



THE SPY WHO LOVED GADGETS

James Bond has been wowing the world with his high-tech toys since his big-screen debut in 1962's *Dr. No*. Bond's latest adventure, *Quantum of Solace*, continues the legend.

By MICHAEL FRANCO



PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE): THE KOBAL COLLECTION; 007 MAGAZINE ARCHIVE - 2008; ALAMY; THE KOBAL COLLECTION; THE KOBAL COLLECTION; THE KOBAL COLLECTION; ALAMY; CORBIS; THE KOBAL COLLECTION; THE KOBAL COLLECTION



Like a perfectly mixed martini,

James Bond is an ideal balance of characteristics: refined yet rugged, flippant yet deadly serious. His ability to think or fight his way out of any situation makes it clear why agent 007 always gets his man - and the girl. Of course, along the way, he's had plenty of help from Q.

For fans of the Bond film franchise, 007's visit to Q's lab is always a highlight, with the schoolmaster-like scientist futilely admonishing the wise-cracking Bond not to destroy everything he uses.

Some of Q's gadgets were silly, like the person-swallowing couch, the rocket-launching boom box and radioactive lint. Other whiz-bang-at-the-time devices have been surpassed by modern technology - like Bond's car phone in *From Russia With Love* as well as an assortment of pagers, surveillance bug detectors, Geiger counters, underwater cameras and jet skis.

But then there are the watches.

Throughout 46 years of Bond movie history, 007 had timepieces that could detonate bombs, deflect



Bond (played by Sean Connery) gets some help with his jet-pack in 1965's *Thunderball*. The rocket-propelled device actually worked in real life.

bullets, release grappling hooks and saw through ropes. Fortunately, these devices aren't available to the public, but it is possible to arm yourself with a laser beam watch.

Produced by American company Aegis, the laser it emits can't blast through steel but is an effective pointer, and can create a variety of patterns with rotation of the bezel.

A variation on the TV watch Bond used in 1983's *Octopussy* - is also available. Called the M800 and supplied by Shenzen Yitongda Mobile Phone, this 3.3-centimetre screen-on-a-wrist not only plays MP4 movies and MP3 files, but also functions as a fully operational GSM cell phone.

Bond Calling

If you prefer to keep your phone and your timepiece separate, there's still a chance to be as cool as Bond. In 1997's *Tomorrow Never Dies*, 007



PHOTOS (FROM TOP) THE KOBAL COLLECTION; ALAMY



The real-life sQuba car (top) was inspired by Bond's Lotus Esprit from *The Spy Who Loved Me*. The Lotus memorably turned heads when after an underwater encounter with the bad guys, Roger Moore's Bond drove it onto a beach to the astonishment of sunbathers.



The K800 phone saved Bond's skin in *Casino Royale* and gave its Sony Ericsson makers some great exposure.

uses his mobile phone to remotely steer his car through a barrage of bullets while hiding in the back seat. A company called Connect2car lets you do the same - sort of. After installing a command unit in your car, your cell phone can be used to remotely turn the vehicle on, operate power windows and door locks, flash the headlights, and even track the car's location and kill the engine if it's been "misappropriated."

While showing Bond a device that can alter his voice in 1971's *Diamonds Are Forever*, Q quips that he "made one of these for the kids last Christmas." You can stuff stockings with the same sort of gadget today, thanks to their wide availability on Internet spy gear sites. "The Pretender" model not only alters your voice - even changing it from male to female or vice versa - but also provides a good excuse to get off the phone with sound effects that mimic a ringing doorbell, barking dog or call-waiting click. Such a device might have helped Bond get out of those finger-wagging calls from M.

Four-wheeled Thrills

Other 007 gadgets remain in the realm of the wealthy and powerful. Take for example the Lotus Esprit driven by Roger Moore - first on



Man Behind Q

His on-screen moniker may have been short for "quartermaster," but Desmond Llewelyn was the actor with the longest association with Bond films. Making his first appearance as Q in 1963's *From Russia With Love*, Llewelyn outfitted five different Bond actors with the gear that helped them survive attacks from a stunning variety of evil geniuses. In fact, in 1989's *Licence To Kill*, Q famously says to Bond: "If it hadn't been for Q Branch you'd have been dead a long time ago." Ironically, Llewelyn, who never liked gadgets in real life, met his end in a car accident in December 1999 shortly after starring in his 17th Bond film. He was 85 years old.

GREAT GADGETS FROM BOND FILMS

Dr. No (1962) Geiger Counter *From Russia With Love* (1963) "Fully-loaded" Briefcase *Goldfinger* (1964) Razor-Edge Bowler Hat (villain) *You Only Live Twice* (1967) Rocket-Launching Cigarettes

On Her Majesty's Secret Service (1969) Mini Spy Camera *Diamonds Are Forever* (1971) Artificial Fingerprints *The Man with the Golden Gun* (1974) Camera Rocket Launcher



Fleming

If Bond creator Ian Fleming had been able to embody 007's uncanny knack for cheating death perhaps he would have been alive this year to celebrate his 100th birthday. In many ways Fleming was born to write Bond.

