

What's In My Backpack?

A 2024 Guide to On-the-Go Tech

The advent of the new year presents the perfect opportunity to reevaluate your gear and upgrade to something better in 2024. This article will update you on the objects I carry on a daily (and nightly) basis when I'm working, traveling, or just hanging out at home. These are my absolute necessities for any occasion.

I hope this list helps patch some gaps in your everyday carry setup, or helps jumpstart a gift idea for a gear-head loved one or tech-obsessed friend. If you don't have one of those yet, get cracking because 2024 will only bring more wifi problems, tech-addled in-laws, and devices that just won't work right.

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In My Backpack

The Backpack (\$63.00)



This is what holds it all together. My career, my sanity, and more.



This backpack has cushioned internal storage space for my 14-inch Macbook Pro, a separate zippered front compartment for my 11-inch iPad Pro, internal pockets to hold the items described below, a cup holder on the side, and a hidden strap on the back to slot over the handle on my rolling suitcase when I travel.

Even packed to the brim, it remains compact, sleek, and lightweight and also comfortable enough for travel and daily commutes (and it slides very easily under the airplane seat in front of me).

At a low price point, this is a fantastic choice for anyone who wants to graduate from a ratty Jansport but isn't quite ready for the gravity and weight of a fancy leather briefcase.

Anker 67W Wall Charger (\$59.99)

Of all the charging bricks I've used this Anker 67W charger is by far the best. Small enough to tuck into a side pocket but powerful enough to charge three devices (including your laptop, tablet, and phone) in a flash, this is a huge upgrade over those legacy chargers rattling around your briefcase.

It's got 2 USB-C slots plus a USB-A outlet, so it should have you covered no matter what generation your tech is. Also, the 2023 refresh of this charger has a higher wattage that allows users to charge multiple devices simultaneously and faster than ever.



Adaptable Charging Cord (2x) (\$14.99)



This cord has attachments for USB-C, Lightning, and USB-A cables so all of your devices can use the same cord. Simple, and it keeps weight down. These come in 4ft and 6ft lengths, and I carry one of each for flexibility.

Anker MagSafe Power Bank (\$53.90)

If there's one thing I hate, it's getting stuck with a dead phone and no backup. This battery pack is slim and small, but with a 5,000mAh capacity, it's got enough juice to charge your phone fully.

The best part is, you don't even need a cord. With any MagSafe enabled iPhone, just click the bank into place on the back of your phone, and voilà. Your phone is immortal.



6ft USB-C Charging Cord (2x) (\$14.00)



This has become my go-to charger for all my devices, especially after upgrading to the iPhone 15 and the latest generation of accessories, which are all now fitted with USB-C ports. The future is bright for universal charging standards!

I use this for my Anker cube, but it's long enough and fast enough that it should be up for any job, whether you want to lounge in bed with your tablet, or use your laptop while it's plugged at the end of a conference room.

Chipolo Thin Wallet Finder (\$30.00)

Who hasn't felt that stomach-churning sense of fear you get when you realize you lost your wallet? I know I have. Eager to guard against that risk, I added the Chipolo Thin Wallet Finder to my device lineup.

This thin card slips easily into a wallet or money clip, and works seamlessly with iOS and Apple's AirTags so that I can track all my items (car keys, backpack, wallet, luggage etc) in one convenient place.

Though the Tile equivalent of this device was handy, Chipolo's ease of use with the iOS Find My app makes it the clear winner in this category. Make 2024 the year you don't lose a thing.



USB-A to USB-C Converter (2x) (\$8.99)



If you're like me, you've long since upgraded to devices that come standard with USB-C ports. Unfortunately, not all of my cables have caught up. Sometimes I only have an old one laying around, or more often, someone I am traveling with only has older cables.

In any case, it's good to have one or two of these little converters handy in case you have to bridge some technological gaps on the go. Just make sure you get them back when you lend them to a friend with old cables!

SanDisk Flash Drive (\$18.98)

Just like a good lawyer, portable data storage is one of those things that's far better to have and not need than need and not have, whether for reading or editing a critical contract or printing the odd image.

