allowing you to soothe baby ("Go to sleep!") without leaving the couch.



**For the Dog Lover**  
Practice your living and entertain your pooch at the same time: the Doggie Driver, \$28 at [prigadgets.com](http://prigadgets.com), sends tennis balls flying to be fetched. Note to cat people: [katzbank.com](http://katzbank.com) sells beautiful, litter-box-concealing benches that start at \$1,750.



**For the Gadget Geek**  
Is it a stress ball? No. Back massager? Wrong again. This rubber USB hub, \$18 at [momastore.org](http://momastore.org), gives you three ports for the price of one. Find it in Home Accessories, under Radius and Electronics, next to some bamboo earphones and Muji cardboard speakers. Museum members get a discount.

ILLUSTRATIONS FOR TIME BY MARCOS CHIN

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