

11

Accessorizing Your Pre

HOW TO...

- Use the Touchstone charger
- Recharge on the road
- Install a higher capacity battery
- Protect your screen
- Choose a case
- “Skin” your Pre
- Mount your Pre in your car
- Dock your Pre on your desk
- Choose headphones and headsets
- Connect a speaker dock
- Find Pre accessories online

The Pre may be the new kid on the smartphone block, but that hasn't stopped accessory makers from cranking out tons of terrific add-ons and extras. You'll find Pre cases, Pre docks, Pre headsets, Pre battery chargers, and a whole lot more. In this chapter, we'll spotlight some of the best accessories we've found for the Pre and tell you where to find them and how to score better deals.

Note

Let's get this out of the way right up front. There are a gazillion more accessories for the iPhone than there are for the Pre, in part because the former has been around a lot longer. The good news is that many iPhone accessories work like a charm with the Pre, meaning you have a much larger selection than you otherwise might think. So please don't be offended if we invoke that “other” device along the way. It's actually a good thing!

276 How to Do Everything: Palm Pre

The Touchstone Charging Dock

Wires? The Pre don't need no stinkin' *wires*. Unlike every other phone, camera, MP3 player, and gadget on the planet, the Pre can charge and recharge just by resting atop the magical Touchstone (see Figure 11-1). If you buy just one accessory for your phone, make it this one.

What you'll need, actually, is the Touchstone Charging Kit, which includes the dock itself and a replacement battery door for the Pre. See, the Touchstone relies on magnets to "lock" the Pre in place, and the standard battery door has no metal. That's why you need the replacement, which is identical to the standard door save for a matte finish (the glossy one just shows fingerprints anyway) and a special "magnetic induction" panel.



The good news is the replacement battery door doesn't change the weight or dimensions of your Pre. That bad news is that it won't work with oversize replacement batteries, which you'll learn more about in the upcoming section, "Bigger, Better Batteries." Of course, you can always change your battery/door configuration depending on the circumstances, like if you're going on a long trip and won't be using the Touchstone anyway.



FIGURE 11-1 The Touchstone charging dock relies on a technology called *induction* to charge your Pre without wires.

Chapter 11 Accessorizing Your Pre 277

The Touchstone is not only cool, it's also smart. For example, if you're on a call and you place your Pre on the dock, it automatically switches to speakerphone mode. And if your Pre rings while docked, the simple act of lifting it up answers the call.

Palm sells the Touchstone Charging Kit for a fairly steep \$69.95, but as of this writing it's available from the PreCentral Store for \$49.95 (<http://tinyurl.com/mc374j>). If that deal's no longer around by the time you read this, a little Google searching should help you find a price at least \$10 below Palm's.



A few clever Pre users have figured out a way to mount the Touchstone in their cars, making for a great mobile charger and dock. To see an example, check out this photo-illustrated success story in the PreCentral user forums: <http://tinyurl.com/p6qddg>. Also, if you already own the Touchstone kit and just need an extra dock, they're available separately.

Recharge on the Road

In Chapter 6, you learned loads of strategies for keeping your Pre charged while traveling, including battery-saving measures like lowering the screen brightness and turning off Bluetooth. Of course, what's the point of having a Pre if you can't use every bell and whistle? We want a blindingly bright screen, every wireless feature cranked to maximum, and non-stop Sprint TV. And we want them everywhere, all the time. *Life in the fast lane, surely make you lose your mind, life in the fast lane...* (Whoa, sorry to go all Don Henley on you there. Where were we?)

By packing the right power-providing accessories, you won't have to worry about the Pre's battery life (which, let's face it, isn't terrific). Let's take a look at the chargers, external batteries, and other goodies you'll want to pack on your next trip—or long commute.

Car Chargers

Want to top off your Pre between home and the office? The office and your lunch meeting? Your lunch meeting and the airport? Or maybe you're taking a road trip and letting the Pre's battery-hungry navigation app show you the way. Whatever the case, a car charger is absolutely essential.

As you may know, Palm sells one: the aptly named Vehicle Power Charger. What's nice about this little kit is that it doubles as a spare USB sync cable, as the larger plug can disconnect from the cigarette-lighter adapter. So if you are indeed headed to, say, the airport, you can charge your Pre on the way, then bring along just the USB cable for PC charging/syncing.



278 How to Do Everything: Palm Pre

Palm sells the Vehicle Power Charger for \$29.99, but you can get it from the aforementioned PreCentral Store (store.precentral.net) for \$19.95.

