



## ButtKicker Gamer Review

August 18, 2005

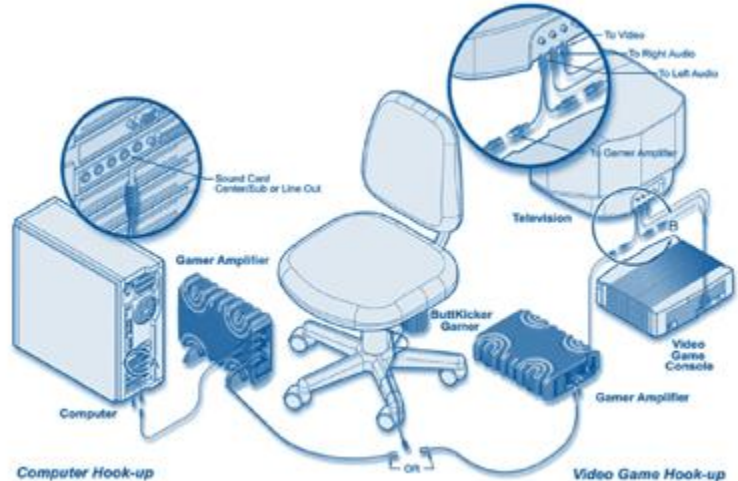
Final Rating 5 out of 5



If you are one of those people who crank up the music in your car until random parts start rattling, or like to go to arcades just because the driver's seat rumbles and reacts when you crash into something, then there is a new product on the market that you are definitely going to enjoy. It's called the "Gamer ButtKicker". Now, at first this may sound painful, but think of it has one huge rumble pack that is mounted right under your tush. The device is made to clamp around the metal pole in ordinary computer chairs and when hooked but to a game system, PC, or audio player, it unleashes a serious amount of amperage on your arse.

### Setup

The Gamer ButtKicker retail package contains two main modules, and seven different cords that have a number of connections. Setting this bad boy up can be very confusing if you don't read the instructions or really know what you are doing. On the other hand, the seven different cords allow for almost any setup and you can hook the ButtKicker up to almost anything that outputs audio. You can setup the Gamer ButtKicker with your Xbox, or any other game console, PC, MP3 Player, CD player, Stereo, and virtually anything else that has an auto output. After you have the right wires in the right places, you will then have to attach the ButtKicker to the bottom of your computer chair.



Hooking up the ButtKicker (BK) to an Xbox is fairly easy, but will take some time to get everything in the right places. The first thing that you will need to do is setup the "Gamer Amplifier". This amplifier requires power, an audio input, and the output that goes to the BK underneath your seat. The amplifier also has a number of controls on the front that you will be able to mess with once everything is setup. The audio input will come from your Xbox AV cable. If your TV uses the red AV plug (most do) then you will need to add another cord into the mix called the mini Y adapter. This allows the red audio cord to go into both the TV and the BK. Once the cord goes through the Y adapter it will need to go through

the "Ground Loop Isolator". This keeps possible amplifier interference from entering the system and basically to keep everything safe should something go wrong electronically or if there is a surge. Once this is hooked up, you can plug the other end of the isolator into the back of the amplifier. The next thing to do is to setup the output that goes into the actual BK. This is the simple part. The BK has a cord attached to it that will need to attach to an extension cord that plugs into the back of the amplifier. The extension cord is quite lengthy, so you can pretty much still move all around your room without a problem. Mostly all the cords are like this, so there should be no problem and some cords included just serve the purpose of extending a cord already in the system if it needs to go a longer way around your room.

Once you have the wiring all set up and worked into the rest of the spaghetti found behind your desk, it is time to attach the BK. The BK is designed to fit around the metal post of traditional computer chairs. Almost every single computer chair out there has this metal post built into it. If you have a different type of chair, or not even what is considered a computer chair at all, you will probably have major issues trying to attach it to anything else. You will need to raise the chair and pull down the plastic part that usually covers the metal post. Then simply open the clamp on the BK and attach it to the post. Once it is attached there is a twisty bar that acts like a bolt and then a knob that will be used to put the final tightness on the attachment so this thing doesn't fly off and do some real damage to something. (Honestly though, it attaches great and even if you were dumb enough to leave it extremely loose it could really only damage the bottom of your chair if it happened to fall off)

