

new products

Chill out with sweet sound

HERE'S a possible cure for those midwinter MP3 blahs: the **Chill Pill**, two speakers that travel together as a too-cute little black capsule. The Chill Pill, from Apple specialist Small Dog Electronics of Waitsfield, Vt., is so heavy on cuteness and ingenuity, in fact, that it's enough to forget this doesn't sound much better than other \$40 mobile speakers. Who cares?

Two speakers, all the necessary wiring and a rechargeable lithium-ion battery somehow make it, like clowns in a circus car, into a capsule that's not even 4 inches tall and 2 inches in diameter. Oh, doctor.

Now watch as we dissect the Chill Pill. The speakers, conjoined magnetically at the hip, separate easily. Next, turn to the two tiny plastic trapdoors. Behind door No. 1 is a mini-USB cable that uncoils about a foot. It's both a speaker cable (connecting to the other speaker's mini-USB port) and a link (with the included USB adapter) to charge the speakers via a computer's USB 2.0 port or an iPod AC adapter.

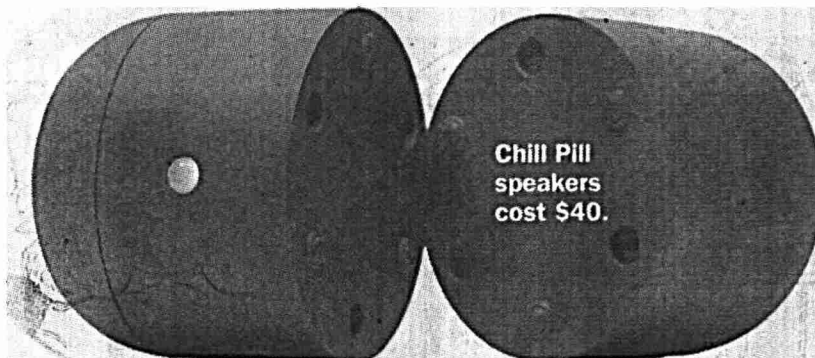
Behind door No. 2 is a minijack connector that mates with an iPod or other digital music player. A mini-volume dial and power/charge indicator LED appear to complete the Chill Pill tour, leaving us with a pair of 1.75-inch-high speakers — each with a single driver peering upward through a plastic domed grille.

If you lift the dome from each speaker, a slight twist suddenly makes it an inch taller. That extra space, enclosed in an accordion of plastic, is the Chill Pill's "extendable resonance," which means the speaker sounds more authoritative in this configuration.

I loved the Chill Pill even before the first listen. It's hard to resist a speaker that entertains without playing music. For its size, the Chill Pill sounded surprisingly good, better with the added height, and best, to these ears, with the speaker's drivers angled toward the listener, not firing upward.

The Small Doggies have a good eye. They picked out this OEM — speakers made by an "original equipment manufacturer" — product to sell under their own Chill Pill Audio brand. It's a lot of entertainment for \$40.

— *The Hartford Courant*



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