This drive in particular has both USB-C and USB-A male ends, enabling you to connect to virtually any device with ease, plus it boasts a plentiful 256GB capacity.

An additional handy tip: Enable device encryption with a complex password so that even if you lose the physical drive, you can rest easy knowing your data is secure.



Airfly Duo (\$44.99)



This handy gizmo allows you to connect a bluetooth headset to any device with a 3.5mm headphone jack input. Whether you're watching TV on a plane monitor, trying to use clunky, outdated gym equipment, or connecting to a rental car's audio, the Airfly Duo will come to your rescue.

Additionally, it functions as an old-fashioned splitter, allowing users to connect multiple pairs of Bluetooth headphones to the same device, enabling easy audio sharing as you watch or listen together. Really handy for traveling families, couples, or lone commuters looking to make friends.

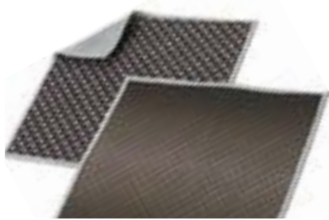
Soundcore A40 BT Wireless Headphones (\$79.00)

I know, I know, AirPods are great. But frankly, I've used these as my daily headphones for months now, and I have not noticed any drop-off in audio quality compared to my old AirPods, and these come in at less than half the price.

For a high-quality listening experience, not to mention state-of-the-art noise cancellation and a comfortable fit, these headphones are a clear favorite of mine. I recommend them to anyone who wants to try out wireless earbuds without breaking the bank.



Microfiber Cleaning Cloth (2x) (\$7.99)



It's always important to keep your devices clean, smudge and dust-free to ensure the best user experience and clean screens for easy reading. Plus, cutting down on unnecessary dirt and grime extends the lifespan of your devices and saves you money.

Luckily, these cloths are cheap, reusable, and durable. Soft on your screens, hard on gunk. They also come in a fun variety of colors, so take your pick!

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The above items stay in my backpack each and every day, whether I'm going to and from the office, on the road, or even on vacation. Below are some suggestions for items that have a permanent spot in my suitcase whenever I travel overnight.

In My Suitcase

Anker 3-in-1 Charging Cube (\$149.95)



I. Love. The Cube. No other item on this list scratches my tech nerd itch like this one. This humble grey box — with a few clicks and clacks — expands to reveal MagSafe charging pads for an iPhone, an Apple Watch, and a pair of AirPods, all contained in a 2x2 cube. Works just as incredibly on a hotel nightstand as it does on your bedside table at home. Buy this. Immediately.

Anker Wall Plug (\$19.99)

I use this tiny 30W charger (with a foldable plug) to power The Cube. With this charger and a high quality USB C cable (like the 6-ft cable mentioned above), your phone, watch, and AirPods will all be at full power overnight.



Sonos Roam Bluetooth Speaker (\$134.99)



Remember: I love music. You love music. The residents of the adjoining hotel room definitely love music. That's why I recommend the Sonos Roam. It's a perfect travel speaker; rugged, compact, waterproof, and powerful enough for everything from shower karaoke to an impromptu party. It packs a punch when you're on the go, and even pairs up with other Sonos devices to boost your playback.

LG Gram + View 16in Portable Monitor (\$349.00)

This is the latest addition to my travel lineup and after using it for just a few days, I find myself unable to go without it. This slim, lightweight monitor slides easily into a suitcase pocket but still boasts 2k resolution and a slick magnetic cover that doubles as a stand. I use this as a companion to my Macbook whenever I travel, and it more than doubles my available screen space. Its bright display and excellent color rendition make it the perfect tool for everything from working with small text to editing vibrant images on-the-go.



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And that's it! I hope you enjoyed this list and maybe even picked up a new toy. If you disagree with one of my choices here, let me know in the comments or send me an email and we can hash it out. But it will be tough to convince me, because this stuff is the best.

Happy New Year to all!