

SPRK+ robot for coding and connected play is kid-friendly and school-friendly

22 June 2016, by Nancy Owano



Credit: Sphero

(Tech Xplore)—Sphero was in the news this week because of its new entry to its little robot family that had numerous tech watchers liking what they saw in the complete package of robot and app, in its new version, namely the SPRK+.

As *Engadget's* Edgar Alvarez reported on Tuesday, the second generation of Sphero's education-focused ball has arrived, dubbed [SPRK+](#).

The SPRK+ has arrived and according to the Sphero site it is listed for [\\$129.99](#).

Sphero has delivered a cute, round transparent [robot](#) with LED lights and it is designed to do more than deliver fun and giggles. Sphero's robot can teach children how to code.

In *CNET*, Scott Stein, a senior editor, remarked that "Sphero SPRK and Lightning Lab have a lot of fun challenges and projects that feel like interactive [lesson](#) plans, mostly because they are."

Lucy Schouten, the *Christian Science Monitor*,

wrote Tuesday about the latest update for this,

Bluetooth-capable, child-friendly robot. Sphero's SPRK is a platform that can teach students to develop such skills through [play](#)."

In talking about the [robot platform](#) what one is really talking about is "an educational program for kids to build up their coding skills," said Edgar Alvarez in *Engadget*, with its robot and a companion [app](#), for users to set up commands for the robot to follow.

This is the Lightning Lab app; Sphero's site says users learn programming, complete [activities](#) and can also share results with the community. The Sphero SPRK Lightning app is available for download in the App Store, Google Play, and Kindle Store.

Brittany Goetting, technical editor, *Hot Hardware*, said the new Sphero SPRK and its corresponding app have the power to inspire interest in coding and STEM principles, and to teach "the [power](#) of cause, effect, and conditions in programming."

"SPRK+ and Lightning Lab teach students valuable skills for the future under the guise of play," said David Millage, General Manager of Education at Sphero. "Learning is [evolving](#) and we are seeing a transition from consumption to creation in the classroom."

The Sphero SPRK+ comes with an inductive charging base with a USB charging cable (the SPRK page warns against using an unapproved USB hub. "Doing so can cause irreparable damage to your cradle and robot.") It also comes with maze tape, 360 degree protractor and sticker sheet. A start guide is also included.

It is listed on the site with Bluetooth Smart in 100 foot range and can go over 4.5 mph. The site says on a full charge there can be over 1 hour of play.

Schouten said the newest Sphero's default mode "is silent, but with a sound option for users who want their robot to 'talk' like R2D2 as it rolls..."

CNET's Stein commented, "it's transparent. You can see the motor, circuits, and other cool tech guts inside. It functions the exact same way as older Sphero robots, but that better Bluetooth can come in handy for the market SPRK is targeting: Educators who have to set up multiple Sphero robots at once."

More information:

store.sphero.com/collections/sprk-plus

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APA citation: SPRK+ robot for coding and connected play is kid-friendly and school-friendly (2016, June 22) retrieved 26 September 2021 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2016-06-sprk-robot-coding-kid-friendly-school-friendly.html>

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