We find all the best software for

WIKIPANION

Free; iPhone,

annoyance of pub

iPod Touch

your smartphone. This week:

quizmasters, any smartphone with

connection can access the mobile

version of Wikipedia. But its 3.2m

entries can be hard to read on a

references are down at the foot of

down. Previous Wiki apps — such as

the iPhone's official one — claim to

make browsing easier, but this new

one is among the best. Buttons at

the bottom of the screen instantly

bring up a contents menu for each

entry - making it easier to navigate

bigger pages — as well as a list of related links. The app lets you save

images and change the font size,

to read when you don't have

£2.99 Plus version adds the option

each page, meaning a long scroll

small screen, and links and

a browser and an internet

apps for Wikipedia

OH MUM, YOU'VE CUT OUT ALL THE *@!#!* GOOD BITS

Digital filters remove sex and swearing from DVDs and Blu-ray discs to allow children to watch grown-up films safely — and soon they will be available in Britain, says Mark Harris

amily film night no longer means having to choose etween The Little Mermaid and Harry Potter for the 50th time. You will soon be able to sit the children safely down in front of Twilight, the hugely popular but sometimes disturbing teen vampire romance, or The Reader, in which Kate Winslet bares all for the sake of

New technology arriving from America promises to transform films with adult themes into U-rated flicks suitable for innocent audiences. Two new systems work with DVDs, Blu-ray discs and even live broadcast television. to censor bad language, nudity, violence guy? Was it graphic? Was it an accident Angels & Demons and was quite and more automatically.

ClearPlay, which launches in the UK in July, requires a particular DVD player and digital filters stored on a USB memory stick. Staff at ClearPlay watch every major new release (the company has more than 4,000 titles in its catalogue), flagging up each time a drop of blood is spilt or a negligee slips to the floor. "We have probably the largest existing database about events in movies," says Randy Staggs, director of product management at ClearPlay. "For nstance, if someone is shot, we also scenes altogether. record who it was and which character

or intentional?

All that information is digitally encoded and made available for download online, usually on the day a DVD goes on sale or rental. At home. viewers plug the USB key into their computer, download onto it the filtering information for the film they want to watch, transfer the key from computer to DVD player and then play the disc as normal. The ClearPlay filter mutes the sound during swearing and skips past the bloodiest and raunchiest

The Sunday Times tried out the system with the Tom Hanks thriller

filters. There are 12 censorship categories, including sex, violence, nudity and drug use, within which you can choose from three levels of filtering or none at all. There are also options for filtering out bigotry, blasphemy, disrespect of elders and even dishonouring of the US flag — a peculiarly American obsession that ClearPlay confirms will not pick up cinematic abuses visited upon the Union Jack.

impressed. Although ClearPlay did not

eliminating the film's goriest moments

edit out every single gunshot and

albeit at the cost of occasionally

obscuring what had happened. What

nmediately apparent, nor was the

fate of the priest played by Ewan

ClearPlay is easy to use, with a

button on the DVD's remote control

calling up a menu that adjusts the

Hanks's character discovered in the

bloodstain, it did a good job of

crypt, for example, was not

McGregor.

The ClearPlay DVD menu is password-protected to prevent children from tampering with its settings, but there is one glaring security flaw. Remove the ClearPlay memory stick and the DVD player will simply play discs in all their unedited glory, which could prove a temptation to youngsters who are curious about why the filtered version of Reservoir Dogs is so short.

ClearPlay is launching in the UK

"Many people are stuck between two worlds," says Britt Bennett, president of TVGuardian. "They would never use bad language themselves and vet they want to be entertained. Our technology lets them watch whatever they want, and if language offends them, they don't have to hear it any more."

