

7 Practical Travel Gizmos for Your Next Car Excursion

Travel by vehicle poses distinctive problems that you can solve with a little advance groundwork and a few practical gadgets. This article describes several of these gadgets. A search that you can use to locate each item on the Net follows its description.

1. Universal USB Car Charger

Electronic wonders like iPods and MP3 players make it easy to enjoy music and watch videos. However, many devices require recharging via computer USB ports. How can you accomplish this when you are stuck in a vehicle?

A universal USB car charger solves the dilemma. The most versatile of these chargers will plug into AC current as well as a vehicle's power point or cigarette lighter. Use your device's USB cable to connect to the charger's pseudo-USB port, and it will recharge without a computer.

Keywords for searching: USB car charger adapter

If you would like to construct your own adapter, you can splice together a 5-volt car charger and a USB female plug. Many websites publish complete instructions.

Keywords for searching: how to make USB car charger

2. Mobile Rechargeable Battery Charger

You may own a GPS, digital camera, or PIM that uses rechargeable batteries instead of alkalines. Rechargeables are a great environmental alternative - until they run down in the middle of a road trip. Fortunately, there are car chargers available. Carry one in your glove box.

Keywords for searching: vehicle charger rechargeable batteries

3. Solar-Powered Rechargeable Battery Charger

You can use a solar-powered system to recharge your batteries if the sun is shining. The best of these systems will also work with your vehicle's cigarette lighter as well as household current. If you do your research well, you may even locate one with special adapters for your PDA or cell phone.

Keywords for searching: solar powered battery charger

4. Portable Water Heater

Many automotive and travel shops sell small water heaters that look like household kettles. These plug into your car's power point, enabling you to enjoy coffee, tea, hot chocolate, or soup - anytime - anywhere.

Keywords for searching: portable kettle car

If you have an infant who requires a warm bottle at feeding time, try to find an immersible heater. These devices have a small heating coil that you can immerse in any liquid. Heat a bit of water in an appropriate container, and then leave the baby bottle in the water until it reaches the proper temperature.

Keywords for searching: portable car immersion beverage heater

5. Portable Hand-Held UV Water Purifier

Tainted drinking water can quickly cause a case of the trots - also known as 'travelers' diarrhea' or 'Montezuma's revenge'. The answer? Purchase a portable pen-sized ultraviolet water purifier. UV light effectively kills bacteria, protozoa, and viruses. These sterilizers are so tiny that you can carry them practically anywhere - stowed in the glove compartment, in a purse or shirt pocket, or in the baby's diaper bag.

Keywords for searching: portable hand-held UV water purifier

6. Multi-Tool

Many different types of multi-tools are available - with combinations of tools that might include nail clippers, screwdrivers, penknives, pliers, scissors, can openers, corkscrews, and other handy gizmos. Hunt around in the stores or online until you find one that contains everything you might need for your next road trip.

Keywords for searching: multi tool camping travel

7. Repair Kit for Eyeglasses

Don't pass over this tip just because you have perfect vision. Whenever you go outside, you should don a pair of sunglasses to protect your eyes. Eliminate the nuisance of loose hinge screws or a missing nose pad with a speedy field repair. Eyeglass repair kits are cheap and small. You can find them in most pharmacies, department stores, and grocery outlets. If necessary, try the Internet search below.

Keywords for searching: repair kit for eyeglasses

These are just some of the devices that can make your holiday more enjoyable. Whenever you travel, make a note of any little glitches you encounter. After you return home, get on the Net and look for a solution. If you can't find anything, maybe you should develop a new invention and become the next Dean Kamen!

(Dean Kamen: inventor of the Segway)

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