

# What's In My Backpack?

## A 2026 Guide to On-the-Go Tech

This holiday season is the perfect time to take a second look at your gear and decide what products are working, and which are overdue for a replacement. This article will update you on the objects I carry on a daily (and nightly) basis when I'm working, traveling, or just hanging out at home. These are my absolute necessities for any occasion. Each year I update this list to reflect new items I have added (and phase out things I have stopped carrying).

I hope this list helps patch some gaps in your everyday carry setup, or helps jumpstart a gift idea for a gear-head loved one or tech-obsessed friend. As we enter the holiday season in a world that feels more chaotic by the day, this gear brings me peace of mind and technological security from my office to the airport terminal. So check out my picks, and get something nice for yourself under the tree this year.

...

### *In My Backpack*

#### [The Backpack \(\\$68.00\)](#)



This is what holds it all together. My career, my sanity, and more.

This backpack has cushioned internal storage space for my 14-inch Macbook Pro, a separate zippered front compartment for my 11-inch iPad Pro, internal pockets to hold the items described below, a bottle holder on the side, and a hidden strap on the back to slot over the handle on my rolling suitcase when I travel.

Even packed to the brim, it remains compact, sleek, lightweight and also comfortable enough for travel and daily commutes (and it slides very easily under the airplane seat in front of me).

At a low price point, this is a fantastic choice for anyone who wants to graduate from a ratty Jansport but isn't quite ready for the gravity and weight of a fancy leather briefcase.

## [Anker 67W Wall Charger \(\\$34.99\)](#)

Of all the charging bricks I've used this Anker 67W charger is by far the best. Small enough to tuck into a side pocket but powerful enough to charge three devices (including your laptop, tablet, and phone) in a flash, this is a huge upgrade over those legacy chargers rattling around your briefcase.

It has 2 USB-C slots plus a USB-A outlet, so it should have you covered no matter what generation your tech is.



## [Adaptable Charging Cord \(2x\) \(\\$11.99 - \\$12.79\)](#)



This cord has attachments for USB-C, Lightning, and USB-A cables so all of your devices can use the same cord. Simple, and it keeps weight down. These come in 4ft and 6ft lengths, and I carry one of each for flexibility.

## [Flat 45W USB C Wall Charger \(\\$9.99\)](#)

I carry this specific charger in my backpack at all times for a very specific purpose: it fits perfectly in loose outlets like those between airplane seats, and it won't fall out like the larger, heavier charging cubes. I never exit an airplane without a 100% fully charged phone, thanks to this unique charger.



## [6ft USB-C Charging Cord \(2x\) \(\\$15.99\)](#)



This has become my go-to charger for all my devices, especially after upgrading to the iPhone 17 and the latest generation of accessories, which are all now fitted with USB-C ports. The future is bright for universal charging standards!

These come in a variety of lengths, including 3-ft and 10-ft, but I prefer the 6-ft length as it's long enough to reach far away plugs but short enough to not be unwieldy.

## [Chipolo Thin Wallet Finder \(\\$35.00\)](#)

Who hasn't felt that stomach-churning sense of fear you get when you realize you lost your wallet? I know I have. Eager to guard against that risk, I added the Chipolo Thin Wallet Finder to my device lineup.

This thin card slips easily into a wallet or money clip, and works seamlessly with iOS and Apple's AirTags so that I can track all my items (car keys, backpack, wallet, luggage etc) in one convenient place.



## [Airfly SE \(\\$34.97\)](#)



This handy gizmo allows you to connect a bluetooth headset to any device with a 3.5mm headphone jack input. Whether you're watching TV on a plane monitor, trying to use clunky, outdated gym equipment, or connecting to a rental car's audio, the Airfly Duo will come to your rescue.

Additionally, it functions as an old-fashioned splitter, allowing users to connect multiple pairs of Bluetooth headphones to the same device, enabling easy audio sharing as you watch or listen together. Really handy for traveling families, couples, or lone commuters looking to make friends.

