

Green Gadget Gifts for Father's Day

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Father's Day is right around the corner, but there is still time to get dad something totally cool *and* totally green. Let's face it, men love their gadgets and, as high-tech gifts go, green gadgets sport some of the coolest technology available. Our list of Father's Day gift ideas is full of useful, money-saving, high tech and just plain fun stuff that will tickle your dad pink and might just make his friends green with envy, too.

The Eton Raptor really is a must have for any level of outdoor enthusiast. Its mono-crystalline solar panel charges a built-in lithium-ion rechargeable battery that can charge a cell phone (via USB) and power the Raptor's digital AM/FM/WB tuner, altimeter, barometer, digital compass, LED flashlight and alarm clock. It's weatherproof, so it can withstand the elements, including rain. Speaking of which, should the sun not be so plentiful, the Raptor can also be charged via DC adapter. And we're just getting started; the Raptor packs in several other nifty features that dad is sure to dig, too. (Did we mention it can be used as an iPod speaker?)

Available in three different colors at Amazon for about \$122.00.

Green Genius Smart Surge Protectors

Every entertainment center, home theater and computer station should be equipped with a high-quality surge suppressor anyway, but these advanced power strips from Accell won't just protect Dad's expensive equipment from power surges, outages or brown-outs, they will also put an end to the constant, unnecessary leaching of power that electronics are known to do while in "stand-by mode." The Green Genius line provides clean, quiet power to devices when they need it, and cuts them off when they don't. Its smart sensors detect when your TV or computer has been turned off and shuts down associated electronics such as DVD players, receivers and printers so they don't sip power for hours while sitting unused. "Always on" outlets will provide constant power to devices like DVRs and wireless Internet routers that actually do need power all the time.

Available at Amazon for \$35.00.

Eclipse Solar Gear-Solar Backpack

This military-grade backpack is outfitted with a 4 watt solar panel and rechargeable battery that stores up energy while hiking, biking or just studying outdoors. The pack is handy for carrying gear whilst banking juice for charging a cell phone, iPod or other portable media device.

Available at Eclipse Solar Gear for \$159.00

PowerCost Home Energy Monitor

If the father in your life is the sort that loves to run around the house turning off lights, adjusting the thermostat or performing other thrifty, energy saving activities, then a home energy monitor will entertain and enlighten him for years to come. The PowerCost energy monitor is a simple to use, yet feature-rich energy monitor which uses a transmitter that connects to your electricity meter with a single clamp. The monitor provides real time and historical data about energy use and can be used with helpful online tools like Google Powermeter. Now dad will know which of his energy saving efforts are helping and which aren't, all while saving money on the power bill.

Available at Lowes for \$109.00.

UFO Power Center

The UFO power center allows remote monitoring and control of up to four connected devices through a slick, graphical interface for iPhone, iPad or PC. With the UFO, dad can see how much energy each of his electronics draw, how much each device costs and can shut down any individual outlet remotely. The UFO also provides visual feedback for how much energy is being used as a light on the top of the unit glows green, yellow or red, depending on the severity of energy usage.

The U.S. version of the UFO power center is available on special from Visible Energy for \$99.99.

PowerMonkey Extreme Solar Charger

Don't let the silly name fool you, the Powermonkey Extreme is one heck of a solar charger and it's probably a safe bet that none of your dad's friends will get anything quite like it. This weather resistant device has a super-sized rechargeable battery with enough power storage to charge an iPhone six times. The device can be charged by the sun using its solar panel or from a wall outlet using a provided USB connection. This charger also comes with a multitude of different charging tips, likely to fit most of dad's (and the kids') gadgets and comes with a convenient storage pouch to boot.

The Powermonkey Extreme is available through Amazon in a number of colors for \$189.95 plus shipping.

Neuton Battery Powered Lawn Mower

Consider getting Dad a lawn mower that is almost as green as the grass it cuts. This mower from Neuton features a 360 watt-hour Duracell rechargeable battery that is said to last for up to an hour, depending on lawn conditions. The mower comes with a bagger and mulch plug. Neuton claims this mower can tackle even long, wet grass due to its superior power. With no gas or oil to worry about, it can be folded up to be stored vertically, thus saving space. And, at an estimated cost of just 12 cents per charge, it will save dad some greenbacks as well.

The Neuton mower is available with free shipping at \$399.99 from Neuton.

Eton Soutra XL

The Soutra XL is a solar powered iPod speaker dock with a built-in lithium-ion rechargeable battery, an efficient, high-powered amplifier and eight speakers to deliver high-quality sound just about anywhere dad might want to go. It can provide excellent sounding tunes while gardening, camping, lounging by the pool or manning the BBQ.

Available from Crutchfield for \$299.00.

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