

# Technology

A Look at Recent Tech Happenings

## Is iPod still on top? iPod alternatives vs. iPod Nano

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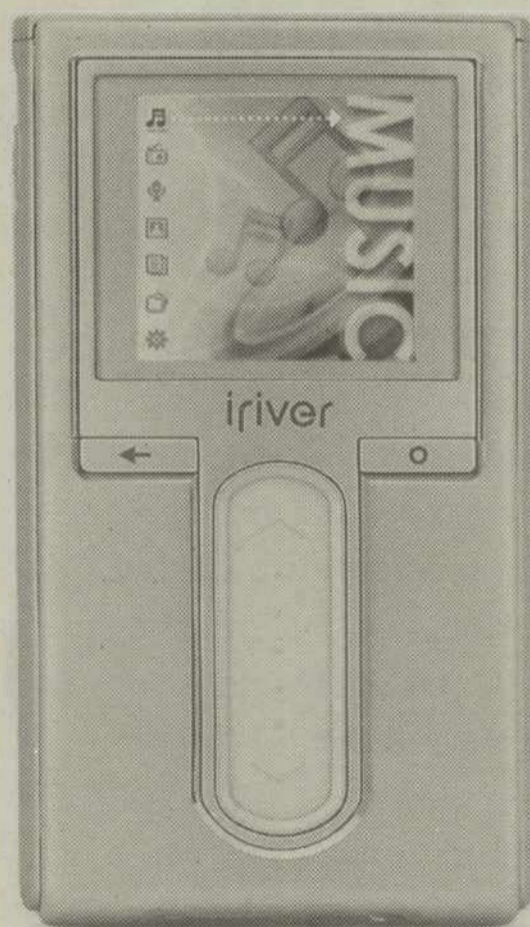
Staff Reporter

Sometimes, it seems like the only thing in the spotlight of MP3 players is Apple. iPod this and iPod that, right? Well, for those out there that have speculations or want alternatives, here's the pros and cons of a few of Apples competitors as well as the infamous iPod Nano itself.

### iRiver H10 5GB

The iRiver H10 came out about the same time the iPod mini was released. It plays up to 150 hours of music, includes FM radio and a voice recorder, and holds up to 25,000 pictures and text files. It uses Window's Media player, which comes pre-installed on all windows PC's, instead of iTunes. The iRiver H10 is a little smaller than a Razor phone, with a backlit 1 1/4 inch color screen.

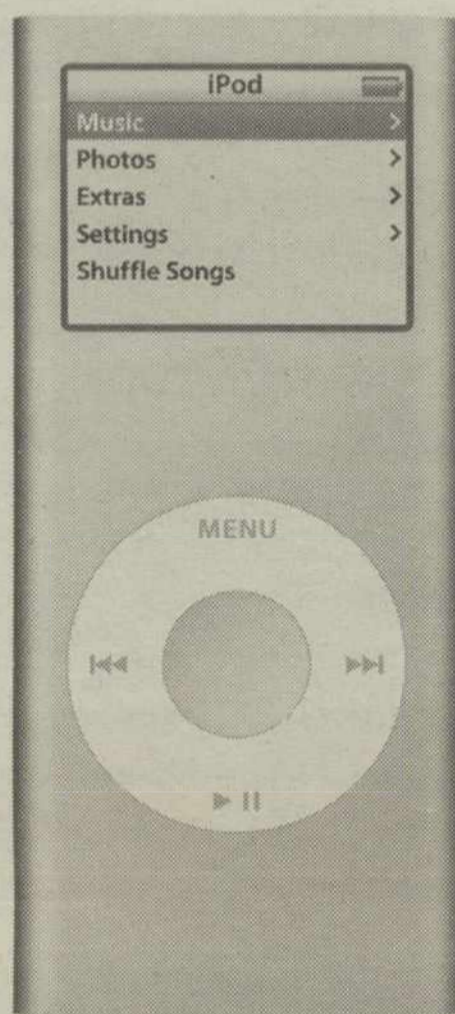
Why use the iRiver? It's a lot like the iPod, but a lot cheaper. The iRiver is usually around \$120, but it varies whether you get it online or at a store. The point is, it's not overpriced. It's also lightweight and durable, and has a claimed battery life of 12 hours. The iRiver supports MP3, WMA, JPEG and TXT files.