That same store also sells the Motorola Micro USB High Performance Car Charger for \$14.95 (<http://tinyurl.com/msz4rw>). The only difference between the two? The Motorola doesn't pull double duty as a standard USB cable. If you don't need that capability, you might as well pocket the five bucks you'll save.

Did You Know?

The Pre's Micro USB Port: Your Ticket to Cheap Chargers

Palm may have designed the Pre without a microSD slot (rats!), but at least the phone employs a standard charge/sync connector. It's called micro USB, and it's a universal port, meaning it will work with just about any micro USB cable or charger on the planet. In other words, you're not limited to buying Palm- or carrier-branded accessories, or to a smattering of third-party accessories designed especially for the Pre. Any item that has a micro USB connector should work.

Specifically, if you're looking for a basic sync cable to connect your Pre to your PC, look for any generic one that has a standard USB connector at one end and micro USB at the other. Palm charges \$14.99 for the Travel Micro USB Cable, but a quick search of eBay ("micro USB cable") reveals similar products selling for as little as \$1.

You need to be a little more careful when dealing with chargers, as it's critical that you use one that supplies no more than five volts (5V) of power. For example, you might have a micro USB cigarette-lighter adapter for your GPS—but before you try plugging it into your Pre, double-check its power output. Same goes for any kind of power supply, whether it's a car charger, external battery, or whatever. An incompatible power supply could fry your Pre in a matter of seconds. Yikes!

The other caveat here is that cheapo cables and chargers aren't always the best quality. Using them could put your Pre at risk, so you'll have to decide if that's worth saving a few bucks. Dave would probably say no, but Rick—a self-proclaimed cheapskate—has no problem rolling those particular dice.

Of course, don't base your decision on our opinions alone. We highly recommend perusing the user forums at sites such as PreCentral.net and EverythingPre (www.everythingpre.com), where you'll find lots of discussion about Pre chargers, including many third-party and generic products that have been tested by your fellow users. In other words, if you're eyeballing a charger and want to know if it'll work safely with the Pre, chances are good someone has already tried it.

Chapter 11 Accessorizing Your Pre 279

Travel Chargers

By far the best way to charge your Pre on the road is with the wall adapter that came in the box and an AC outlet. Of course, the latter are hard to come by in airplanes, taxis, trains, and the like. If you need power that's available anywhere, any time, you need a travel charger—specifically, an external power supply that packs its own battery.

These accessories, also known as emergency chargers, come in all shapes and sizes. As we noted earlier, any external charger that relies on a micro USB connector should work with the Pre. And there are tons of them, as some BlackBerry phones employ micro USB. So you needn't limit your charger search to Pre-specific products; the door's open to just about any charger that's BlackBerry-compatible.

Let's take a look at some of the more intriguing chargers you can toss in your bag, briefcase, purse, or even pocket.

The Ecosol Powerstick

About the size of a pack of gum, the Ecosol Powerstick (<http://tinyurl.com/ltfgnb>) charges by plugging into a computer's USB port. That means you can leave it plugged in, and then grab it when you head out the door. When your Pre is low on power, simply connect the Ecosol to the Pre's micro USB port and let it recharge the smartphone. The Powerstick features a cool LCD gauge that shows how much of its battery power is remaining—a major plus compared with other chargers.



Another perk: The Powerstick is compatible with other devices besides the Pre, and it in fact comes with nine different connectors for plugging into other gizmos. Palm sells the charger for \$79.99, but if you shop around online you should be able to find it for as little as \$50.

AA Portable Emergency Charger

The AA Portable Emergency Charger relies on a single double-A battery, which is handy because they're sold just about everywhere on the planet. (Gas stations? Check.

280 How to Do Everything: Palm Pre

Airports? Check. The mental institution where Dave gets his weekly treatments? Believe it or not, check!)



The screenshot shows an eBay product listing for a portable emergency travel charger. The page header includes the eBay logo, a search bar, and navigation links for 'Categories', 'Motors', 'Stores', and 'Daily Deal'. Below the header, there's a breadcrumb trail: 'Back to Search Results | Listed in category: Cell Phones & PDAs > Cell Phone & PDA Accessories'. A message states 'We're working to make eBay easier to use.' Below that, a note indicates 'This is a private auction. Sign in to view your status or learn more about private listings.'

