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The Packard Family Is Here to Help Your Family! *Personal Injury* | *Social Security Disability* | *Car Accidents* | *Special Needs Planning*

New Tech You'll Actually Use

SMARTER GADGETS FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

Technology moves fast, and keeping up with the latest releases can be hard. But not every shiny new gadget deserves your attention. However, a few standouts are worth watching as they hit store shelves in 2025. The latest Consumer Electronics Show at the beginning of this year spotlighted the newest products that promise to make life easier, more connected, and more fun.

One example? The Even Realities G1 glasses. Unlike other smart glasses, these look like regular eyewear but are packed with features. They have turn-by-turn navigation, a quick note display, and even a teleprompter mode that could change how presenters and content creators work on the fly.

Then there's the AMP fitness machine. This compact home gym is a smart all-in-one system that trades bulky weight plates and in-person training for digital weights and a companion mobile workout app. The best part? It takes up about as much space as a slim but tall nightstand.

Gamers will want to check out the OhSnap MCON. This simple gadget turns any smartphone into a handheld gaming device. It gives off serious PSP Go vibes for a nostalgic feel and avoids the clunky attachments associated with similar devices like the Backbone.

And if you're the kind of person who loses their wallet every other week, keep your eye out for the MOFT MagSafe Wallet. It's sleek, functional, and compatible with Apple Find My, so you'll never lose your wallet again. It even has a built-in 70dB chirp feature for when you're sure it's *somewhere* nearby but can't quite spot it.

All these products have something simple in common: They solve problems without overcomplicating things. Today's best tech focuses on offering smart design and useful features built to fit into real life rather than just impress in a flashy demo.



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A collection of thoughts and stories to educate, entertain, and inspire.

Want Deeper Conversations?

THE SECRET TO BEING HEARD IS LEARNING TO LISTEN

A lawyer once gave me some networking advice. He said, "when you take someone to lunch, order a huge salad." He told me to just keep chewing and nodding, letting the other person talk. He continued, "When your mouth is full, it forces you to be quiet and you will have a much better lunch experience."

September is International People Skills Month. As far as people skills go, active listening is one of the most essential. It's not just about waiting for your turn to say something; it's about showing up for another person and helping them feel understood. It builds trust and strengthens bonds. This is as true at the workplace as it is at home.



I learned about active listening when I was a teenager. My older brother Stan told me a story about an experience he had in South America. He spoke Spanish and told one of the locals that the word "really" was a magical word, and made Americas think you spoke English. All he had to do was throw in "really" at every pause. The guy actually tried it out! The conversation went on beautifully, until finally the American paused, awaiting a response to a question. The magic wore off when he again responded with "really." It was more than just a funny story;

Stan wanted to show me that there are effective things we can do to facilitate conversations.

My dad also helped teach me this valuable people skill. "Son, do what you can to make the conversation easy." I learned to reduce the other person's fear of feeling stupid by being curious. I learned more magical words: "Tell me more," or "What happened next?" (or anything that emphasizes my interest in what they are saying). I learned to summarize and restate what the other person said. Before, I thought good conversation meant doing a lot of entertaining, being funny, and telling good stories. I felt that I needed to be a "performer" to be interesting. My grandma gave me one powerful line: "Michael, if you want to be interesting, be interested." As it turns out, the best way to make someone feel like you genuinely care is to genuinely care.

I discovered that listening is a skill, and like any skill, I've had to practice to improve. I had to learn how to quiet all the little programs running in my mind: the dad jokes, the movie quotes, and especially, the part of my brain that formulates a response. It is okay to just be quiet and put the phone away. I don't need to read the text messages or respond to the buzz while in the middle of a conversation with someone else. Another part of listening is making eye contact and other facial expressions. (My wife calls this "nonverbal applause," such as nodding or smiling.) I try to ask open-ended follow-up questions and give space to elaborate. I'll often rephrase what they said and ask if I've missed something.

Everyone wants to be understood, and it's a beautiful gift to give someone. Active listening really comes down to being present and deliberately paying attention. So, if you want to improve your understanding and strengthen your relationships, try using some magic words. It will take practice, and it might be awkward at first, but it might change everything.

—Michael Packard



Smog, Soot, and Stubble

How Bountiful Beards Became Victorian Air Purifiers

Step aside, antibiotics! In the smog-choked streets of 1850s London, where chimney smoke clung to every surface and a “fog” could linger for months, doctors championed a fuzzy solution. The prescription? Grow a beard. Not just any beard, but big, bushy, chest-brushing beards that could rival a lion’s mane. Their advice made it seem like thick, woolly beards were a frontline defense against disease.

As London’s population surged past the one million mark in the mid-1800s, so did its coal consumption. Residents warmed their homes and powered the city with coal, releasing dense plumes of smoke that clung to the damp air. These weren’t your average winter mists. In 1873, one thick smog event blanketed the city, contributing to hundreds of bronchitis-related deaths. Another hung around for four months in 1879, plunging London into darkness.



