



## PlayStation Move

**Release Date:** September 21

**Price:** \$400 for the lowest cost bundle

**Pricing details:** One PlayStation Move Motion Controller costs \$50, although it won't work unless you also have a \$40 PlayStation Eye Camera. The lowest cost Move setup is \$90. Some games may require the PlayStation Move Navigation Controller (\$30), an extra device that is comparable to the Wii Nunchuk, minus the cable. Other optional components include a \$30 charging station, and a \$20 shooting attachment. There are several bundles, including a \$100 option that consists of one motion controller, one navigation controller and a camera. A \$400 choice contains the \$100 bundle, plus a PS3 and a game called Sports Champions.

**How does it work?** The glowing balls are visual markers, just like the light wands that help a 747 line up at an airport gate. According to Anton Mikhailov, a Senior Engineer for Sony, the glowing sphere is made of translucent silicon rubber that doubles as a tiny airbag in case you whack your brother's ear. It is internally illuminated by a 24 bit RGB LED lamp that can adjust in color according to your current room lighting condition, for the greatest possible contrast. It's sort of like a reverse chameleon -- it does everything it can to be seen by the camera. Like the Wii, Move detects motion with a set of 3-axis accelerometers. Mikhailov told me that unlike the Wii, these newer accelerometers can handle up to 6Gs of motion. So, even in the most intense sword fight, the Move controller was able to keep up with our testers arm motion, without losing the feel, or, in Mikhailov's words "becoming saturated." Your movements are also captured by three gyroscopes (one per axis); again comparable to the Wii MotionPlus. There's also a rumble feature, so you can feel events, and a very accurate feeling analog trigger, for shooting or using an on-screen airbrush. The motion information is transmitted to the PS3 console by way of Bluetooth, just like the regular Sony controllers. The PlayStation Eye camera captures your location in the room, videos, photos and sounds.

**Any drawbacks?** We found the PlayStation Move to be harder to pick up and use. For example, you can't simply hand a controller to a different-sized player without first recalibrating the system, where you fit your body into an outline on the screen and follow a sequence of movements.

**How does it compare with the Wii?** At \$400, Move costs twice the Wii and has a fraction of the games. But the technology works, and feels great. It offers designers the best of the Kinect and Wii worlds, on an HD screen.



## Microsoft Kinect

**Release Date:** November 4

**Price:** \$300 for the lowest cost bundle

**Pricing details:** The \$300 bundle includes a 4 GB Xbox 360 with no hard disk, a Kinect sensor and a copy of Kinect Adventures. The Kinect Sensor alone is \$150, providing you already own an Xbox 360.

**How does it work?** Kinect is a special camera housed in a sensor bar that also contains a microphone, that you plug into an existing Microsoft Xbox 360 game console. The camera does a lot more than take pictures. It is a sensitive, intelligent, motion capture system that continually scans the room, and can see people, faces and detailed motions. You can drive a car by pretending to hold an invisible steering wheel, or swat at a soccer ball by moving your hand in thin air. Facial recognition is provided by a camera that works in concert with the motion sensor, allowing you to assign players automatically, say, for a trivia game. Clearly, the combination of face and voice recognition working in concert with a connected console running services like Twitter and Facebook could be a potent mix for "the rest of us." This system also has a lot of potential for exercise games.

**Any drawbacks?** Kinect is not good for fine motor control. However, it could be used in concert with a regular wireless Xbox controller. Like the PS3 Move system, Kinect has to be calibrated before using.

**How does it compare with the Wii?** With no controllers to find, charge or run over with the vacuum cleaner, Kinect might offer the fastest, most direct route to interactivity. However, it will only work with some and is best suited to gross motor dancing or sports activities.