The main product listing is for a 'Hot! AA Portable Emergency Travel Charger for Palm PRE'. The item condition is 'New'. The quantity is set to 1, with a note that 'More than 10 available'. The price is 'US \$7.99'. There are two buttons: 'Buy It Now' and 'Watch this item'. The shipping information is 'FREE shipping Standard Flat Rate Shipping Service' with a link to 'See all details' and a note that 'Estimated delivery time varies for this shipping service. Seller ships within 1 day'. The returns policy is '14 day money back, buyer pays return shipping | Read details'. The coverage information is 'Pay with PayPal and your full purchase price is covered | See terms'. A photo of the charger is shown on the left, with an 'Enlarge' button below it.

Equally handy, the charger sports a carabiner-style clip so you can easily wear it on a keychain, belt loop, or just about anyplace else. And they're inexpensive. We found one on eBay selling for the bargain price of just \$7.99, shipping included. You'll almost certainly be able to find something similar.

iGo powerXtender

Like a slightly more robust version of the previous charger, the iGo powerXtender (<http://www.igo.com>) relies on two AA batteries to power your Pre. However, you'll need a Pre-specific connector tip to go with it (iGo Power Tip A138). So plan on spending \$15.99 for the charger and \$9.99 for the tip.

Another Power Option: Spare Batteries

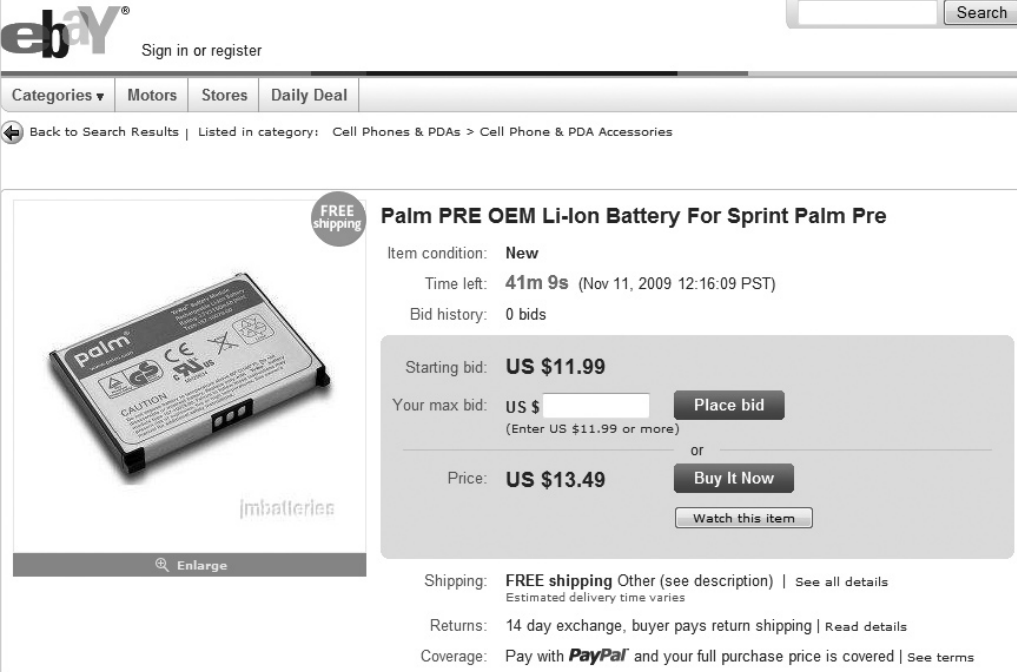
The Pre's battery is removable, so if yours is out of juice, why not just swap in a fresh one? That's certainly an option, but it presents a couple of challenges. First, you need a way to charge your spare battery while it's outside your Pre. Second, the actual act of swapping batteries involves powering down the Pre, removing the battery door,

Chapter 11 Accessorizing Your Pre 281

making the switch, and waiting on a lengthy power-up process. Granted, that's really more of a hassle than a challenge, but it's something to keep in mind.

If you still like the idea of keeping an extra battery (or two) on hand, head to the PreCentral Store and check out the Palm Spare Battery Charger for Pre (<http://tinyurl.com/lqdmk>). This \$29.95 item not only charges your extra battery (via wall adapter, USB cable, or vehicle charger), but it also doubles as a battery carrying case.