Like ClearPlay, TVGuardian lets viewers choose a level of filtering for swearwords and religious references. It will launch two devices in the US in the next few months: a TVGuardian for standard-definition digital broadcasts and DVDs; and a high-definition version for HD TV and Blu-ray. It hopes to expand into the UK shortly

Although both companies admit that the religious right in America forms the core of their clientele, they are keen to demonstrate a wider appeal. "Another large demographic of ours is the elderly," says Bennett. "If you think of them growing up in a culture in which Rhett Butler's 'Frankly, I don't give a damn' was shocking, how do you think

However, a survey by the Pew

(about half) are worried about vernment censorship of broadcast

All new American television sets already contain a so-called V-chip, which can censor entire programmes – every US show is now broadcast with an age rating. Although the chip has been fitted in millions of TV sets since it was first produced in 2000, only 15% of US parents have ever used the system.

"Some people like blood and gore," admits Staggs. ClearPlay even has something to offer such viewers: a filter category called mushiness that screens out saccharine sentimentality. It promises to make those Little Mermaid film nights fly past in a flash

umbnails at the foot of each page. These are extras found and linked by WikiTap users, but many of them won't be relevant to the subject you're browsing. It's still worth it for its search prowess, though you need type in only part of a word to get results, and it's quick and



£1.79, iPhone, No one would claim that Wikipedia pages

were pretty to look at, but this app reformats them with new, attractive fonts and layouts. It also lets you lock the iPhone's screen in either landscape or portrait mode, which is handy. As with Wikipanion and WikiTap, you can bookmark entries for quick reference later. It comes with dozens of pages already bookmarked — all of them, for some reason, on the subject of art history and offers the option to browse entries in other languages. Articles is clever and capable, but you're basically paying for cosmetic changes, not extra functionality



From £9.99: BlackBerry, Nokia Windows

For just under a tenner you can download and store Wikipedia on your phone, but you'll need at least 4GB of available memory to accommodate it. Wikipock provides two obvious advantages: you'll no and it keeps a browsing history. The longer need an internet connection to look through Wikipedia, and to download and store entire entries searches are far quicker. On the downside, you have to save the file to a computer before copying it to a suitable memory card for your phone. Alternatively, you can buy it pre-installed on a card (for more money). The cheapest version won't allow updates, but it's still really cool to be able to carry a real-life 1.7 billion-word Hitchhiker's Guide around on your phone.



SEE NO EVIL, HEAR NO EVIL

Why stop at filtering television content? Technology can now sanitise all kinds of digital media.

MICROSOFT REAL-TIME **RADIO FILTER** microsoft.com

Microsoft has patented software to edit live radio broadcasts as they go out. The automatic censoring filter checks the sound of individual words against a dictionary of profanities. If it spots "undesired

speech data", the program will either mute the sound or scramble the word to make it unintelligible. The system has yet to be used by any radio station — although we might not know if it had been.

did it. Was it the good guy or the bad

WINDOWS LIVE FAMILY SAFETY

An easy way to keep your children from straying into the darker reaches of the internet is to install

the web filtering system within Windows. It can restrict them to child-friendly sites and block social

GOOGLE SAFESEARCH google.co.uk/preferences

Ensure that you don't get a nasty surprise in your search results by setting Google's adult content filter to "strict". This should prevent explicit text and images from being returned in search queries.

with a single LG DVD player and a monthly fee of £7 (or an annual one of £54) to download new filters, 200 of which will be available initially. While ClearPlay offers filters only for DVDs

(and soon Blu-rays), a rival service called TVGuardian works with discs and broadcast television, too. TVGuardian is a set-top box that

plugs into your television, DVD or Blu-ray player and your cable or satellite receiver (if you have one). It intercepts the subtitles that broadcasters transmit alongside programmes. When TVGuardian spots a rude word, it simply mutes the audio for a few seconds and displays

a cleaned-up version of the subtitles.

they feel when they hear the f-word used 50 or 60 times in a new movie?"

Research Centre for the People and the Press found that while about a third of Americans are upset by sex violence and bad language on TV, more are annoyed by reality shows that ridicule or trick people — and more still



internet access.

