

Eco-Gadgets



While surfing the web seeking out good news stories, I came across an awesome Green article that can help all us technology buffs out there. I am not here to promote a specific green friendly product but I am using this one as an example for us to keep our eyes peeled for new things on the market.

It is a charger that will work on a lot of our little tech gadgets such as ipods, cell phones etc.

The real cool part is that it is charged up by wind power. Why not have this little gadget strapped to you or your bike so that it can collect power from the wind that you can in turn charge your ipod if it dies while you are on that bike ride.

Below is the article that I found in the local newspaper about the HYmini. Once again, I am not promoting any particular gadget here, just the concept of using green products.

The power of green

Eco-gadgets perfect to help out in a pinch

The popularity of eco-gadgets is likely due to a greater awareness of the benefits of renewable energy, the cost savings of not plugging into a traditional electrical outlet to charge every one of your gadgets and an overall desire to go green.

Plus, they're just really, really cool.

Solar and wind chargers can attract a lot of ooohs and aaahs among your friends. On top of that, it's pretty nifty to say your cellphone is charged entirely by wind power (and this doesn't mean your witty conversation). Can it really be that simple?

It's easy to inject the HY-mini (US\$49.99) into your daily life. This gadget uses the wind to charge a hand-held unit and store the charge for future use. The extremely lightweight wind turbine has optional attachments to secure the gadget to your arm or to bike handlebars, with a car window attachment available by this spring. Charge just by biking to work, and turn heads doing so!

The HYmini can also be plugged into a power outlet, and solar panels (cased in cardboard to make them fully recyclable) can also be ordered to supplement charging. Attachments for most cellphone types and a USB port are included.

If you're not sure your jogging or biking is gathering the wind power you need, a small green light turns on to indicate the turbine is turning fast enough.

The HYmini is great to have around in a pinch. If you find your cellphone dead, a minute of driving with the HYmini out the window can get you enough juice to rouse your phone long enough to send a text message or retrieve a phone number.

If there's a downside, it's the lack of any way to see how much charge is left in the HYmini. A green light indicates the HYmini is fully charged, and a red light glows while the gadget is charging a device, but in between, you're never sure where you stand.

On the more passive side, the Solio Classic (US\$99.95) uses solar power to keep your gadgets on the go, even if you're staying still.

This fan shaped-charger sets up easily anywhere -- there's even a suction cup included to grab the sun from your car or office window. While it can also be charged via power outlet, it's easy enough to set up the Solio and just forget it's there (until the sun moves of course).

The Solio needs as much as 10 hours of full sunlight to charge, making it a difficult option during the depths of a Canadian winter, and can often require two days of peak sunlight to gain a full charge. Once fully charged, it holds enough juice for multiple gadgets, depending on the devices you're powering.

Keeping in line with its sleek design, only one button controls the Solio. Push the button to charge a device, or push the button for a measure of how much power the Solio currently holds.

When folded up, the Solio is slightly smaller than the HY-mini and features a number of attachments that work with all major cellphone brands, USB-charged devices, and BlackBerry and Garmin gad-gets. Another nice touch is the inclusion of a number of different power outlet adapters. You're covered when you travel nearly anywhere in the world.

The downside, of course, is you need to have sun to make it work. And even in the sun, it takes time to charge -- an hour of good sun can get you about 20 minutes on a cellphone, longer for an MP3 player. In a pinch, a dead phone and an empty Solio may not help you much.

Both the HYmini and the Solio provide portable power through environmentally friendly sources. Both devices are essentially plug-and-play and easy to use, even for the non-technical. And for gadget fiends, both carry lots of cool factor and will make you the envy of your friends.

HYmini: Basic package US\$49.99 at www.hymini.com. Available in black, green and white. Great for those constantly on the move, by motorbike, boat or bicycle.

Solio Classic: US\$99.95 at www.solio.com. Available in silver, white and pink. Better for those in an office, home or camping setting where the gadget can sit and charge.

Why not send me any gadgets you come across that are green friendly and I will be certain to display them in our magazine so that we can all help promote an eco-friendly world.

By MICHELLE FINCH, SPECIAL TO SUN MEDIA
<http://www.hymini.com/html/HYmini.html>

Wasn't that great?
Peace and Love
Wayne
[Email Wayne](#)