As for the spare battery itself, the aforementioned PreCentral Store sells them for \$39.95, but we found Palm-branded OEM replacement batteries selling on eBay for as little as \$12. Our advice: Buy the \$12 one. There's absolutely no reason to spend more.



ebay® Sign in or register

Categories ▾ Motors Stores Daily Deal

Back to Search Results | Listed in category: Cell Phones & PDAs > Cell Phone & PDA Accessories

FREE shipping

Palm PRE OEM Li-Ion Battery For Sprint Palm Pre

Item condition: **New**
 Time left: **41m 9s** (Nov 11, 2009 12:16:09 PST)
 Bid history: 0 bids

Starting bid: **US \$11.99**
 Your max bid: **US \$** **Place bid**
 (Enter US \$11.99 or more)

or

Price: **US \$13.49** **Buy It Now**

Shipping: **FREE shipping** Other (see description) | See all details
 Estimated delivery time varies

Returns: 14 day exchange, buyer pays return shipping | Read details

Coverage: Pay with **PayPal** and your full purchase price is covered | See terms

Bigger, Better Batteries

There's another way to solve the problem of never-enough-battery-life: Install a bigger battery. See, the stock Pre battery has a capacity of 1150 milliampere-hours (mAh), and as you've probably discovered by now, that's barely enough to get you through a day's worth of walking around.

Ah, but what if you could shoehorn a 1400-mAh battery into your Pre? In theory, that would net you about 20 percent more runtime. Okay, then, how about a 2600-mAh battery or even a whopping 3800-mAh battery? The latter would run more than three times longer on a single charge. Hey, wipe that drool off your chin!

282 How to Do Everything: Palm Pre

TABLE 11-1 Extended Batteries for the Pre

Product	Capacity	Price	Where to Get It
Amzer SmartCell 1400	1400 mAh	\$49.95	http://tinyurl.com/ku8d4o
Amzer SmartCell 2800	2800 mAh	\$89.95	http://tinyurl.com/lav7lp
Amzer SmartCell 3800	3800 mAh	\$129.95	http://tinyurl.com/kkxjox
Seidio Innocell 2600mAh Extended Life Battery	2600 mAh	\$64.95	http://tinyurl.com/mbsj4h

All this can be yours—for a price. Not just the price of the battery, but also of your Pre's svelte figure. You know how Robert DeNiro famously bulks up for certain movie roles? If you want your Pre to deliver more power, you'll have to accept added bulk. That's because these larger batteries are physically larger, protruding extra millimeters from the battery slot. Take a look, for instance, at a Pre with the Seidio Innocell 2600mAh Extended Life Battery installed, shown here.



As you can see, the Pre looks a little stouter about the tum. Just how much stouter depends on the size (and corresponding capacity) of the battery. The Seidio product isn't too bad: It adds only about 4mm of overall thickness to the Pre. However, and this is true of most extended batteries, it necessitates the use of a replacement rear door, one that's a bit deeper to accommodate the deeper battery.

Consequently, when you opt for an extended battery, such as one of those shown in Table 11-1, you lose compatibility with the Touchstone charger. That's a disappointment, to say the least, but it's the price you pay for extra power on the inside.



The one exception to this is the Amzer SmartCell 1400, a 1400-mAh battery that's the same size as the standard battery. Consequently, it doesn't require a replacement door, and it should work with the Touchstone.

Protect Your Screen

A scratched Pre screen can ruin your day faster than sitting through one of Dave's "jokes." Fortunately, it's pretty easy to avoid both. For starters, never get on the phone with Dave. Then, apply a screen protector to your Pre. Problems solved!

A screen protector is basically a clear, self-adhesive sheet of plastic cut to fit the front of your Pre. In addition to preventing scratches that can occur when, say, your Pre meets your keys inside your pocket, these sheets can reduce both glare and fingerprints. Definitely a worthwhile investment, especially considering that most screen protectors sell for \$10 to \$15. Table 11-2 lists some options.

Chapter 11 Accessorizing Your Pre 283

TABLE 11-2 Screen Protectors for the Pre

Product	Price	Where to Get It
BoxWave ClearTouch Crystal	\$12.95	http://tinyurl.com/nbcser
Palm Pre Clear Screen Protector with Cleaning Cloth	\$8.95	http://tinyurl.com/mx449c
ScreenGuardz	\$9.99	http://tinyurl.com/lh392v
Smartphone Experts Screen Protectors (3-Pack)	\$14.95	http://tinyurl.com/npsljv

Choose a Case

The Pre is slim and compact enough to ride easily in a pocket or purse. But, let's face it, you've got all kinds of dangerous flotsam in there. (Dave's purse in particular is a gadget deathtrap, what with all the bobby pins and such.) What's more, when your Pre is tucked away somewhere, you're less likely to hear it ring when a call comes in.