Free; iPhone, iPod Touch, Android Wiki Tap adds YouTube video and

other multimedia content to Wikipedia pages, displayed as

CLUEDO

59p

BlazBlue: Calamity Triggei

Xbox 360, PS3; £45. Age 12

Street Fighter, step aside; the head-to-head fighting game genre most recent edition of its rival,

BlazBlue: Calamity Trigger cleverly combines impressive 3-D backgrounds with hand-drawn cartoon combatants. Even though the action all takes places within two dimensions, the ornately animated arenas create the illusion of depth and the results do not look dated. The fighting itself is fast, fluid and skilful. BlazBlue allows you to easily control some of the trickier moves by simply moving the analogue joystick or shoulder trigger-buttons on your console gamepad. This means you won't need the manual dexterity of a heavy-metal guitarist to win a bout. The roster of fighters you can play as is intriguingly varied too. Alongside all the typical generic-looking warriors are buxom doctors, shape-shifting spectres and even a young witch. A little more visual polish, along with a proper tutorial for newcomers, would not have gone amiss — and the less said about the bizarre background plot the better. Still, what matters is the calibre of the grappling, and whether you're playing the computer, challenging a friend on the sofa next to you or being battered online by a pre-teen, BlazBlue is a fine reminder of what made the old fighting greats so enjoyable. Stuart Andrews

Frontier ****

Wii: £30. Age 12

Fans of the Harvest Moon farm-simulation games will recognise this spin-off series, which has a more sword-and-sorcery focus and was originally for the DS handheld console. Frontier is the first Rune Factory title for the Wii and has the same animé-style graphics and free-roaming structure. Your character. Raguna, begins by tending a



farm. You must grow crops, converse with other characters and run errands. This doesn't sound so exciting, but you do eventually get to battle with monsters and domesticate them to work on your smallholding. You can choose whether you prefer to cultivate seeds (and relationships with local womenfolk) or slope off to slay beasts. An interesting element is the internal clock whereby a minute ticks by each second — if you stay up too late one day, your character will feel rough the next. The controls are simple, but it's infuriatingly tricky to pinpoint a location. The lack of clear goals and slow-loading scenes can also make it feel as though you're watching grass grow. Even so, Frontier's sedate pace and depth of gameplay somehow make it oddly compelling. David Phelan

iPHONE GAMING

reviews games for

SCRABBLE ★★★★☆ £1.79

It is a sign of the times that you can now play Scrabble head to head on a pair of iPhones,

rather than sitting at a table with a board. This faithful recreation has excellent touchscreen controls, letting you shuffle the tiles, zoom in and out of the action and even look up questionable words in a built-in dictionary. The two-player mode uses wi-fi but works only within a room — you cannot play online against people

V II I

around the world. Good score-tracking saves you the bother of a pen and paper, but if you have more than two players it is

HERE & NOW: THE WORLD **EDITION ★★★☆** £2.99

Monopoly has come long way since the days of boots, scottie dogs and jostling for London train stations In this cosmopolitan iPhone version, each

> property is a city (Old Kent Road is now Gydnia, in Poland. and Park Lane is Montreal) and the counters are animated penguins and windmills. The 3-D spinning board adds a nice visual touch as you roll virtual dice and travel round the world. Up to four people can play, either over wi-fi (everyone will need to buy a copy of the game) or simply by passing a single iPhone around. As with Scrabble — the games share a developer — there is no online mode



Who killed Cluedo? We say: Electronic Arts, with a clumsy adaptation of the much-loved detective classic. The software maker, responsible for all three games here, has not done a straight conversion of



the board game but has created a graphic-novel-style adventure featuring the original six suspects. The idea is still to explore a mansion, looking for weapons and clues to a murder, but new elements include grilling animated characters and judging from their digital twitches whether they are lying. Although this one-player game is fun and every mystery is slightly different, the novelty wears off quickly. It's no match for the multi-player cardboard original.