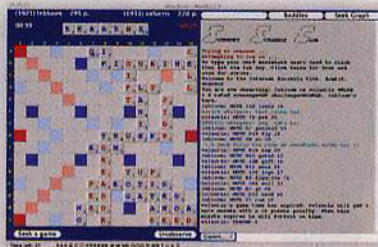


# Hot Stuff

What we're raving about this month



## Internet Scrabble Club

As a Scrabble fan, I've tried online versions of the classic game, including the official Scrabble app on Facebook. The best version I've found is the Internet Scrabble Club. Download the Java app, log in to the ISC server, and you can find a game almost anytime, featuring players of all skill levels (several real-world Scrabble champs play there). The only downside I've discovered: the Mac client doesn't have all the features of the Windows client; for example, you can't sign the Fair Play pledge (whereby you promise not to use anagram software). And I don't know how Hasbro or Mattel (which both own the rights to Scrabble) feel about the ISC's use of their trademark. But if you have a Scrabble addiction, the ISC is a fiendishly good place to get your fix ([www.isc.ro](http://www.isc.ro)).—**DAN MILLER**

## Berkeley Lamp II

If you spend your days at a desk, good lighting can make a huge difference. Full Spectrum Solutions' \$289 Berkeley Lamp II is the first lamp I've tried that bathes my desk and office in bright, pleasant light without creating any eyestrain or glare. The Lamp II provides two independent, dimmable bulbs—one facing downward for task lighting and an upward-shining one for the room. Each bulb has a choice of color temperatures: 3,500K (for casual lighting) or 5,500K (for reading and other tasks). An AC outlet on the lamp's base lets you power up a gadget. The Berkeley Lamp is environmentally friendly too: the fluorescent bulbs should last ten times longer than incandescents, and it comes packed in 100 percent postconsumer materials ([www.berkeleylamp.com](http://www.berkeleylamp.com)).—**DAN FRAKES**



## Back-In-Time

Leopard's Time Machine is great for creating backups, but its interface is limiting. Tri-Edre's \$29 Back-In-Time offers a more flexible way to access those backups, even on multiple Time Machine disks. It allows you to see how many different versions of a file or folder exist, identify all files new



to the current backup or deleted since the previous backup, restore data to any location, and edit Time Machine's backup schedule. ([www.tri-edre.com](http://www.tri-edre.com)).—**DAN FRAKES**

## Ocean Way Drums

Imagine having two great audio engineers sitting next to you when you load up your virtual drum kit. That's exactly what you've got if you use Ocean Way Drums, a new music tool from Grammy-winning producer Allen Sides and Grammy-nominated producer Steven Miller. Miller and Sides created the drum samples at Ocean Way Studios, one of the most famous studios in the world. They recorded in Studio B, where the drum tracks for some of the world's top-selling albums were laid down. Ocean Way Drums starts at \$249 ([www.oceanwaydrums.net](http://www.oceanwaydrums.net)).—**JIM DALRYMPLE**

## Tune Blocker

Technology, at its best, saves us from doing stupid things. If you've ever connected your iPod or iPhone to someone else's Mac to charge it and accidentally told the device to sync with that person's library, you know where I'm coming from. Enter Matias's Tune Blocker, which offers a way to charge your iPod on any computer without fear. The Tune Blocker is a USB-to-iPod dock-connector cable with a special switch. In one position, it'll act like any iPod cable, syncing all your data, but flip the switch on the Tune Blocker to the charge-only setting, and you'll disable the syncing functionality. No accidental syncing, no potential iTunes-erasing, and no one else's music harping your buzz. A 3-foot cable runs \$25 and a 6-foot version goes for \$30 ([www.matias.ca/tuneblocker](http://www.matias.ca/tuneblocker)).—**SCOTT MCNULTY**