All the more reason to consider a case. They're good for showing off your style, keeping your Pre safe from scratches (to say nothing of accidental drops to the pavement), and even securing your Pre to your belt for easier access (and more audible rings).

Here are some things to keep in mind as you shop for a case:

- **Style** If you're a briefcase-carrying, suit-wearing executive type, you may want a case to match. That means leather. Here's the Smartphone Experts Side Pouch, a fine example of corporate style:



284 How to Do Everything: Palm Pre

- **Portability** In the summer, when the tight clothes come out and the jackets get stowed, pockets are hard to come by. That's when something like a belt-clip case can come in mighty handy. Check out the Seidio Holster, seen here at right.
- **Screen protection** When your Pre is bouncing around in a pocket, purse, or briefcase, the last thing you want is for some piece of flotsam to gouge or scratch the screen. That's one of the main reasons behind getting a case in the first place.
- **Drop protection** Gravity—it strikes without warning (especially if you're a klutz like Dave), and it can fatally wound a Pre in a matter of milliseconds. A case made of neoprene or even metal can save the day if your Pre gets knocked or dropped to the floor. Check out the Body Glove Faux Nylon Snap-on:



- **Moron protection** We used to hear stories of people driving over their PalmPilots. Why anyone would leave a PDA in the driveway in the first place is beyond us,

Chapter 11 Accessorizing Your Pre 285

but there are aluminum and metal cases that can handle such punishment. Or maybe you just need to survive a day at the beach, in which case something like the Aquapac Handheld Case might be a good choice:



Dozens of different cases are available for the Pre. In Table 11-3 you'll find a smattering of them—a little something for everyone. But with so many options available, you should definitely shop around until you find just the right case for your lifestyle.



Why stop with just one case? We have a leather belt-clip holster for our days at the office, a ruggedized hard/soft shell for weekend combat maneuvers, and a colorful plastic shell for nights on the town.

TABLE 11-3 Pre Cases

Product	Description	Price	Where to Get It
Aquapac Handheld Case	Waterproof, sandproof, and sunlight-resistant; also floats in water	\$24.95	http://tinyurl.com/nqkoxm
BodyGlove Faux Nylon Snap-on	Drop-proof hard shell with textured corners for easier gripping	\$29.95	http://tinyurl.com/n8nsxy
PDA Skins PDA Plus	Zippered case with slots for cash and credit cards and an outside pocket for your headset	\$39.95	http://tinyurl.com/mxvfuh
Seidio Holster	Belt-clip holster protects the screen, leaving the speaker unobscured	\$24.95	http://tinyurl.com/kpju8c
Smartphone Experts Click Case	Shiny, colorful plastic shells clip onto the Pre backside	\$17.95	http://tinyurl.com/m9ur5m
Smartphone Experts Top Pouch	Top-loading leather belt-clip case, available in several colors	\$24.95	http://tinyurl.com/nwyelo

286 How to Do Everything: Palm Pre

“Skin” Your Pre

To paraphrase Henry Ford, you can get a Pre in any color you want, as long as it's black. While that's fine for Dave, whose entire wardrobe consists of black t-shirts and jeans, Rick prefers to spruce things up a little. As you learned in the preceding section, certain cases can add a dash of color to your Pre. But for serious flair, nothing beats a skin.

Skins are really just special decals that add some personal style to your Pre. Options range from colorful patterns to sports team logos to a photo of some cute kittens. Or you could even design your own skin with text, graphics, or even a snapshot of your kids. That's one reason we're partial to Unique Skins (www.uniqueskins.com), which lets you build your own skin from scratch. And the design process happens right in your Web browser using a simple (and, dare we say, fun?) set of tools. Check it out in Figure 11-2.

The company promises that its skins will never fade or smudge, and that the adhesive won't leave behind any residue when you peel one off. What's really amazing is that these custom-designed skins cost just \$6.99 apiece.



FIGURE 11-2 Unique Skins lets you design your own Pre skin, complete with text, graphics, and even your own photos.

Chapter 11 Accessorizing Your Pre 287

Rick vs. Dave: The Accessories We Can't Live Without

Rick: While Dave prefers accessories of the pink and sparkly nature, I like manly leather cases and bullet-stopping screen protectors (because I get fired on a lot).

Actually, I spend a lot of time chained at my desk, and much as I love the Touchstone charger, I prefer a more traditional dock. That's why my Pre accessory of choice is the Mobi Products Cradle, which holds the Pre more upright than the Touchstone and provides a slot for keeping a spare battery charged and at the ready. I'm also partial to the Griffin TuneBuds Mobile, which, though designed for iPhones, work very nicely with the Pre (as do most headsets).

