

**STOP HACKERS NOW!** p. 82 | **15 EASY HOME UPGRADES** p. 104

**HOW TO ROAST THE WHOLE DARN PIG** p. 50

**SUPER STORM RESCUE AT SEA**  
p. 44

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# Popular Mechanics

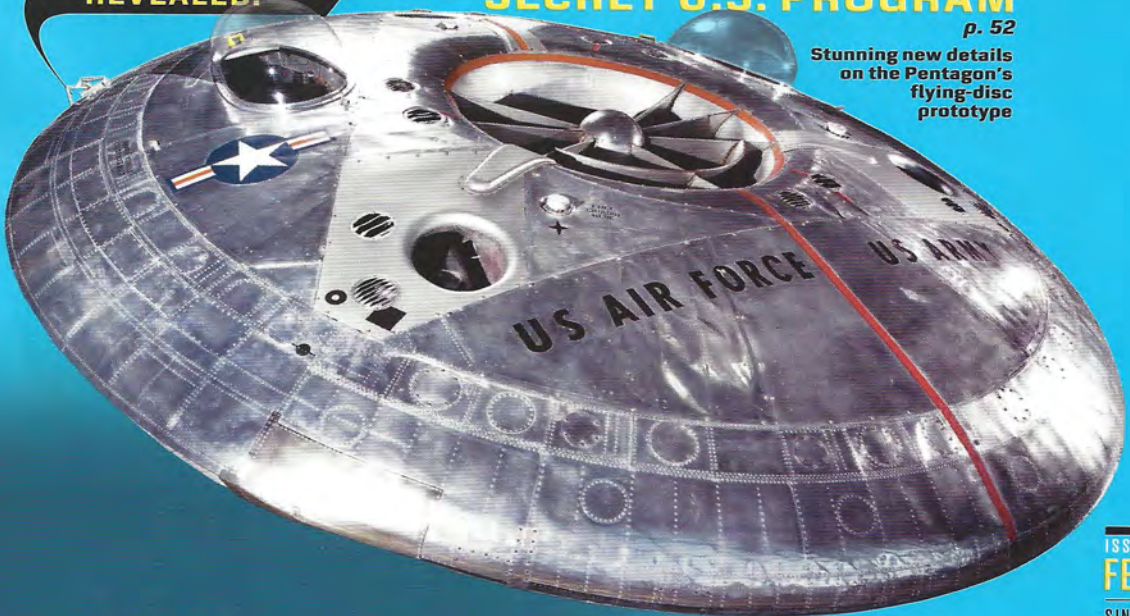
**DECLASSIFIED:**

# FLYING SAUCER

**REVEALED:** →

**SECRET U.S. PROGRAM**  
p. 52

Stunning new details on the Pentagon's flying-disc prototype



**SECRET**

PROJECT 1794

**PLUS**  
**TABLET TEST: Which New 7-Inch Is the Best?** p. 25  
**How an NFL Kicker Scores From 50 Yards Out** p. 62  
**Inside America's Last Steam-Powered Sawmill** p. 64

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# Ten

## Tech Projects One Weekend, Zero Hassles



There are two schools of thought when it comes to keeping your tech gear humming: never-ending fiddling and never-get-around-to-it procrastination. But both tinkerers and technophobes can end up with a stack of projects waiting for a rainy day. This weekend, make it rain progress for 48 straight hours.

BY THE EDITORS ILLUSTRATIONS BY TYPOZON

DAY:  
**FRIDAY**

GET READY:  
**PREPARE SELF, SAVE DATA**

NO. 1  
**2 HOURS**  
↓



First, make a plan that's achievable. Your list should include a balance of projects, from the have-tos (sensible data backup) to the want-tos (whole-home audio!).

Don't forget all the adapters, tools, and other supplies you'll need. Order cables ahead of time online—they'll cost far more in a last-minute run to the store.

### Backup

- NAS drive (\$100 to \$200)
- 10-foot Ethernet cable (\$3)

### Home Theater Makeover

- TV mounting bracket (\$30 to \$500)
- Drill/driver (\$60)
- Ratcheting screwdriver (\$15)
- Blue masking tape (\$5)

- Tape measure (\$6)
- Stud finder (\$14)
- Logitech Harmony Link and infrared emitter (\$100)
- Velcro cable ties (\$4)

### Home Office Overhaul

- Tablet computer (\$500 to \$1000)
- 23-inch or larger screen (\$200 to \$600)
- Desk lamp (\$10 to \$200)

- Wireless keyboard and mouse (\$140)
- Tripp Lite 8-outlet Vertical Power Strip (\$60)
- Windows 8/OS X Mountain Lion (\$70/\$20)
- Ergonomic chair (\$100 to \$800)

### Whole-Home Audio

- AirPlay speakers (\$50 to \$500, AirPort

Express base stations (\$99 each), or Sonos Play:3 & Sonos Bridge (\$350)

- 1/8-inch to RCA cable (\$3)
- 1/8-inch to 1/4-inch cable (\$3)

### Home-Front Surveillance

- Surveillance camera system (\$150 to \$250)
- Window mount (\$25)



DAY:  
FRIDAY (CONTD)

NO. 2  
2 HOURS →



The Seagate Central (\$190) network-attached storage drive backs up all your data in one spot.

## Back Up Every Byte

Before a weekend of mucking around with your gadgets, make sure to back up your data. We recommend getting a network-attached storage (NAS) drive, which will back up all the computers in your home. Windows and Mac OS X both have built-in software that automates the process. If you haven't backed up in a while, get the process started and go to sleep—it will take all night.



Relax, you're done for the evening.

DAY:  
SATURDAY  
MORNING

HOME THEATER MAKEOVER:  
HANG TV, WRANGLE REMOTES, UNTANGLE CABLES

NO. 3  
2 HOURS  
↓



## Wall-Mount Your TV

It no longer requires a degree in structural engineering to get today's flat-panel TVs on your wall. So treat your set like a work of art and hang it proudly.

1.

Before you do anything, get two friends to place your TV against the wall and adjust it to a spot that makes for comfortable viewing from your couch. Mark the wall on the top, bottom, and sides with pieces of masking tape.

2.

Wiring is the hard part. For a clean install, route in-wall-rated electrical and HDMI cable to a recessed old-work outlet box behind where the TV will hang. If you don't feel comfortable doing this work, you can avoid calling an electrician by using wall-mounted raceways to run cables to baseboard plates.

3.

Most TVs have standard VESA anchor points on the back. Attach the TV-mounting hardware first

4.

and measure how far down from the top the points of attachment are. Next, measure from the tape on your wall and mark the spots.

5.

Before tightening the fasteners on the wall bracket, test with a level. Once everything on the wall is level and secure, mount the TV to the wall bracket. Plug everything in. Make popcorn. Enjoy.



NO. 4  
1 HOUR  
↓



## Reduce Your Remotes

Some TVs can be controlled by smartphone apps from the manufacturer. Or you can use an infrared emitter, such as Logitech's Harmony Link (\$100), to control multiple devices from a smartphone or tablet.

NO. 5  
1 HOUR  
↓



## Tame Your Cords

Get the rat's nest of wires behind your A/V cabinet under control. Unplug everything, then replug in one component at a time. Coil up any slack and cinch the loops with Velcro ties.



Today's flatscreens are much lighter than those of yore—so light, in fact, they can be hung on the single wire of the OmniMount LEDW60.



Expert Tip

For multichannel audio without a wiring nightmare, mount a surround-sound bar beneath the TV.



Have lunch.

