

Powermat wireless charger best buy

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You may have read our recent review of the Uniden Wireless Power Starter Kit and heard us groaning about the fact that the ‘wireless’ charger does indeed have a wire, the one that connects the charger to the wall. The Powermat is no different, as it also features a single cable wall charger. The wireless part, of course, is the connection from the mat to your electronics device, although this isn’t strictly true for charging most devices.

iPhone and BlackBerry Bold 9000 owners can use a specifically designed solution to draw power from the mat, in the form of a protective sleeve for the iPhone and a battery cover replacement for the Bold. iPod owners can use a Powermat iPod dock (as can iPod Touch and iPhone users) and Nintendo DS aficionados have the option to cover the base of their console with a special DS glove.

Once you’ve installed the appropriate receiver, the rest is pleasingly simple; just place the device on the mat. When the receiver and mat make a connection you’ll feel a gentle magnetic pull and the LED on the edge of the mat lights up. That’s it. Just leave the phone or DS sitting on the mat until its charged, which occurs at a surprisingly fast rate. During our tests, we found we could charge an iPhone from completely drained to 100 per cent in approximately one-and-a-half hours.

While charging occurs, the mat is completely safe to touch, doesn’t heat up too much (though it does get a little warm under the phone) and the charging connection will not be interrupted by anything you do short of removing the electronics device you are charging. When the device is fully charged, the Powermat will put itself in a zero-consumption standby mode.

The Powermat charger plus one connection accessory (either a Powercube or one device-specific attachment) will retail for AU\$199.95, but of course to make full use of the three charging pads available you’ll need to fork out for at least two more accessories, each of which retail for AU\$49.95. That’s AU\$300 to replace the clutter of three power packs that come free with your phone or MP3 player. While the Powermat is an undeniably cool bit of consumer tech, the premium should be enough to put more than a few gadget geeks off the charms of this wireless charger.

It’s sexier than the Uniden, but no cheaper unfortunately. The Powermat behaves as advertised and can free you from a certain amount of wired clutter, but AU\$300 is a lot to pay for a charger in anyone’s books. Early adopters will pay the price, but hopefully we’ll see a significant drop in price for this excellent device sooner rather than later, so that the Powermat can find its way onto more kitchen benchtops than just those of the ridiculously wealthy.

Name



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