

taking a look at what'll be under the tree this year. Virtual reality headsets have come down in price and gone up in quality. You've probably seen TV commercials for them. There are dozens to choose from, here's a look at some of the most popular (good and the very bad)

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0-8 Jamey Tucker
20-27 Samsung Gear VR \$100
28 - 43 Merge AR/VR \$30
44-52 Oculus Go \$200
53-59 Google Daydream \$100
100-114 HTC Vive \$700

ANCHOR INTRO

YOU'VE SEEN THE COMMERCIALS, YOU'VE HEARD ABOUT THE COOL FACTOR, BUT YOU MAY HAVE NEVER TRIED VIRTUAL REALITY.

IT'S PERHAPS MORE POPULAR NOW THAN EVER BEFORE. BUT WILL ONE MAKE A NICE CHRISTMAS GIFT? OUR CONSUMER TECHNOLOGY REPORTER JAMEY TUCKER TAKES A LOOK AT THE BEST AND THE VERY WORST OF VIRTUAL REALITY DEVICES.

PACKAGE

I've said this before, but this really will be the Christmas of Virtual Reality devices. Prices have come down and the quality has gone up. But which one do you put under the tree? First, those plastic headsets, are not very good. Some require special apps and the quality just isn't worth the money, even if they're inexpensive (I found them for just \$5).

The Samsung Gear VR is one of the best I've tried. It's immersive, blocks out light and comes with some games included. The knock on it is that it only works with certain Samsung phones and phablets. It's around \$130.

For kids, the Merge AR/VR is a great choice. It's made out of a squishy material so it won't break. Some schools use them. There's also the Merge Cube which is pretty cool with games...and programs where you can hold a beating heart for example.

If you want to go all out, look at the Oculus Go. It doesn't need a phone or computer. It's as immersive as you'll get. It'll set you back around 200 dollars.

You should also check out Google's Daydream headset, it works with most phones and has a controller. The downside is the phone gets really hot playing games and will shut down. It's around 100 dollars. And the creme de-la creme is the HTC Vive. It's out of this world. Seriously, I've made a fool of myself using it. I wish you could see just how great the Vive is and how it truly suspends reality. The Vive is around \$700. Gamers will think it's worth every nickel.

A virtual reality headset will be a hit around the Christmas tree, but if you want to keep them playing after December 26th, spend a little more money and get a good one. That's What the Tech? I'm Jamey Tucker

ANCHOR TAG

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO EXPERIENCE VIRTUAL REALITY WITHOUT PUTTING ON THE HEADSETS. SOME STORES WILL LET YOU TRY THEM BEFORE YOU BUY THEM.

WEB STORY

If you're tempted to buy a virtual reality headset for someone this Christmas, you might make a huge mistake. You'll find lots of VR headsets in the big box store; they're cheap, as low as \$5. But those plastic headsets, are not very good, in fact they're bad. Some require special apps and the quality just isn't worth the money. With most of them, too much light is allowed in to the glasses which totally ruins any chance at a good VR experience.

The PlayStation VR is great if they have a PlayStation 4. It does a good job of blocking out light. There are lots of games and they can add hand controllers and buy other games in the future. It's about \$250 just for the headset.

The Samsung Gear VR is one of the best I've tried. It's immersive, blocks out light and comes with some games included. The knock on it is that it only works with certain Samsung phones and phablets. If you have an iPhone, you'll have to look elsewhere. The Samsung Gear VR is around \$130.

For kids, the Merge AR/VR is a great choice. It's made out of a squishy material so it won't break. Download the free Merge apps for educational games and other arcade type games. Some schools have begun using the Merge to be used in the classroom. There's also the Merge Cube which is pretty cool. Hold it in front of the glasses as you look at the cube turns into a 360-degree view of a human heart or lungs. Of course there are other games to play with the Cube. The Merge headset and Cube are very affordable; about \$40 for the headset and \$15 for the Merge.

If you want to go all out, look at the Oculus Go. It doesn't need a phone or computer. It's as immersive as you'll get. Not only can you play games and Rock Band you can watch shows and movies.

You should also check out Google's Daydream headset, it works with most phones and has a controller. The downside is the phone gets really hot playing games and will shut down. It's around 100 dollars.

The creme de-la creme is the HTC Vive. It's out of this world; nothing compares to the virtual world in the Vive. It does require a powerful computer and you can add hand controllers. Many dedicated gamers have built entire rooms in their home for gaming VR using the Vive. The Vive is around \$700. Gamers will think it's worth every nickel.

A virtual reality headset will be a hit around the Christmas tree, but if you want to keep them playing after December 26th, spend a little more money and get a good one.