## [SanDisk Flash Drive \(\\$24.95\)](#)

Just like a good lawyer, portable data storage is one of those things that's far better to have and not need than need and not have. This drive has both USB-C and USB-A male ends, enabling you to connect to virtually any device with ease, plus it boasts a plentiful 256GB capacity.

An additional handy tip: Enable device encryption with a complex password so that even if you lose the physical drive, you can rest easy knowing your data is secure.



## [NeoRockle 16pcs Silicone Cable Straps \(\\$8.18\)](#)



I'm constantly dealing with a tangle of cords wrapped up like a ball of snakes in my backpack. It's not only annoying, it's risky — who knows what valuable item you might drop in an airplane seat when you're wrangling a knot of cords from a zip pocket.

That's why I got these NeoRockle straps. They don't pick up fuzz or lose their effectiveness like Velcro straps, and they're quick and easy to use. Plus, they're totally awesome!

## [Soundcore by Anker Sport X20 Bluetooth Headphones \(\\$79.99\)](#)



I know, I know, AirPods are great. But frankly, I've used these as my daily headphones for months now, and I have not noticed any drop-off in audio quality compared to my old AirPods, and these come in at less than half the price. This model also offers an added ear loop for extra stability during active workouts, meaning you won't lose one on a run or an airplane.

For a high-quality listening experience, state-of-the-art noise cancellation and a great fit, these headphones are a clear favorite. I recommend them to anyone who enjoys active noise cancellation during their work — or workouts — without breaking the bank.

## [LISEN UltraSlim Wireless Portable Charger 5,000mAh \(\\$38.99\)](#)

If there's one thing I hate, it's getting stuck with a dead phone and no backup. This battery pack is the thinnest portable charger we've ever tested at just .38 inches, but it doesn't compromise on capacity, boasting a robust 5,000mAh rating. It's got enough juice to charge your phone fully and get you out of any jam.

The best part is, you don't even need a cord. With any MagSafe enabled iPhone, just click the bank into place on the back of your phone, and voilà. Your phone is immortal.



...

The above items stay in my backpack each and every day, whether I'm going to and from the office, on the road, or even on vacation. Below are some suggestions for items that have a permanent spot in my suitcase whenever I travel overnight.

## *In My Suitcase*

### **LISEN MagSafe Portable Charging Stand (\$12.99)**



Though I have preached about my love for the Anker Cube in years past, LISEN's competitor does everything the Cube did, but at a smaller form factor and better price.

I'm really enjoying the convenience of tucking this into my suitcase pocket and charging my Watch, AirPods, and Phone with ease.

### **Anker Wall Plug (\$11.19)**

With this tiny foldable 30W charger and a high quality USB C cable (like the 6-ft cable mentioned below), your phone, watch, and AirPods will all be at full power overnight. I pair this with the LISEN Portable Charging Stand and have all my mobile device power needs covered.



### **Sonos Roam 2 Bluetooth Speaker (\$179.00)**



Remember: I love music. You love music. The residents of the adjoining hotel room definitely love music. That's why I now recommend the latest version of this speaker, the Sonos Roam 2. It's a perfect travel speaker; rugged, compact, waterproof, and powerful enough for everything from shower karaoke to an impromptu party. It packs a punch when you're on the go, and even pairs up with other Sonos devices to boost your playback.

### **LG Gram + View 16in Portable Monitor (\$249.99)**

This is a more recent addition to my travel lineup and after using it for the last year, I find myself unable to go without it. This slim, lightweight monitor slides easily into a suitcase pocket but still boasts 2k resolution and a slick magnetic cover that doubles as a stand. I use this as a companion to my Macbook whenever I travel, and it more than doubles my available screen space. Its bright display and excellent color rendition make it the perfect tool for everything from working with small text to editing large spreadsheets on-the-go.



...

And that's it! I hope you enjoyed this list and maybe even picked up a new toy. If you disagree with one of my choices here, let me know in the comments or send me an email and we can hash it out. But it will be tough to convince me, because this stuff is the best.

Happy Holidays to all!