Dave: I can't fathom why Rick needs any accessories at all since he never leaves his parents' basement, but I suppose it can be fun to pretend you have friends. In any event, my favorite (and utterly indispensable) Pre accessory is a pair of Bluetooth stereo headphones. They're from Dell, and they came with some PC I bought a year or two ago. Nonetheless, despite their inauspicious origins, I use them absolutely daily to listen to music while on the go. Without them, my Pre would not be nearly as awesome.

Mount Your Pre in Your Car

In Chapter 6 you learned how to use your Pre as a GPS navigation system. What you didn't learn was how to use it safely in your vehicle. That means mounting the phone on your windshield or dashboard so it's at eye level, just as a standalone GPS would be.

While we've yet to see any car mounts designed expressly for the Pre, plenty of universal mounts work just fine. Arkon Resources (www.arkon.com) and iGrip (www.igrip.net) are among the companies that make such products, and you can find several of them in the oft-mentioned PreCentral Store (<http://store.precentral.net/palm-pre-car-mounts.htm>). For example, here's the Arkon SM315 Universal Windshield/Dashboard/Console Mount, which suction-cups your Pre to your windshield:



288 How to Do Everything: Palm Pre

If your windshield is too deep to make a suction-cup mount practical (or your state has laws against windshield-mounted devices), you might be better off with a cigarette lighter mount, which plugs into your car's cigarette lighter (but may not charge your Pre, alas).

Other options include “weighted” mounts that rest on your dashboard and vent mounts that clip into your air vents. Bottom line: If you plan to use your Pre as a GPS, or you just want a safer way to interact with it while driving (something we absolutely positively don't recommend), a car mount is a must.

Dock Your Pre on Your Desk

Back when Palm made PalmPilots, desktop docks were standard equipment. These days, not so much—something we don't fully understand. Don't most of us still spend our days chained to a desk? And isn't it more convenient to have our phone/information manager at arm's length rather than stuffed in a pocket or clipped uncomfortably to a belt? (It's the rare belt-clip case that isn't uncomfortable when you're sitting down.)

Palm doesn't make a traditional dock for the Pre, though the Touchstone sort of qualifies: It holds your device at a semi-upright angle and simultaneously charges it. However, if you want an honest-to-goodness dock, check out the glamorously named Mobi Products Cradle w/Spare Battery Slot (<http://tinyurl.com/nyboddb>). Take a look:



Chapter 11 Accessorizing Your Pre 289

As you can see, the dock relies on a coiled USB connector for charging, meaning you can't just drop the Pre into the cradle and trust that its battery will magically recharge. You have to perform the manual step of carefully plugging in the connector.

On the plus side, the cradle includes a slot for a second battery (see “Another Power Option: Spare Batteries” earlier in this chapter), one that stays charged and at the ready. You can see the slot in better detail here:



You may have noticed that the cradle also comes with a plastic stylus and holder, which is amusing given that the Pre doesn't respond to stylus input. (It's not a PalmPilot, silly Mobi Products!) The only way to navigate the touch screen is with a finger.

Anyway, the dock sells for \$24.95—a reasonable price if you spend more time at your desk than you do on the move.

Choose Headphones and Headsets

As you learned in Chapter 8, the Pre makes a fine MP3 player. Of course, it's also a phone. Consequently, you might want to treat your ears to something a little better than Palm's bundled headset. Don't get us wrong: It's fine, but there are better and more versatile ways to listen to music—and hold conversations.

Bluetooth Headsets

For example, a Bluetooth headset allows you to place and receive phone calls while your Pre stays tucked away in your pocket, briefcase, or somewhere else on your person—no wires required. You learned all about Bluetooth—how to enable it on your Pre, how to pair a headset, and so on—in Chapter 6, so hop back there if you need a refresher.

In the meantime, let's talk about some actual headsets you might want to buy. They come in all shapes and sizes, with prices ranging from \$20 to more than \$100.

290 How to Do Everything: Palm Pre

Choosing one can be a challenge, indeed, as it's hard to know how well a headset will fit your ear(s) without actually trying it on (rarely an option) or how good it will sound without actually listening to it (ditto).

Note There's also the matter of style. Rick wouldn't be caught dead wearing the fashion equivalent of a Borg implant, but Dave has no problem walking around with a shiny, flashing woman-repellant sticking out of his ear. And looking like he's talking to himself.