A couple problems with the iRiver is the lack of accessories. The iRiver team seems to have overlooked this, as well as other things like the number of technical problems the player seems to have. Plus, when these problems do come about, they're not easy to fix, and you usually have to send it in to be work worked on.

The screen is pretty small, and the backlight wears down the battery really fast, making your 12 hours of music more like six hours. Also, the iRiver has no data storage, Window's XP exclusive, and doesn't come with the cute little white earbuds that we've all come to know and love from iPod.

### iPod Nano 4GB



Ah... the infamous iPod. It's the smallest of its class, and it still holds nearly 1,000 songs. Along with four games, the signature white earbuds, a stopwatch function and a picture slideshow, the iPod Nano now comes in six colors. The iPod Nano supports MP3, WMA, AIFF, and AAC files, uses the iTunes store, and reads text files. It also is incredibly small and lightweight, with a 1.5 in. screen, a body smaller than a credit card, a width less than a pencil, and a battery life of 24 hours (claimed).

Unfortunately, though, it's so small... it's easy to lose. Also, consumers say it's overpriced, usually around \$200. It also contains no built-in voice recorder, and the headphone jack is in the bottom, which is both irritating and inconvenient.

### Zune

If you're still not feeling the love for the iPod, another MP3 will be launching Nov. 14 that people are already swooning about. Zune, by Microsoft, is going on the market around \$250, and is competing against the iPod Video. It's about the same size, weight, and has a similar catalog

of songs, with a library of two million songs and 99 cents per song, as the iPod. Zune has a larger screen than the iPod, includes an FM receiver and wireless technology so you can share songs and photos, with who ever is close by.

Super cool, right? Consumers say that the design and body is a lot



more sturdy and durable. One problem for current iPod owner will be that



they will have to dump their existing libraries and start fresh. Also, Zune will only be Windows compatible. Wireless transfers only last for three days, or three

times you play it, whichever come first. Zune come in three colors, white, black and...brown. Brown? Bad decision.

Personally, if I went back in time to when I got my iRiver, I think I would have instead gotten the iPod Nano. It's size, compactness, and attractiveness makes me look at my bulky MP3 player and sigh. Of course, my iRiver is red...and I like that about it, but the new iPod comes in pink, green, silver and blue.

Anyway, whether you decide on the iRiver, the iPod, or Zune, you have to respect each MP3 player for its own uniqueness. Whether you're an Apple fan or Microsoft groupie, diversity is what it is all about, even when it comes to your music player.

## Learn to burn a perfectly mixed CD using Window's Media Player

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Staff Reporter

To some people, a CD is something to listen to when times get lame. To others, it can be used as a great frisbee. For the rest, however, a customized playlist is a way of expressing their very existence into a pirated 50 cent piece of plastic bought at the nearest Circuit City. Unfortunately, there are a lot of you out there that really have no idea how to even burn a CD. Fear not, computer-inert students, here is a walk-through on how to create the perfect mixed CD.

1. Insert a clean, blank CD into the CD drive
2. Open up Window's Media Player
3. From Window's Media Player, click the "Burn" tab on the top of the screen
4. On the right side of the screen, you should see "CD Drive (D:) - Audio CD" in the option's menu. If it does not say that, look in the drop-down menu for the D drive. If it says something like "CD is full" or something like that, find a different CD. The one you have in the computer already has something on it.
5. This is the part where you

may be confused, so listen carefully. Open up iTunes, or whatever you have already in Window's Media Player, and use drag n' drop to drop the songs you would like into the left side of the screen. You'll probably have about 20 songs, or 80 minutes of music. If you are using music that is already on Window's

