

software

SAY2PLAY: THE WEAPON OF VOICE

VERY GOOD ★★★★★

Along with jetpacks and holographic butlers, voice-controlled computers are one of those near future technologies that still elude us. Say2Play is the crafty software trying to bring that future to us now by letting players interact with their PC games through a vocal interface. Several pre-made game templates are available, but the software can be programmed for almost any title. The software is quick and easy to setup, and doesn't require any voice training. Aside from the awkwardness we felt while barking orders at our computer, we found Say2Play's vocal commands worked great for switching weapons, casting spells, and other macro functions we didn't feel like assigning to a key binding. Unfortunately, the slight delay in response (less than a second) could frustrate some, especially when playing twitchy shooters. At the very least check out the free seven-day trial, because Say2Play could be a useful addition to anyone's gaming repertoire.

\$29.99 • www.Say2Play.com



toys

RESIDENT EVIL 5 FIGURES

NECA, purveyor of fine video game collectibles, has unleashed these RE 5 figures in conjunction with Capcom's newest entry in its survival horror series. The set includes Chris Redfield, Sheva Alomar, and the massive Executioner Majini complete with his giant axe. Each figure includes its own arsenal and up to 25 points of articulation. Like the game, these are more fun when you're playing with a friend.

\$15.99 • www.necaonline.com



pc

RAZER CARCHARIAS HEADSET

VERY GOOD ★★★★★

Nothing's worse for a professional gamer than headphones that pinch the ear. After extended gaming sessions, even a slight amount of pressure can leave a migraine. That's not a problem with Razer's new Carcharias Headset; unless you're Babar, these round cans should have no problem keeping your ears cozy. They also produce solid, if bassy, audio, and boast a sturdy noise-cancelling mic. We also like the extra long, braided cord. The only thing that gave us pause were the thin wires along this set's neck, which make us wonder how long the unit will hold up in combat.

\$79.99 • www.razerzone.com

rocking

NYKO METAL DRUM PEDAL

SUPERB ★★★★★

This drum pedal isn't called metal just because it knows how to rock. It's actually has reinforced metal plating, so it should have no problem surviving your late-night Metallica beatings. The unit's extra wide base and rubber feet make sure it stays in place. Best of all, it works with all the important music games: the PS3, Xbox 360, and Wii versions of Rock Band 1 & 2 and Guitar Hero World Tour. The unit also comes with a splitter, letting you double kick your heart out if you haven't already destroyed your original pedal.

\$19.99 • www.nyko.com



peripheral

SAITEK AVIATOR FLIGHT STICK

VERY GOOD ★★★★★

Saitek is Hollywood's go-to maker for flight sticks. The company's products have been featured in shows such as *Terminator 3*, *Firefly*, and *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. Thankfully, Hollywood isn't steering us in the wrong direction this time. Saitek's Aviator, for PS3, Xbox 360, and PC, is a sturdy piece of hardware. The unit feels great, has a stable base, and comes with an integrated headset jack so you can stay in constant contact with your wingmen. A dual mode switch even lets you change the control layout to support different games. Sure the list of software you'll use this on isn't long, but then again, how many fake guitars do you have?

\$49.99 • www.saitekusa.com

peripheral

WII OLD SKOOL RETRO CONTROLLER

LIMITED APPEAL ★★★★

Are you still playing all your Virtual Console games using Nintendo's ergonomic Classic controller? Stop! Those old games were never intended to be played comfortably. Classic video game controllers were about as elegant as a deck of cards, but at least this Datel Old Skool controller captures all the magic of Nintendo's Japanese Famicom design. This might appeal to collectors for its pure aesthetics. But for practical purposes, the controller only has two side buttons, and lacks analog, so it really only works for NES and SNES titles. It also leaves your hands cramped up after extended use. Just like the good 'ol days.

\$19.99 • us.codejunkies.com

books

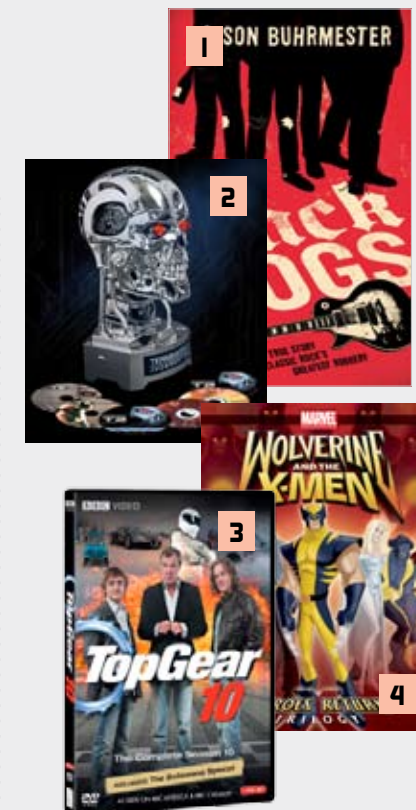
DAWN: THE WORLDS OF FINAL FANTASY HARDCOVER

The Final Fantasy series is an expansive empire these days, but for its first six entries the series had a very specific vision. That vision stemmed out of the artwork of one man: Yoshitaka Amano. For the first time outside of Japan, the legendary artist and publisher Square Enix have permitted Dark Horse to collect the phenomenal artwork that inspired Final Fantasy. Dawn showcases the preliminary sketches and paintings from the first four games, and includes a detailed account of the history behind Final Fantasy's early collaborators.

\$29.99 • www.darkhorse.com/Books



media shelf



1. *Black Dogs: The Possibly True Story of Classic Rock's Greatest Robbery* By Jason Buhmester

Former game journalist and current *Inked* magazine editor Jason Buhmester tells a fictionalized tale of the famous Led Zeppelin robbery, one of rock 'n' roll's greatest mysteries.

\$13.95 • www.randomhouse.com

2. Limited Edition T2 Complete Collector's Set

This six-disc set of the classic action film comes packaged in a collectible 14-inch T-800 Endoskull bust, complete with sound effects and light up eyes.

\$174.99 • www.lionsgateshop.com

3. Top Gear 10

Britain's award winning show comes to American DVD for the first time. This quirky, humorous motor enthusiast program features some of the craziest races and motor challenges from either side of the Atlantic.

\$39.98 • www.bbcshop.com

4. *Wolverine And The X-Men: Heroes Return Trilogy*

Wolverine must reunite the X-Men to prevent a horrible vision of the future from coming true in this first three-episode story arc from the new Nicktoons series.

\$14.98 • www.lionsgateshop.com