




Behind the Scenes: 10 Distinctive Home Theater Accessories

By Bob Ankosko • Posted: Aug 16, 2013



When it comes to home theater, there's the gear that we enthusiasts like to obsess over, and then there's everything else: racks, cabinets, stands, mounts, seating, you name it. Beyond a perfectly calibrated TV and multi-speaker sound system, it's the "everything else" that distinguishes a truly fine setup from one that's just OK. So take a look around and ask yourself: What can I do to take my theater space to the next level? If you happen to be making plans for an entertainment space, even better. To help get the creative juices flowing, we've rounded up 10 products for your consideration—some [distinctive](#) , some just plain practical. We want to hear about your upgrade adventures, so leave a comment.

and the stands come with spiked feet (for carpet) and flat feet for use on hardwood floors.
bello.com



Terrestrial TV

There's lots of talk these days about cable cutters—people who get so fed up with the perpetually escalating cost (and/or poor quality and/or service) of cable TV that they opt to replace it with Internet streaming and those pristine signals TV stations broadcast over the air. If you've had it with cable or just want to give off-air TV a go, Mohu [makes it easy](#) to get in the game with its 21 x 1 x 9-inch SkyHDTV antenna, which weighs only 3 pounds and is designed for mounting in your attic or on the roof. The \$170 antenna is multidirectional, meaning you won't have to worry about aiming it, and uses a tiny digital amplifier to strengthen signals originating up to 60 miles away. gomohu.com



Subwoofer Nook

There's no shortage of nice-looking A/V cabinets, but you'll be hard-pressed to find one with compartments for speakers and a subwoofer. In addition to supporting TVs with screen sizes up to 55 inches, BDI's Novia 8426 has a multifunction compartment that will accommodate a center-channel speaker or a couple of components or a trio of compact left/center/right speakers; two media/component storage compartments, each with an adjustable shelf; and a subwoofer alcove behind the media/component storage area. The 31 x 52 x 22-inch cabinet has low-profile wheels and is available in Natural Cherry (shown) or Cocoa Cherry. List price is \$1,995, but the cabinet is widely discounted [online](#) (Amazon was selling it for \$1,299 when we checked). bdiusa.com



TV Concealment, 007 Style

Prefer more of a 007 approach to TV concealment that will blow your mind and astonish your

neighbors? Inca specializes in motorized systems for making a flat-panel TV rise majestically from a cabinet or the floor, pop out of the wall on a swiveling platform, or drop down from the ceiling, to give a few examples. All systems are remote-controllable, and many include a swiveling mechanism so you can adjust the angle of the TV from your [easy](#) chair. To give you an idea of cost (excluding installation), a standard cabinet lift with no swivel capability ranges from \$3,030 to \$4,325, depending on the type of lift and size/weight of the TV, while a custom floor lift ranges from \$5,920 to \$6,740. inca-tvlifts.com



Rugged Rack

Nothing is worse than a flimsy A/V rack that wobbles every time you switch out a piece of gear, threatening to dump prized components. The Sanus AFA (\$170) comes highly recommended by HT audio editor Mark Fleischmann, who uses it as his main equipment rack, which sees all manner of components swapped in and out of it every couple of weeks. Pillars made of heavy-gauge tubular steel support four black-lacquered shelves, each of which can hold up to 75 pounds, and the AFA is a spacious 19.5 inches deep. The 33-inch-tall rack also has adjustable feet and cutouts in the back of each shelf to provide a pathway for cabling. sanus.com



Aim to Please

Maybe you can relate to my dilemma: I have a pair of Bluetooth speakers on a shelf in my Florida room and like to occasionally reorient them so music can be heard outside. Problem is, there's no easy way to do it. I have to prop the speakers up on the back of a sofa that butts up against the windows overlooking the patio. Pretty half-assed... The solution? Mount 'em on pivoting brackets. Duh! OmniMount Stainless Steel Series wall/ceiling brackets have a ball-and-socket setup that lets you rotate the speaker 360 degrees, pan it 180 degrees, and tilt it +/-30

degrees. The model 5.0 W/C (\$25) is for speakers weighing up to 5 pounds, model 10.0 W/C (\$30) for speakers up to 10 pounds. omnimount.com



Hold the Black Spaghetti, Please

The thing about flat-panel TVs you see in [advertisements](#) is that everything looks nice and tidy—you never see cables running from the TV even though you instinctively know they're there. OK, so you can't airbrush away cables in real life, but you can use Sanus' ELM806 in-wall power and cable management system to simplify and conceal the wiring behind a wall-mounted TV. The \$120 kit includes a recessed PowerOut panel that goes behind the TV, a PowerIn panel that goes behind your equipment cabinet or rack, and a 6-foot quick-connect power cable that runs between the panels. A template and mounting hardware are included for do-it-yourself installation. All you need is a pencil, drywall saw, screwdriver, and level. sanus.com



Adjust Your "Fireplace TV" Without Leaving the Couch

People love the idea of mounting a flat panel over a fireplace, and in many rooms it's the only place to put a TV. Problem is, you have to look up. Can you say neck strain? The ComfortVu motorized TV mount lets you mount a 55- to 90-inch TV over a fireplace and quickly adjust its position when it's time to settle in for a movie. Press a button on the supplied remote, and the TV swings out and down 34 inches and forward 25 inches—or you can stop it anywhere in its travel to lock in the perfect viewing position. Best part? The price has been reduced to \$1,995—nearly 50 percent less than the original version introduced a couple years ago. comfortvu.com



Secret Seat

Everybody's gathered around the TV to watch the season finale of *The Americans*, and in walks Uncle Joe. The room is packed. Kids are sprawled on the floor, and every seat is occupied. Time to grab a chair from the kitchen—unless you have a JumpSeat Ottoman from Salamander Designs. What looks like an ordinary (but well-appointed) ottoman is actually a seat in waiting. Lift the cushion, and a comfy Microsuede seat presents itself, complete with its own cup holder and storage space; the seat is available with piping or stitching along the edges of its cushions. Prices: \$999 with the standard brown or black leather exterior, \$1,499 for the custom model with a choice of 19 exterior leathers and eight Microsuedes. salamanderdesigns.com



Art of Disguise

Wouldn't it be cool if you could make your TV disappear when it's not in use? That's the idea behind VisionArt's motorized TV-concealment system. When the TV is off, it hides behind framed art you choose (or provide). When it's time for *Bates Motel*, hit a button on your remote, and the art lifts (or have the system wired so it retracts when the TV is turned on). Six galleries of "museum-quality" giclée prints on canvas and six frame collections offer hundreds of possibilities. Prices start at \$999 for the basic QuickShip option—which offers a limited selection of prints and frames for a 46- or 55-inch TV—and scale up to five figures when you start getting into large-screen mechanisms and limited-edition prints. visionartgalleries.com