


new notions and practical products



that evoke questions like "Where can I get one of those?" or perhaps "What were they thinking?" Many of the new products are true innovations, that either stem from new technologies or adapt the concepts of previous inventions. Others are simply practical ideas that have not reached wide distribution due to a lack of mass marketing. Thanks to the Internet, some of the more interesting products are finding an audience, although the merit of the innovations may still be a matter of opinion. Read about the inventions listed below and decide for yourself.

1. anti-scald sink and bath plug

Scalding can be a real household danger, especially for children and seniors. So, this hot water "sentry" could save someone from a serious injury. It looks like an ordinary bath or sink plug, but the plug changes color if it's in hot water. As the temperature increases, the color becomes more vivid, revealing the word "hot" in bright letters - a very practical warning device that is more effective than the traditional "toe test". The plug is also available in a more sensitive model for parents who are bathing babies and younger children.

2. personal shower/entertainment center

For those who want their showers to last as long as possible, here's a unit with almost everything you need to take showers for hours! It's got a built-in seat and features a control panel that allows you to choose from sprays, mists, waterfalls, body-jets - and even a foot massage! But that's only the beginning: it's also equipped with lighting and a mirror, as well as speakers with an input for radio and CDs, plus a telephone system. For the ultimate in long showers, some units are even equipped with a television!

3. multipurpose bathroom scale

The ordinary bathroom scale has really gone upscale, with the introduction of a new model that measures not only your weight, but just about everything else you'd want to know. It measures body fat, muscle mass and water density, for your very own in-house body diagnostics analysis! It also has a self-adjusting memory that can keep track of up to six different people, and can report the progress for each. It even has a "recommendation" display... but maybe that's getting just a little too personal!

4. water filter - for your shower

If you prefer purified drinking water, why not have purified shower water? Now you can get a showerhead with replaceable filter that works just like kitchen faucet purifiers. Filtered shower water can be a very sensible idea if you have sensitive skin or brittle hair and your water supply quality is questionable. The distributor claims it removes chlorine, lead, iron, and hydrogen sulfide, and even reduces fungi and algae.

5. driveway beacon trail

This invention will alert drivers to avoid nearby lawns, flowerbeds, or unsafe edges (e.g. soft shoulders or gutters). The tough aluminum alloy units are about one inch high, and can be secured on paved or wooden surfaces with self-adhesive backing or permanent screws. The blinking or steady light-emitting diodes (LED) turn on automatically at dusk and can run for up to 8 hours from energy collected by top-mounted solar panels. Consider these trail lights to help prevent accidents around boat docks and exterior stairways as well.

6. portable generators - the next generation

The random occurrence and frequency of serious storms has fuelled a great interest in portable generators. Fortunately, manufacturers have responded with highly efficient, sophisticated models that are lightweight, multi-purpose and affordable. Today's modern generators are powerful enough to keep home basics operating, but measured enough to power a portable computer without blowing delicate circuitry. The newest versions can recharge your cell phone, tune in local radio broadcasts, and provide emergency lighting and electricity.

7. mosquito magnet

This innovation is sure to become popular as concerns over mosquito-borne diseases increase. The magnet uses propane, heat and carbon dioxide to imitate the natural emissions of humans and other large animals. Once the mosquitoes are attracted to the scent of this bug elixir, they follow their "noses" to their doom. On the other hand, if you're not the bug-killing type, you can get a "catch and release" bug siphon that takes care of unwanted bugs like wasps and flies without making a mess, and allows you to release them alive and out of harm's way.