Consequently, your best bet is to search out reviews. We recommend perusing CNET.com for professional coverage of the latest and greatest headsets and Amazon for user reviews (which are often just as valuable).

That said, we can recommend one Bluetooth headset here and now: the Aliph Jawbone 2 (www.jawbone.com). It's widely regarded as the gold standard among headsets (though there is a newer model, the Jawbone Prime, that's reputed to be even better).



The Jawbone offers unsurpassed sound quality and noise-cancellation features. Our only complaint with it is the quirky volume control. Oh, and the list price: \$129.99. Fortunately, it's easy to find online for as little as \$50.

Did You Know?

What About Plain Old Headphones?

With all this talk about headsets, let's not forget good-old-fashioned headphones, the kind some of us grew up with permanently affixed to our ears. Because the Pre has an industry-standard 3.5mm audio jack, it's compatible with just about every pair of earbuds, headphones, neckphones, and the like on the planet.

That means if you already own a favorite pair, feel free to plug 'em in! If not, we highly recommend investing in a pair of "in-ear" earphones (also known as "canalphones"), which have foam or rubberized tips that slip snugly into your ear canals to form a noise-isolating seal. We like these much better than so-called "noise-canceling" headphones, which generate competing audio frequencies to drown out ambient noise (such as airplane engines).

Chapter 11 Accessorizing Your Pre 291



FIGURE 11-3 Jabra's HALO headset offers music—and conversation—without wires. It has a list price of \$129.

Stereo Headsets

If you can wirelessly listen to callers in one ear, why can't you wirelessly listen to music in two ears? That's the idea behind stereo Bluetooth headsets, which resemble traditional earbuds or headphones—but without the cord. A perfect example is the Jabra HALO (see Figure 11-3), which you might mistake for an elegant, folding pair of regular headphones if not for the conspicuous lack of wires descending from the earpieces.

Because the Pre supports a Bluetooth technology called A2DP, it's able to stream music wirelessly in stereo. And trust us: Once you cut the cord, you'll never go back to wired headphones.

As you can see in Figure 11-3, the HALO looks like a pair of headphones. But it still allows you to hold phone conversations thanks to a built-in microphone. When a call comes in, the music fades out until the call is over. The same is true of most other stereo headsets, including these popular models:

- Motorola Motorokr S305
- Motorola S9
- Plantronics Voyager 855
- Pulsar 590E
- Samsung SBH 600

Wired Headsets

If you don't mind being tethered to your Pre, wired headsets offer terrific sound, freedom from yet another battery to keep charged, and affordable prices. Obviously, your Pre came

292 How to Do Everything: Palm Pre

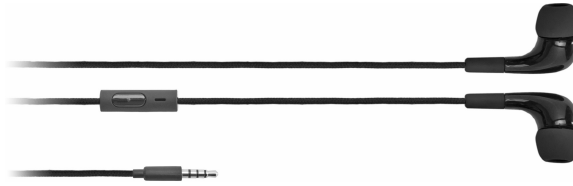


FIGURE 11-4 The Griffin TuneBuds Mobile is much like the bundled Pre headset, but with noise-isolating earbuds and a tangle-free cord.

with one such headset, so we won't spend too much time talking about replacements—except to name Rick's favorite, the Griffin TuneBuds Mobile (see Figure 11-4).

Designed for iPhones but compatible with the Pre, the TuneBuds combine noise-isolating earbuds with a talk-ready microphone and a play-pause control. They're not perfect, but they're definitely worth the \$39.99 list price. What's more, if you hit up a price-comparison site such as PriceGrabber (www.pricegrabber.com), you should be able to find them for as little as \$20.

The TuneBuds come with three pairs of rubberized earbuds so you can get the best fit for your ears. We particularly like the nylon-coated cord, which helps prevent tangles. To that end, it would be nice if Griffin supplied some kind of plastic cord wrap, but at least you get a zippered carrying case.

As with Palm's headset, the earbuds include an in-line microphone for phone conversations. A small button lets you answer incoming calls or send them to voicemail. When not pulling phone duty, the button can play or pause your tunes or skip to the next song.

How's the sound quality? To Rick's ears, excellent, though he's the first to admit he's not the best judge of audio fidelity. If you can, borrow a pair from a friend and try them for yourself.

Connect a Speaker Dock

You know what Three Dog Night said about one being the loneliest number, right? Why not share that goofy song (and others) with friends and family members instead of sitting there all alone with your headphones? All you need is a speaker dock.

