

The joy of ... a good hair gadget

Our columnist has discovered the ultimate, life-changing accessory — a hairdryer stand



Emma Freud discovers the hairdryer stand: "Imagine a microphone stand for your hairdryer"

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In a previous decade, I wrote [the gadget column in Tatler](#), unearthing beauties such as the toaster which emblazoned your face onto each slice of toast and the wine bra with its wine-filled pad tucked into each cup to either increase your bust or to self-medicate with alcohol. I found the bikini made from solar panels that created enough power to charge your phone, and — my favourite — the game console remote control that you operate via your pelvic floor, designed to give new mothers a workout for their pubovisceral muscle, while simultaneously destroying alien spaceships.

My contract ran for years because it transpired that the thrill of a new gadget runs deep. At the end of 2022, the UK was named just the [third country in the world](#) to have built a tech industry worth more than \$1 trillion.



Hair dryers were invented in 1888; however, the portable version we know today was invented in 1920 by the Racine Universal Motor Company

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We humans are evolutionarily hardwired to seek and satisfy our basic survival needs so when they're met it automatically triggers a dopamine response — the intentionally addictive feeling of pleasure, satisfaction and motivation. But in a developed culture where basic survival needs are easier to access, it's electronic gadgets that lure us with their dopamine highs. We can now improve our basic human need to communicate, feel connected, experience pleasure and find partners through gadgetry — it's a shortcut to primal joy. A neuroimaging study from a 2011 BBC documentary showed that Apple products stimulated the same parts of an Apple fan's brain as those in a person of faith's when shown religious imagery: gadgets are our modern icons.

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So it's no great surprise that I miss those heady days of writing copy that hinted at the possibility of purchasing an instantly better, cleverer, shinier or more productive life — all for £9.99. And this week my heart was once again lifted to a temporary state of joy by an inexpensive purchase, an aid to finally ease the thrice-weekly frustration of my home grooming routine. It's a compact, freestanding, adjustable-height, hands-free hairdryer stand.



The joy of a hairdryer stand

I can believe you aren't yet convinced, but imagine a microphone stand for your hairdryer. It's like being temporarily given a third arm to hold it, freeing both of your hands for styling. It's a ticket to a permanent good-hair day, for less than the cost of a single blow-dry in a salon.

I place my hairdryer into the mouth of the stand, perch in front of it, hold a damp tress with one hand, brush and preen with the other, and within minutes I am looking like Debra Winger at the end of *An Officer and a Gentleman* when Richard Gere takes off my hat and my hair tumbles down as he carries me out of the factory to a golden future in which I will be tall, slim and permanently 23. The joy is real even if the fantasy is tragic.