Victorian physicians, caught between outdated theories and the dawn of germ science, believed thick beards could filter the noxious air swirling through the city. With coal smoke saturating the sky and mysterious illnesses lurking in every cough, they saw the beard as a barrier and a natural air purifier, trapping invisible enemies before they reached the throat or lungs. Public speakers were even told their beards would soothe strained vocal cords! Men were reassured that their whiskers could keep sore throats at bay.

But here’s the ironic twist in this follicular fairy tale. Modern research paints a less noble picture of the beard. According to dermatologists and ecologists, those bodacious beards trap bacteria, food particles, and even play host to tiny squatters (aka ectoparasites). What the Victorians hailed as a filter functioned more like a germ motel!

So, while the beard boom of the 1800s was well-intentioned, it might be best remembered as a moment when style, “science,” and smog collided and the beard won (if only temporarily).



HIT BY A DRUNK DRIVER?

Protect Yourself After the Unthinkable Happens

Getting hit by a drunk driver can be a terrifying experience, and knowing what to do next can make all the difference. After the immediate chaos, you need to take essential steps to protect your health and your rights. From receiving prompt medical care to preserving evidence, the right actions can help build a strong foundation for your recovery so you can focus on healing and moving forward.

Prioritize safety over everything else.

Nothing is more important than your safety, so if you can, move to a safe location away from traffic and turn on your hazard lights to signal to other drivers you are dealing with an emergency. Contact 911 immediately so you and others can receive medical attention and the police can start their reporting process. Make sure to get a copy of the police report because it will contain key details about what happened, witness statements, and the results of any DUI or field sobriety tests.

Document everything carefully.

Evidence is a crucial element of your personal injury claim, so it's vital to gather details on the scene that show what occurred when the drunk driver hit you. Make sure to get the contact information of the person who hit you, and if they say anything about being drunk or intoxicated, note that. Take photos or video of any damage, injuries, or details like skid marks. Even if you don't feel like you were seriously hurt, you need to go to the doctor as soon as you can to get evaluated for injuries that don't always show symptoms, like internal trauma. This gives you a plan to heal and provides a powerful paper trail of your medical bills and diligence in caring for your injuries.

Make informed legal moves.

Drunk driving cases have their own nuanced set of laws, so it's essential to contact an experienced attorney who understands how to investigate the case, negotiate with insurers, and get you the highest compensation possible. The drunk driver who hit you may face criminal charges, and your reporting can help keep other drivers safe.

If a drunk driver has hit you, you’re not alone. Contact Packard Law Firm today.

—Michael Packard

REAL STORIES, REAL IMPACT

WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY ABOUT WORKING WITH US

At Packard Law Firm, we care deeply about helping people through some of life’s most challenging moments with not just legal expertise but also heart, dedication, and a genuine commitment to doing what’s right. It means so much to us when clients share their kind words and heartfelt stories with us. From sincere thank-yous to positive success stories, your positive reviews are a testament to the impact we strive so hard to make. Here’s a look at what some of our recent clients had to say.

“If you are seeking disability, you should only consider the Packard Law Firm for representation. They are, without a doubt, the very best!”

—Roy

“Packard law firm is top notch. Everyone who helped out on the case was knowledgeable, and they all explained the situation and the case and how it would go very clearly to me, and everything just went so smoothly that I just have to give them five stars across the board on everything.”

—Randall

“Packard Law Firm is exceptional! They went above and beyond to help us quickly resolve our property damage dispute. We are so grateful for their professionalism and prompt attention to our issue. I highly recommend them!”

—Tanner

“Very helpful with my SS benefits. Couldn’t have done it without them! Recommended to anyone dealing with SS benefits.”

—Karl

At Packard Law Firm, every client’s story matters. We’re honored to stand by you, fight for you, and celebrate by your side. Thank you for trusting us. If you have been hurt in an accident or are fighting for the disability benefits you deserve, contact us today for a free evaluation.

TAKE A BREAK



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|--------------|--------------|----------|
| Apples | Foliage | Pirate |
| Aster | Grandparents | Sapphire |
| Coffee | Labor | Virgo |
| Constitution | Lunchbox | Waffles |

CREAMY CAULIFLOWER SOUP

Ingredients Inspired by CookieAndKate.com

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">1 large head cauliflower, cut into bite-size florets3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, divided1/4 tsp fine sea salt, plus more1 medium red onion, chopped2 cloves garlic, pressed or minced | <ul style="list-style-type: none">4 cups vegetable broth2 tbsp unsalted butter1 tbsp fresh lemon juice1/4 tsp ground nutmeg2 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley, chives, or green onions for garnish |
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Directions

- Preheat oven to 425 F.
- On a rimmed baking sheet lined with parchment paper, toss cauliflower with 2 tbsp olive oil.
- Arrange cauliflower in a single layer, sprinkle with a little salt, and bake 25–35 minutes until tender.
- In a soup pot, heat remaining olive oil and cook onion and 1/4 tsp salt until soft.
- Add garlic and cook 30 seconds until fragrant, then add broth.
- Add all but 4 cauliflower florets to the pot and simmer for 20 minutes.
- Transfer mixture to a blender, add butter, and blend until smooth. Then blend in lemon juice and nutmeg.
- Garnish with cauliflower florets and serve. Add parsley, onion, and chives as desired.