

12 Tech Gifts Your Kids Will Totally Love

Tuesday, November 14 2017, 1:58 PM

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Rack up the cool-parent cred this holiday season



Photo:

Augie

Crazy-cool tech toys

Adults may feel nostalgic for old-fashioned toys, but it's hard to beat the bells and whistles of modern-day tech toys. We've sorted through the useless plastic crap (or UPC, as a mom friend of mine calls it) for the best tech-driven toys for your kids' holiday wish list.

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Cube-tastic

Kids love a Rubik's Cube — at first. It doesn't take long before they decide the puzzle is unsolvable. Enter [Cube-tastic](#), a puzzle cube that pairs with a free augmented-reality app kids can use when they get stuck or for timed challenges.

Ages 4–7, \$20

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FurReal Friends

Remember those little battery-powered dogs that barked and sat? Well, animatronic toys have gotten a **tech** makeover thanks to [FurReal Friends](#). These responsive toy animals — from kittens to monkeys to unicorns — can eat, poop, walk on a leash, bark, blink, sneeze and so much more. Many are activated by hand, but some of the fancier ones are controlled by apps.

Ages 4–7, \$10–\$120

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Landspeeder

When money is no object, the Skywalker is the limit. [Radio Flyer's Luke Skywalker Landspeeder](#) is modeled after the X-34 craft from "Star Wars: A New Hope." It has room for two riders, an interactive dashboard with lights and movie sounds, and a working gearshift that maxes out at 5 miles per hour. Is it ridiculously expensive? Yes. Is it totally awesome? Also yes.

Ages 4–7, \$500

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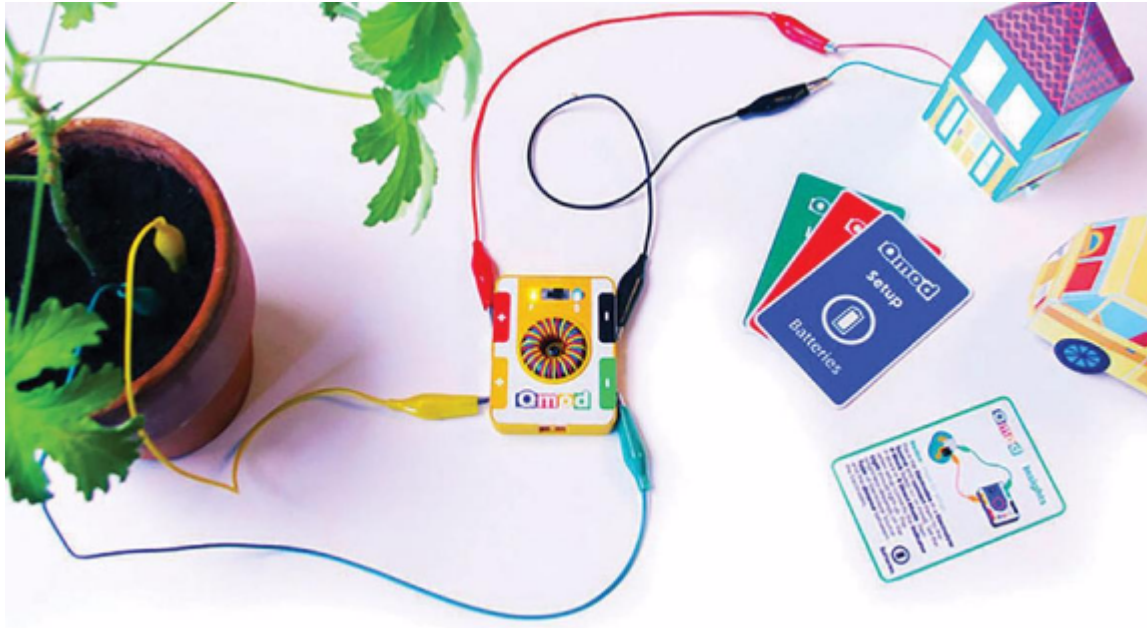
Flight simulators at The Museum of Flight

Feel like you're flying thanks to [The Museum of Flight](#). Three flight simulators offer a 360-degree view. The Premium i360 Flight Simulator immerses you in pilot-gunner air combat (children shorter than 48 inches must be accompanied by an adult). The 4D-X Simulator Ride for groups mimics life as a pilot with aerial maneuvers and simulated combat (must be 38 inches tall to ride). And the Junior Voyager Simulator lets kids explore the skies with a joystick, stereo sound, widescreen monitor and flashing lights.

Ages 8–12, \$1–\$9

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Qmod Energy Kit

Kids can create electricity from wind, water, sunshine, plants and even bacteria with [this kit](#). Includes a battery, solar panel, LEDs and electrodes for fun and intuitive experiments.

Ages 8–12, \$87

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Augie

Not quite as cute as BB-8 of “Star Wars,” [Augie the Coding Robot](#) still has enough charm to motivate kids to learn. Kids program Augie’s movements using an accompanying app. The more coding kids learn, the more Augie can do.

Ages 8–12, \$200

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Sphero robot racers

My kids have been begging for [Sphero's](#) robot racer Ollie ever since they saw one at a friend's house. This Bluetooth-connected, app-controlled robot goes up to 14 miles per hour and can make sharp turns and drift like a race car. Powered by a USB charger, Ollie glows in millions of colors, making it all the more enticing. (And if your family prefers good old-fashioned remote control, Sphero has a Lightning McQueen toy you might want to check out.)

Ages 8–12, \$100–\$300

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Crunchyroll

[Crunchyroll](#) is one of the few legal and official anime streaming sites in the U.S. (just try finding the latest anime on Netflix). Plus, it shares revenue with its Japanese partners, which means subscribing supports the creators of those anime shows your teens love so dearly. Episodes go online as soon as an hour after they air in Japan; you can also download the latest manga chapters as soon as they are published. Subtitling allows your teen to be a true otaku rather than a weeb, but if dub is the order of the day, subscribe to [Funimation](#) instead.

Ages 13–18, \$7 monthly

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Vintage game consoles

Try [a retro game](#) with simple graphics to change up your teen's gaming (we're sure they'll love it!). Sure, you can dig up a Commodore 64 or other old PC, but there's a certain nerdy beauty to finding an old-school game console that's as inefficient as it fun. This gift becomes a whole family affair with the subsequent quest for game cartridges that actually work!

Ages 13–18, \$5 and up

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Ultimate Ears Wireless Speaker

No matter the era, kids want their music and they want it loud. Try the modern-day boombox, aka a cell-phone-controlled Bluetooth wireless speaker. Good sound quality is a given, but the ones by [Ultimate Ears](#) are small enough to carry. They're also waterproof, and have a battery charge that lasts for 10 hours. Look for a variety of colors and get even more stylish with its (higher-priced) Street Collection's floral and graphic designs.

Ages 13–18, \$100

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"Splatoon 2" and "Persona 5"

Kids think you're totally not cool with video games? Wow 'em with ["Splatoon 2"](#) for Nintendo Switch. Players transform into squids and win territory by coating it with ink (think paintball but with more tentacles). This game, rated E for everyone, is a happy compromise for the kid who wants a shooter game and the parent who'd prefer to skip the violence.

If you're looking for something a little more sophisticated, try ["Persona 5"](#) for PS4 (rated M for mature). It's a Japanese game about high school vigilantes with psychic powers. Dungeon crawls with turn-based combat alternate with high school time management and social network building for a really good time.

Ages 13–18, \$60