

# The Kirby Tester

This shrinkwrapped package consists of a handheld item resembling a portable taser; a CD containing a variety of diagnostic software programs; and an illustrated (four color, naturally) pamphlet explaining how to use both the item and the software. Retail value \$79.99, five dollar rebate coupon inside, a couple of links on the cover to websites that require an account to access. The package does not reek of extradimensional origin, assuming that somebody nearby has the ability to detect that sort of thing.

As near as can be determined, the Kirby Tester actually does scan for actual superpowers. To use, apply the handheld to the subject's bare skin, and hold it there while various prodding, buzzing, scraping, flashing, slight lazing, and other oddly-sounding activities ensue. Once the sampling is done, hook up the handheld to a computer running the diagnostic software. The pamphlet claims that the device can detect with 95% accuracy whether the subject has flight, natural armor, regeneration, psionic powers, enhanced physical abilities, enhanced mental capacity, and/or an innate attack. It can also project -- with considerably less accuracy -- just how broadly powerful

any of those abilities are. Lastly: if the subject has any kind of super-weakness, the Kirby Tester will at least pick up that that weakness in fact exists, but details will only be forthcoming if that specific weakness is in the Tester's database.

When they appear on the black market, Kirby Testers get snapped up quickly. And nobody knows who's doing the snapping up -- and, yes, really, **nobody** knows. If somebody in the Shadow Game had superheroes -- or supervillains -- then the other players would swiftly know about it...

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