

 NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC

NORTHLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY  
  
3 8101 00111 7896



# Kids

DARE TO EXPLORE

**NEW**  
Tech Page



AMAZING  
Animals



ANT Snakes!



NEW MOVIE:  
Finding Nemo

**Red  
Pandas:  
Will  
They  
Survive?**

**DATE DUE**  
Due Date  
\*\*\*5/08/03\*\*

#BXBCKMW \*\*\*\*\*CR LOT 0050A\*\*C-091  
#15237NRTC300M64#8 D5 WOM210  
NORTHLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY J/A04 210  
300 CUMBERLAND RD P000262  
PITTSBURGH PA 15237-5410

MAY 2003  
www.nationalgeographic.com  
AOL Keyword: NatGeo

# 10

## Cool Inventions

NG KIDS reveals the latest and greatest in techno triumph.

BY SEAN McCOLLUM

Can your teeth receive phone calls? Can your jacket play the latest Avril? With these new inventions, anything's possible! NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS investigated the latest gizmos to find out what they do—and how. Our favorites are here, so check them out. After all, how else will you find out about a robot that mows the lawn?



### 'NET SPECS

**Invention:** Projectable Display Eyewear

**Price:** \$1,000 (but not yet available)

**What's in It for You?** You're bored. You want to catch a movie but don't know what time it starts. What do you do? Log on to your glasses! With a touch of a button, a computer screen seems to float in front of your eyes as you surf the Web. "People will be able to walk around and have access to e-mail and the Internet," says Micro-Optical President Paul Zavracky.

**How It Works:** A tiny projector on the eyeglasses communicates with a handheld computer or other device. The projector then beams images through special lenses in the glasses—images only the wearer can see.



## ROAD TRIP

**Invention:** Trikke

**Price:** \$150-\$230

**What's in It for You?** It may look like a scooter. But with this cool ride, you never have to put a foot on the ground. "Just shift your weight from side to side," says Michela Maletis, 12, of Sierra Madre, California. "It's kind of like downhill skiing."

**How It Works:** The rider's shifting weight translates into a push from the Trikke's rear wheels, kind of how your in-line skates work. And like a three-legged stool, Trikke's three wheels make it more stable than a two-wheeled scooter.



## MY TOOTH'S RINGING

**Invention:** The Phone Tooth

**Price:** Not yet available

**What's in It for You?** Implanted in a molar, this electronic device can receive cell phone calls that only the wearer can hear.

**How It Works:** The phone tooth contains a microchip that acts like a tiny one-way walkie-talkie to direct radio signals from the air to your tooth. These signals invisibly vibrate the user's jaw. Those vibrations create invisible sound waves that carry a message to your inner ear.

## DID YOU KNOW?

A recent survey from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that Americans' favorite invention is the toothbrush! Probably invented in 1498 by the Chinese, the toothbrush beat out four other choices—the car, the personal computer, the cell phone, and the microwave—as the invention folks couldn't live without. Now that's something to smile about!

## TURN UP YOUR JACKET!

**Invention:** Burton AG Clone MD Jacket

**Price:** about \$1,000

**What's in It for You?** This jacket has a built-in sound system! Patches on the sleeve allow users to control a mini-disc player in the jacket's pocket.

**How It Works:** No wires needed for this jacket! Instead, a special touch-sensitive fabric carries your command—louder, new tune, etc.—from the arm control panel to the MD player, which is connected to headphones.



## TYPE FACE

**Invention:** Virtual Computer Keyboard

**Price:** Sold to manufacturers, the device will up the price of a handheld computer by \$35.

**What's in It for You?** Most handhelds are about the size of a deck of cards. That makes typing, well, challenging. But when the handheld comes with this virtual technology, a ghostly keyboard can be projected onto any flat surface, such as a tabletop.

**How It Works:** A computer chip built into a handheld device beams out the keyboard. Sensors can tell where your fingers land and instantly zap that info back to the device.

"Sound Off!" If you could invent a cool gadget, what would it do?  
[www.nationalgeographic.com/ngkids](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/ngkids)  
AOL Keyword: NatGeoKids



## 4 UNDER YOUR SKIN

**Invention:** VeriChip

**Price:** \$200 plus a \$10 monthly fee

**What's in It for You?** No bigger than a grain of rice, this device provides a lot of information. Implanted under a person's skin, the gadget can give personal identification data to people such as police or rescue squads. In the future, chips with satellite technology might help locate people who are lost.

**How It Works:** Each VeriChip contains a number that is read by a special scanner. That number is entered into a computer, which connects the number to information about the person who had the chip implanted.



## 5 MOWBOT

**Invention:** Robomower RL 800

**Price:** \$600-\$700

**What's in It for You?** Hate your job as the family weed whacker? Try the Robomower! This automatic grass cutter will do the job while you do something that's actually fun.

**How It Works:** Robomower owners place hidden wires to mark the area to be cut. The machine's sensors detect these wires, and then it mows back and forth until the entire area is cut. The sensors also let the Robomower know if it needs to avoid an obstacle. And a bonus: The rechargeable batteries are eco-friendly!



## 6 FRIDGE SURFING

**Invention:** Internet Refrigerator

**Price:** about \$7,900

**What's in It for You?** Surf the Web, take digital pictures, create video messages, watch TV, send e-mail, and download music—all while you're fixing yourself a snack.

**How It Works:** Like a computer, this refrigerator is hooked into the Internet via a phone line. The maker, LG Electronics, has also created an Internet microwave and washing machine.



## 8 RECYCLED FASHION

**Invention:** SLIK fabric and clothes

**Price:** \$20-\$150

**What's in It For You?** This fabric is made from recycled plastic shopping bags. Creator Karin Carter then fashions the material into purses, jackets, pants—even a parka that doubles as a sleeping bag!

**How It Works:** Carter first shreds and cuts up the plastic bags. A press then uses heat and pressure to combine the pieces together to create the leathery fabric.

## ADOPT A 'BOT

**Invention:** ER1 Personal Robot

**Price:** about \$600 without the laptop

**What's in It for You?** This computer on wheels can follow you around, tell you you're a genius, bark when it senses a loud noise, and perform other simple tasks.

**How It Works:** The laptop is this robot's brain, so it can be programmed just like your computer. Its camera "eye" allows it to move around and identify people and objects.