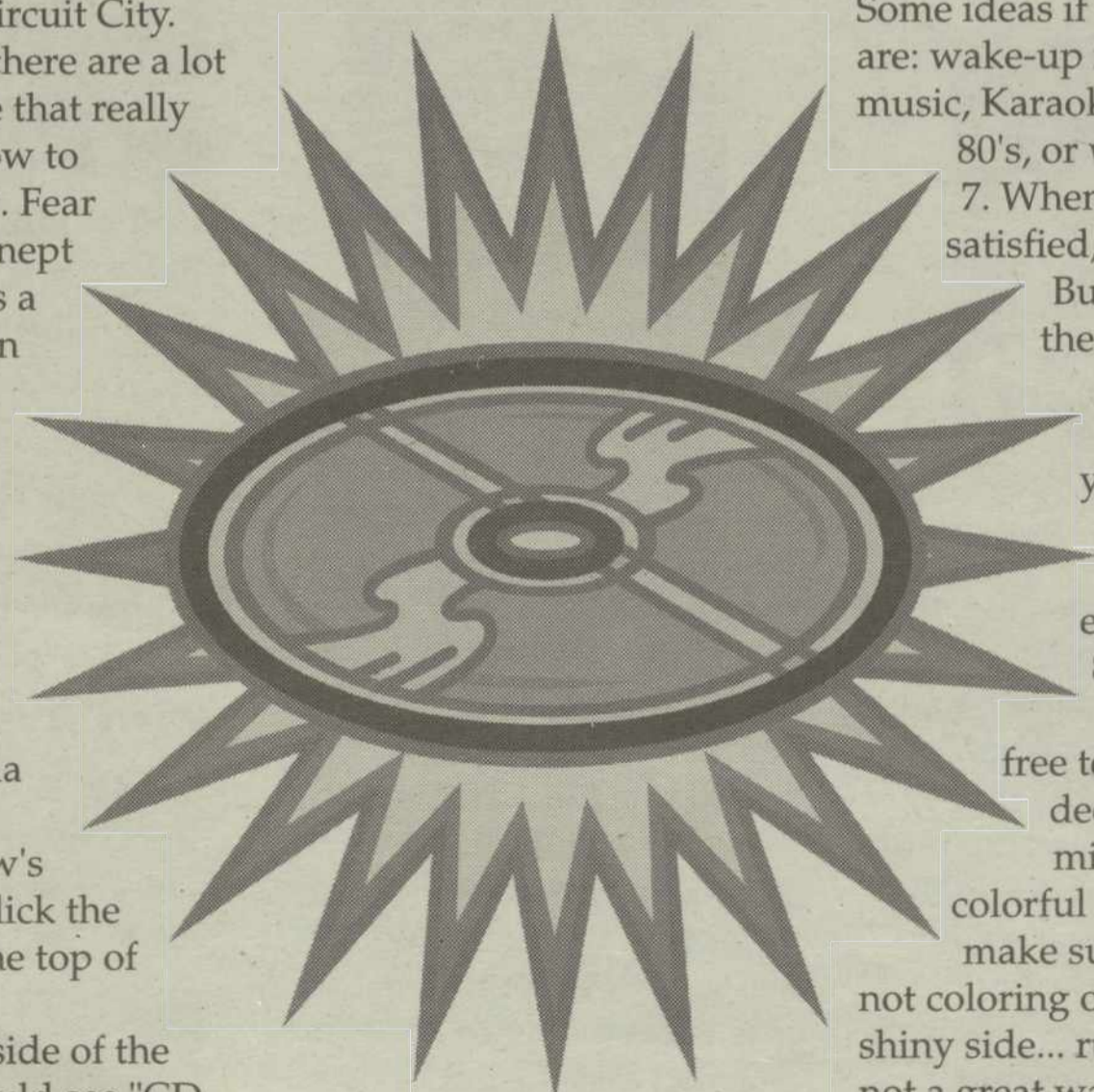
your playlist under the "Burn List" drop down menu, and you should have all your songs.

6. Before you are satisfied with this list, consider who your audience is. Will this CD be going to your girlfriend or helping put you to sleep? Keep this in mind and scan your list of music. Some ideas if you're stuck are: wake-up music, car music, Karaoke music, 90's, 80's, or workout music.

7. When completely satisfied, choose "Start Burn" right above the left side. In roughly 15 minutes, you're CD will be finished and ready for your enjoyment.

8. When you're finished, feel free to color and decorate your mixed CD with colorful sharpies. Just make sure that you're not coloring on the extra-shiny side... ruining the CD is not a great way to show how computer-savvy you are to your friends.

There you go! Your very own burned CD! Now, smile broadly and give yourself a pat on the back; you have conquered the Window's Media Player monster, and you have a snazzy burned CD to boot.



Media Player, this is what you have to do: create a playlist of the songs you want on the CD. Choose around 17-20 songs, and add them to a playlist using the right-click method with your mouse. After you've created the playlist, go back into burn, choose