

## The best universal remote control: Phone

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Definitely like that, you can still call on today's smartphones. But they are also web browsers, cameras, camcorders, music players, navigation systems, gaming devices, memory and many more. Every day there are new ways to use the phone more conveniently.

Of all the tricks that the phone can do, for me nothing is as compelling as using a phone as a universal remote control, being able to do everything from unlocking the house to adjusting the temperature. Or start the car. All of that is possible right now - but only with high-tech door locks, air conditioners and cars that most of us don't yet own. So I come back to a more likely wall application: it is the use of mobile phones to control TVs and other related equipment such as television entertainment equipment (set-top box) and DVR.

Most of the products that help you accomplish this are modern products developed from the traditional universal remote control since the 1980s - these devices have floating buttons for all purposes. For example, the L5 Remote is an infrared adapter for \$ 59.95, plugged into the iPhone's Dock Connector, allowing you to direct your phone to the TV and other electronic devices to control. Like the classic remote control, you can configure the

application of the L5 Remote to work with any device. But you can also customize it by selecting the buttons and then arranging them on the screen in the order you want.

However, the phone remote controls that simply mimic the buttons from the old controller on a touch screen of the phone are still nothing to break through. Why copy such a clumsy interface like a phone can do so much more ?!

Talk to Peel, a \$ 99.95 remote control system that works on iPhones, iPod Touches and iPads, and prepares support for Android phones. Created by Apple engineers, it is an ambitious combination of hardware and software that aims to free you from juggling with too many remote controls and from the dominance of the directions. programming on the screen, organizing thousands of programs and hundreds of channels into a monotonous network doesn't help you find the program you want to see. (Especially if I'm here, you won't remember SyFy being channel number 68, 293 or 759.)

Peel is not perfect, but it has the most complete changes to what it takes to have a remote control since Logitech's Harmony came up with the idea of ??programming a universal controller over the Internet. last century. If you are interested but don't want to spend hundreds of dollars to try it, you can download it for free from Apple's App Store; You only have to manually change the channels with the remote control available.

Currently, Peel works with the iPhone and iPod Touch; A version for Android is also being developed. The hardware includes a small infrared transceiver - Peel calls it a Fruit, although I find it looks like a shrunken bowling - you'll leave the range of view including TV, set - top box and Other entertainment equipment. Peel runs the C-cell battery so you don't need to plug it in. Data transfer between iPhone and Fruit is done by the Peel Cable, a sausage-shaped unit that plugs into your Wi-Fi router. All this sounds a bit complicated, but I only do it for five minutes and I don't have to use the Wi-Fi password. (However, after that I found out I had to do some simple operations with checking the position of Fruit and cable to ensure data transfer.)

In the first few minutes of trying Peel, I found the programs and movies I wanted to see - programs that I couldn't find out if I left them on my devices. Unlike the L5 Remote and other competitors, Peel does not let the channel set up and up on the phone and expects you to use the set - top box programming system to locate stations and programs. Instead, it uses the iPhone screen to create its own guide to the show, arranging for parts such as newly released movies, comedy shows, and sports, in addition to the Top Picks section. Adjust according to your preferences. The interface is very elegant with images and logos instead of endless words.

Besides TV and set-top boxes, Peel also controls DRV, DVD players, Internet TV such as Apple TV and Roku, and other devices in your entertainment system. Among the examples, there is no program guide on the phone - you cannot view the Apple TV images from your phone, but the application is still very easy to control. Operations such as raising up to increase the volume and lowering to lower the volume will help you not have to take your eyes off the screen.

I find that sometimes Peel works a bit odd - for example, it only displays the channel name of the programs of the day, and the search function does not always return the results of the program for the next day. according to the. (Peel says the product is building an update that improves search functionality.) Peel's illustration of the program on other stations is so small that it's hard to tell if it's about Glenn Beck or Lucille Ball. And I hope that Peel has a mechanism that is at least a bit like a traditional programming system. There are times when you want to know what Bravo channel is playing and at 10am, and while it can be determined by search, it is not the app's forte.

Although new, Peel promises to have a good future ahead. The plastic remote controls that are not intuitive enough that we have used for so long have obviously deserved to be in the past - and I can't wait until they

completely disappear.

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