

## Portable MP3 players

### I Want My MP3

By Michelle Silver

**M**y first introduction to all things MP3 was seeing the name splashed across newspaper headlines, next to things like "piracy," "stealing" and "Metallica prepares to sue." So I knew MP3s were worthy of attention. I just didn't know what they were, or why I'd want my own MP3 player. That's when I started exploring—and realizing that, even without all the controversy, these electronic devices are quite cool. Here's what I found out.

#### The basics

MP3 is an online music file format that allows for major file compression, making it easy to distribute music over the Net at a rapid-fire pace. This means you can browse thousands of music choices, and then mix and customize all your own soundtracks (so you can put Talking Heads and Mozart together). It also means—and here's the controversial part—that, for better or worse, music can be sent all over the world without agents, music companies or record labels stepping in (for more info, go to [thesourcesite.com](http://thesourcesite.com)).

#### Why MP3 players rule

The quality of the sound is comparable to listening to a CD, and it downloads on the fly. An MP3 file takes less than 5 minutes per song to download. Plus, they're the perfect portable. Not only are they small (smaller than a Walkman), but there are no movable parts, so music won't skip when you play it. In fact, one owner raved "The first day I bought it, I dropped it accidentally 8 times and it still works fine." (Why he dropped it 8 times I don't know.) For more reviews, check out [productopia.com](http://productopia.com). Many also offer built-in microphones and phone book capability—and will probably become more and more like PDAs.

#### A few bummers

Depending on memory size, you can run out of space pretty fast when you download files onto your player. You can, however, always add more memory cards to your player, or dump MP3 files back onto your desktop computer and then transfer them to CD (Visit [beyond.com/features/mp3/portable](http://beyond.com/features/mp3/portable)).

#### Shelling out the bucks

MP3 players tend to run from \$100 to \$800 (most fall between \$100 to \$200). If you're paying over \$300, you'd better have a good reason. Features to consider when shopping:



Rio PMP 600 (\$169.95)

## Steamtunnels digs...

#### RFC jazPiper iMV32U (\$229)

This inexpensive player has a voice memo recorder and capability to store phone numbers. It's expandable to only 64 meg, but still lets you get plenty of music on there.

#### Rio 500 (\$269)

Stores up to 2 hours of digital-quality music and up to 32 hours of spoken audio. This is also the first portable digital audio player to support both the Mac and Windows.

#### Saehan MPMan (\$249)

Good sound quality that includes option for bass enhancement. Can also hold other files in addition to music, such as doc, gif, etc. And comes with parallel port cable, headphones and carrying case.

#### Creative Nomad Jukebox (\$499)

Yes, this baby is far more expensive, but it offers 6GB of memory and can hold approximately 2,000 songs. The Nomad may have most storage space of all MP3 players.

- **Platform** determines whether the players will be compatible with Windows-based PC, Mac or both
- **FM Stereo** (speaks for itself)
- **Internal Memory.** Typically, players hold 16 or 32MB. More advanced come with 64MB (although you can add memory cards to almost all players). More memory means more music.
- **Phone book.** Allows you to store thousands of phone numbers.
- **Built-in microphone.** So you can record thoughts, ideas, latest top-40 smash hit, etc. •

**For complete pricing information, and a comparison guide to all portable MP3 players, go to [steamtunnels.net](http://steamtunnels.net) and use keyword "portable MP3."**

## Ask the experts

**JOBTRAK.COM**

**Q.** I do not have a lot of work experience. What other than education can I include in my resume to give it "substance"?

**A.** A resume is a showcase of skills acquired, not necessarily a long list of jobs held. Take advantage of projects, especially group projects, you have worked on in your major program, and list the skills you used to complete it. Also, if you have held leadership positions in an organization, be sure to describe your responsibilities and projects completed. Most college recruiters realize that students do not have lots of work experience.

—Leslie Schuh, Campus Recruiter, Cerner Corporation