

home electronics

The first of the next generation

Video games are home computers

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If the computer isn't in your home, it's almost at the doorstep.

Already business men have computers on their desktops which can easily do the work of systems that only 10 years ago required a large air-conditioned room and upwards of \$1 million in large mainframes.

But in the home, the computer has already arrived in the form of the video game. Although it is simple to use and fairly cheap, it is a computer nonetheless.

It won't take weeks of training to handle the home computer.

The unit responds to a series of instructions called the "program." In the case of the video game, the program is contained in the cassette which is put into the game. The computer takes the instructions from the cassette and then it is moved by the "data" which in the case of the video game is the joystick.

Beyond this, the first computer to invade the home is the next generation. Manufacturers have only to make them "user-friendly" before they come on the market in waves.

Being user-friendly means making the computer

ultrasimple to use and "understand" if a wrong key or data input is used.

These computers have a simple-to-learn language called BASIC.

The home computers, like the business desktops, can have many components added on. When the home computer is in operation, it will be connected to "data bases" and that will allow hitherto massive amounts of information to come right into the home.

One piece of home computer data coming into homes right now is through Telidon and TV Ontario. Telidon is a Canadian invention which allows the transmission of text and graphics from a data base (TV Ontario) to any local terminal (your television).

Theoretically, anyone receiving Telidon from TVO can access the entire Telidon data base with the correct decoder. Such access is seen in the Teleguide information system now in hotels and information centres in Ontario.

A decoder is a simple device and when it appears in the home, it will be the first true home computer. Any piece of information, such as a story in a newspaper can be flashed on the screen after it is selected in the home by the viewer using the code provided.

Bell Canada and the cable companies are ready now to access Telidon lines into our homes. Electrohome, an Ontario television manufacturer, is producing video monitors with built-in Telidon decoders. That means it is only a matter of time until that new television you buy will have a computer Telidon capability built in.



The first home computer is the video game. It heralds the start of an entire new generation of computers which may make it possible to do all your work, banking, and food buying from the home.

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the DIAMOND VISION faceplate comes to the rescue. It actually absorbs unwanted ambient light with an improvement of up to 40% in contrast and overall color performance.

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Your VCR should meet your needs

It was only a few years ago that the first video-cassette recorders (VCRs) came on the market.

There were only a few models and all you did was plug them in and play a pre-recorded cassette or tape something from the television.

Now there are VCRs with built-in audio components to tape stereo simulcasts and VCRs with programmable features such as taping up to eight events in any three-week span. VCRs are coming down in size and weight.

Models coming into the stores now are either of the multi-facet variety in a market where each manufacturer is trying to outdo the others with a plethora of features; or are of the simplest type with the very lowest price.

The gulf between these two types can be upwards of \$300 to \$1,000 so there are a few features which should be considered and tested before you bring that brand-new VCR home to play with.

Programmability: Every VCR allows the operator to set the machine to automatically tape a show while the operator is elsewhere occupied. If there is only one show a day then the low-priced model might be attractive; but on a night when several specials are being broadcast at the same time, an extended program capability might be useful.

Portability: If you are certain you won't be out taping your own shows, a portable probably isn't required. But should you feel you might want to get Granny on tape for the kids, then a portable might be a wise investment, and they come with many of the features of the big desktop units.

Control: Many of the new VCRs have remote controls that include channel changing. If you don't have a remote control on the television you can use the VCR tuner to change channels. If the remote has scan, you scan the commercials right from your chair.

Heads: The newer models feature three heads (in case of Beta) and four heads (in case of VHS) to ensure the highest quality playback and provide the new special effects.

Styling and features: Cosmetically, VCRs are being designed to look like integrated parts of audio equipment. More buttons and LEDs are being incorporated into the overall design to expand your ingenuity.

Future: Many experts agree that the next wrinkle will be video cameras with built-in recorders. They probably won't be designed to replace the current models consumers have purchased but will be used in conjunction with existing formats.

RCA has just introduced its most innovative videodisc player, model SGT250, which features fully electronic function controls and stereo sound capability with infrared wireless remote control. The deluxe model, which has a suggested retail price of \$699.95, features Auto Start that begins the playback sequence automatically as soon as the disc sleeve is removed from the player.

Like the SGT200, a stereo videodisc player RACA introduced in June, the new model features a "CX" noise reduction system which allows any new "CED" stereo disc to be played on RCA's monaural player, while any monaural disc can be played on the stereo players.

Both players also offer a stereo indicator light and dual-track audio switching with a selector switch on the back of the player that lets the viewer choose independently either audio track 1 or audio track 2. Special discs with two different audio tracks can be used with either stereo player, allowing the viewer a choice of sound tracks.

A basic series of stereo audio components, which RCA introduced last June, complement both stereo videodisc models.

Two other videodisc players complete the RCA line — the SGT100, a monaural model initially introduced in 1982 (suggested retail price, \$529.95), and the SGT075, a monaural sound leader model introduced in June (suggested retail price, \$488).

The SGT 200 stereo model has a suggested retail price of \$699.95. Software for "CED" videodisc players continues to sell well. RCA recently produced its 5-millionth videodisc — *The Jazz Singer*, starring Neil Diamond. (Continued on C9)

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Servo-control turntable keeps the disc spinning at 450 rpm — even when your house current surges. It's an RCA safeguard that helps assure optimum picture stability.

Tangential-tracking pick-up arm moves the stylus straight across the radius of the disc. The result: virtually perfect tracking and a clear, steady picture on your TV.

System control microprocessor functions automatically during player operation. This tiny computer helps assure top performance during every second of disc play.

"Durafite" diamond stylus extracts picture and sound from the discs. It's designed for years of quality performance with normal use.

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