## **Appearance**

Since the ButtKicker is marketed toward gamers, it looks almost like designs you see on consoles like the Xbox. The amplifier has neat ridges on the side and on the top that are accented with silver paint. The amplifier looks rigid and tough and on the front it has a nice looking display. The front also contains the BK Gamer logo, two knobs, two buttons, three LED displays, and a number of texts describing the controls. This amplifier looks great next to any game system, especially the Xbox, and mostly any TV (since most are made out of the same looking black plastic). It is a shame that the BK has to be hidden underneath your chair because it truly looks amazing. The drum part that contains the motor has ridges in it and a red top and bottom, with neat silver accents on the top as well. This drum is attached to an arm, or guarder type thing, which then attaches to the clamp. The guarder has the Gamer ButtKicker logo right on it and it is not just some cheap spray paint to make it look pretty. It's shiny, silver and red, which looks excellent in the middle of the device. The other end of the BK contains the clamp which has a nice little red knob at the end. Attached to the drum part is the cord that comes out of the bottom. With a few Velcro straps that are included you can easily attach this cord to your chair so it won't always be in the way. However, often times you will probably end up running over the cord, and it getting tangled up somehow. Although it doesn't happen often, unless you are extremely careful it might frustrate you a time or two. As stated above, this cord is then attached to the extension cord that plugs into the back of the amplifier.



## Performance

Finally, on to the most important part of the product, the performance, and of course... it passes with flying colors! The main volume control on the amp will probably never have to go more than half way up to show how powerful this thing actually is. But if you really want to rattle your seat feel free to crank it up and almost be rattled completely out of your computer chair. Besides the volume control, you can also control the Low Filter and High Cutoff. The amp included in the box is 100 watts - that gives the BK plenty of power. The only downsides about the amplifier is that it has a fan in it so it will be buzzing probably just as loud as a normal computer, and it is somewhat large and will need a good amount of space (about 13" by 9") on your desk or wherever you want to put it.

One great thing about the BK is that it has its own thermal switch. When the thermal detector senses that the BK is too hot, it will switch off to prevent itself from overheating. This is an excellent feature because it prevents you from basically killing your new \$150 piece of equipment when you really just want to see what it is capable of doing. The BK also has a frequency response of 10Hz-250Hz. This basically means that the BK can perform up to 250 cycles per second if it really needed to.

With this amount of frequency and power packed onto the bottom of your chair there comes two small problems: chair rattling and possible back problems. For the most part, there is not much you can do about your chair rattling but the documentation included in the box actually gives some advice. The part that rattles most often is the lever that raises and lowers the chair. It suggests that you jam some foam in-between it and the bottom of the seat, or use something like a beanbag to keep it from rattling. Although, all chairs are different, and if you have a rather cheap chair, you might spend a great deal of time trying to fix these rattles, or you could just live with them and game on.

One thing that you definitely need to consider is the condition of your back. If you have some sort of back problem it is probably not the best of ideas to purchase this product. Because it is attached directly to the chair, the entire chair shakes including the seat, armrests, and the back of the chair. If you have some sort of back issue, this could easily cause back problems if you use it too often or for too long, especially if you are using it to listen to music with a lot of bass. If you have minor back problems every

now and then, and just plan on using it for games, chances are you will be just fine.

One other small issue is with background music in games. If the game has somewhat loud background music, the BK will react to it and if the background music is ongoing your seat will always be rumbling. Since it is always rumbling, when something dramatic happens it usually gets mixed in with the other rumbles of the background music and is less dramatic. Although, this is not a huge issue and only happens with a few games. Other than those few points, the performance of the BK is truly amazing and you will be surprised at how much more realism it adds to any game.

## **Overall**

Overall, the Gamer ButtKicker is an extremely unique product that works well. With the 100 Watt amp and the 250Hz ButtKicker, this thing is sure to give you a huge shock should a grenade or something explode in your game. The device reacts extremely well to the music and when playing music you can even feel the beat of it if you have your speakers or TV turned off. \$150 is an excellent price when you take into account that you can actually hook this thing up to anything you want and switch between things like your PC, console, and music player with just switching a few wires. The overall look, quality, and performance is well worth your buck. Without a doubt, this is truly a "kick ass" gaming product!

**Final Rating: 5 out of 5.**



- Lee Tomko, "L3e", Executive Director  
Thursday, August 18, 2005