Although no speaker docks are designed expressly for the Pre (not yet, anyway), most such products have compatible line-in jacks. All you need is a 3.5mm patch cable, which you can find at any Radio Shack (sorry, we just can't bring ourselves to call it "The Shack," any more than we can bring ourselves to refer to *Star Wars* as "Episode IV"). Just plug one end into the Pre's headphone jack and the other into the dock. Presto: You've got one killer MP3 jukebox.

You can pick up a small, portable speaker dock for as little as \$30 or spend upwards of \$200 on a big 'un. However, this is one category that's going to require you to focus on iPod and iPhone products, as that's where all the action is, speaker dock-wise. The good news is that you can find plenty of reviews at sites such as Amazon, CNET, and

Chapter 11 Accessorizing Your Pre 293

iLounge (www.ilounge.com). And we've yet to find a company with a wider selection of speaker docks than Altec Lansing (<http://www.alteclansing.com>), which at press time had no fewer than a dozen Pre-compatible models (meaning they all have 3.5mm input jacks). See Figure 11-5 for some examples.

Wireless Docks

Not one for wires? Then take advantage of Bluetooth. Just as the Pre can wirelessly stream audio to Bluetooth headsets, so can it connect with Bluetooth speakers. We're partial to the Blueant M1 Bluetooth Stereo Speakers (<http://tinyurl.com/mdz6ek>), a standalone, bookshelf-ready "speaker bar" that features a built-in subwoofer and a rechargeable battery (for easy moving from room to room). The M1 lists for \$199.95, but we've seen it selling online for around \$155.

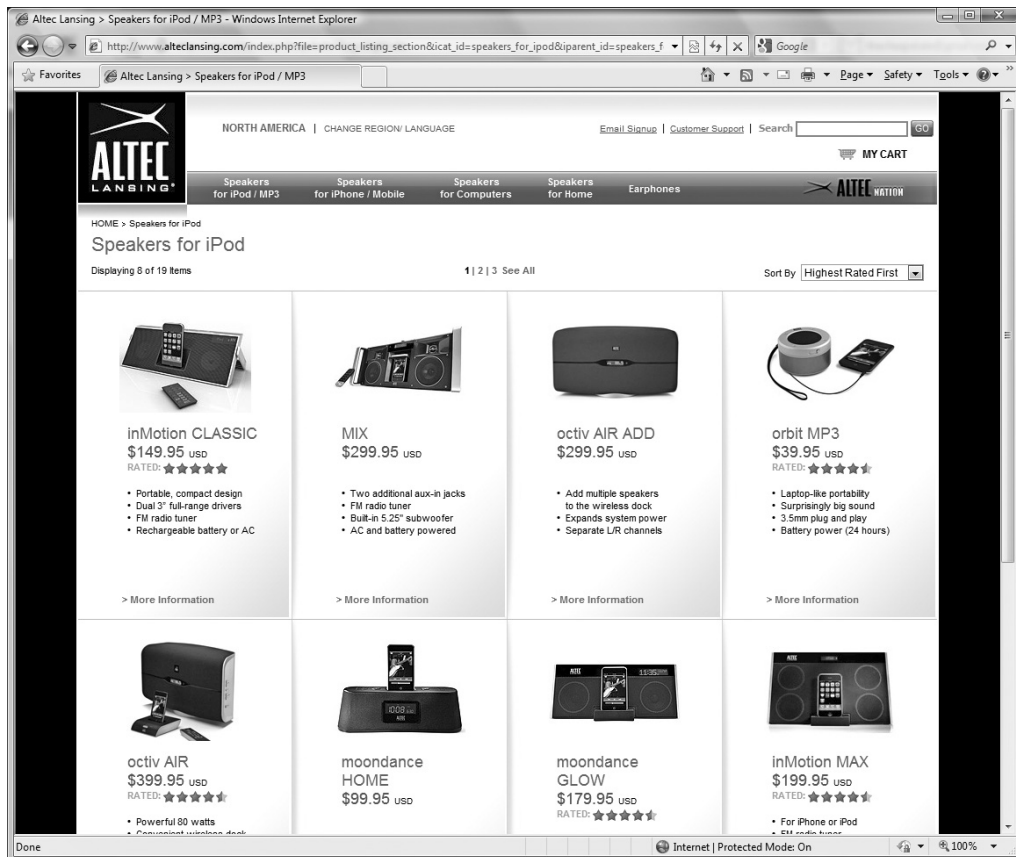


FIGURE 11-5 Altec Lansing's speaker docks may say iPod and iPhone all over them, but those with analog input jacks will work just fine with the Pre.