He was from a wealthy family and had a taste for fine food and drink, held various stints as a newspaper writer and spent a good part of his early career working for British Naval intelligence. In 1952, from his winter home in Jamaica, Fleming penned *Casino Royale* – the first of 14 Bond novels – and introduced the world to a secret agent who would live long past the writer's early demise at the age of 56 in 1964. Over 100 million Bond novels have been sold to date.



land and then into the sea – in 1977's *The Spy Who Loved Me*. The sQuba, invented by Swiss custom car designer Frank M. Rinderknecht, can now duplicate most of the Bond car's amphibious features (featured in the April/May issue of *Discovery Channel Magazine*) but is valued at a wallet-shrinking US\$1.5 million.

That takes care of the wealthy. What of the powerful?

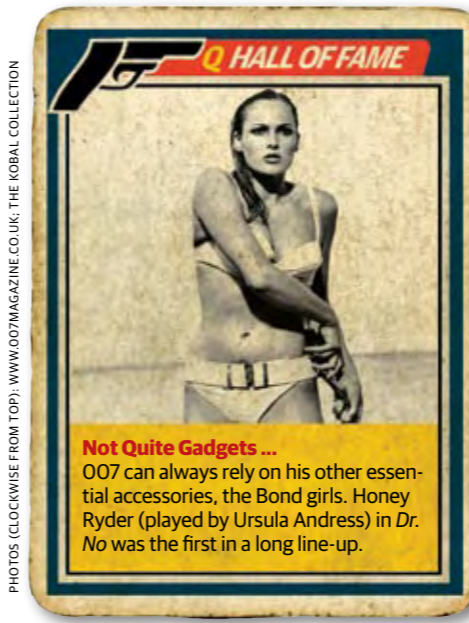
The British army has taken a cue from Q who outfits Bond with a disappearing car in 2002's *Die Another Day*. It claims to have made a vehicle completely disappear using a system of cameras and projectors that sample the surrounding landscape and beam it onto the car. And the Brits estimate a now-you-see-it-now-you-don't tank will be reality by 2012.

Across the pond, before US military designers began work on the gadget-heavy SmarTruck project, they were asked to watch Bond movies – presumably in case they weren't creative enough. It turns out they weren't, as the design (which featured run-flat tyres, electric-shock door handles to repel unwanted passengers, smoke and teargas launchers, and the ability to zap rocket-launched grenades) has been canned after years of development.

Not all car-related gadgetry is out of reach for normal citizens. In Chi-



Another film, another Aston Martin. This time Bond drove a heavily-armed V12 Vanquish (top) in *Die Another Day*. Bond never drove the US military's SmarTruck (below) but the brains behind it watched Bond flicks for inspiration.



PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP): GETTY; WWW.007MAGAZINE.CO.UK; COURTESY OF U.S. ARMY; THE KOBAL COLLECTION; ALAMY

PHOTOS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP): WWW.007MAGAZINE.CO.UK; THE KOBAL COLLECTION

na, renegade road users are making use of a device Bond's Aston Martin car featured in 1964's *Goldfinger* – the revolving licence plate. Instead of using it to cross international borders like 007 did, drivers are using it to avoid speeding tickets.

Product Replacement

Casino Royale, released in 2006, was considered a fresh start for the Bond film series. Daniel Craig portrayed a grittier Bond, more reliant on his own mettle than on high-tech pieces of lab-invented metal. In fact, Q doesn't even appear in the film. Q is replaced by another gadget master – Sony, which acquired the rights to distribute Bond films beginning with *Casino Royale*.

In what some claimed was product over-placement, Bond wields his Sony Ericsson K800 gadget more than any other in *Casino Royale*. Unlike the model available to consumers, though, his phone could transmit his vital signs back to MI6 headquarters, helping him narrowly escape a nasty poisoning incident. Interestingly, *Casino Royale* was the most successful Bond film ever, showing that audiences might just be ready for a less gadget-laden 007.

That might be good news for the brand-new *Quantum of Solace* where gadgets will play only a minor role. Sony Ericsson will be supplying Bond again, this time with the C902 phone which 007 will use to fight off death and destruction. Consumers can fight their own conversational battles with a limited-edition model that comes loaded with Bond goodies like 007 wallpapers, screen savers, behind-the-scenes info and a spy game.

In *Never Say Never Again*, Bond shows that his most powerful weapon is as ever, his quick wit and his ability to prevail – with or without gadgets. Handing a hoodlum a slim silver device, he explains: "This bomb has a tiny gyroscope inside. Any lateral movement on



Cold War Competition

When they first appeared on screen, most of Bond's gadgets were, of course, completely fictitious. But they didn't always appear that way – especially to Russian agents during the Cold War. According to Peter Earnest, executive director of the International Spy Museum in Washington DC, spy movies helped fan the flames of an already fierce competition between Russian intelligence agencies and their counterparts in Europe and America: "Our understanding is that when these movies came out, the KGB were avid viewers and would go to their researchers and ask why they didn't have them." Imagine the fingers that were sacrificed while researching the pocket snap-trap used by Bond in *Diamonds Are Forever!*

your part and you could be served in an egg cup." The true identity of the device is revealed later in the film when Bond returns, snaps open the ordinary cigarette case and removes a smoke, leaving behind one shaken and stirred bad guy. ■

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