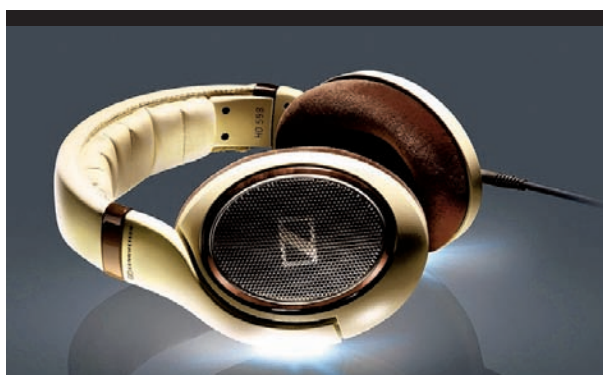


From sound bar to top 'phones



Panasonic SC-HTB10 sound bar

Designed to appeal to buyers inhabiting smaller spaces is Panasonic's first "sound bar" home cinema system. Sound bar systems don't provide true surround sound but widen the stereo image and use electricravery to simulate surround-sound effects. They can work quite well, especially in a small area. Although you won't get the audio immersion of true SS, a good sound bar will be a big improvement over any TV's built-in speakers. The little Panasonic unit also features a "clear-mode" dialogue setting designed to make speech clearer. The HTB10 is easily connected with a single HDMI cable. Yours for \$399 from electrical and home cinema retailers. www.panasonic.com.au.



Sennheiser 500 series headphones

When it comes to headphones, few would dispute the pre-eminence of Sennheiser. The company has announced three new high-end models — the entry-level HD 518, mid-range HD 558, and flagship HD 598. It will set you back \$439.95 for a pair of 598s — designed to look elegantly exclusive with cream-coloured surfaces, leatherette and glossy burl wood inlay. The 6.3mm audio jack is gold-plated, and each cushioning earpad has been spun by audio artisans using fleece shorn from rare free-range velours (a sort of plush antelope) which graze on the upper slopes of Kilimanjaro (not really, but they are *very* comfortable headphones to wear even over long periods). Total harmonic distortion for these uber-cans has been measured at below 0.1 per cent. The frequency response is 12 to 38,500 Hertz. All three models utilise Sennheiser's E.A.R. technology, which ensures accurate channelling of audio signals into your ears, where they belong. The HD 518s are priced at \$229.95 and 558s at \$319.95. www.sennheiser.com.au.



Grundig Vanto+ LED LCD televisions

Grundig entered the LED LCD market this year with two small-screen HD TVs offering lightweight slimline design, a six-star energy rating, and aimed at providing sets ideal for smaller spaces or for those looking to upgrade their second or third TV. The soon-to-be-released Vanto+ full HD TVs use the same edge-lit LED LCD technology but also incorporate play, pause and time-shift function for live TV via USB and the ability to record on to USB at the touch of a button. Available online and from selected Harvey Norman and Retravision stores. Recommended retail price is \$439 for the 19-inch, \$529 for the 22-inch and \$579 for the 24-inch. www.bushaustralia.com.au.

DVD New Release

KENT ACOTT



EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES (Sony Pictures, PG, \$35) Director: Tom Vaughan

Harrison Ford stars in this poignant drama about a couple's efforts to find a researcher who might be able to cure their two children's rare genetic

disorder. The film is based on a true story that was documented in the book *The Cure: How a Father Raised \$100 Million — And Bucked the Medical Establishment — In a Quest to Save His Children*. The DVD package includes some behind-the-scenes footage, interviews and deleted scenes.



STOMP THE YARD: HOMECOMING (Sony Pictures, M, \$35, Blu-ray \$43) Director: Rob Hardy

This sequel has all the energy, moves and thumping soundtrack of the original. Once again the story centres on Chance Harris (Collins Pennie) as he tries

to find a balance between his school, his work, his relationships and the opportunity to perform at a nationally televised step competition. The release includes a commentary from the director and members of the cast and some deleted scenes.



UNDER THE MOUNTAIN (Sony Pictures, M, \$33) Director: Jonathan King

After being sent to stay with relatives after the sudden death of their mother, teenage twins become fascinated with a volcanic lake and the smells that seem to be coming from

an old house by the shore. Based on a novel by Maurice Gee, the film is aimed directly at the teen market. It includes a commentary from director King and writer Matthew Grainger.

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