Coming soon: high-definition discs. If you have a high-definition disc player (either Blu-ray or HD-DVD), perhaps you want to burn your own high-definition discs and play them on your HDTV. Not so fast. Burning HD movies requires two things: You need a disc burner that burns discs in your format of choice (Blu-ray or HD-DVD), and you need HD authoring software that lets you set up a disc to work with that format.

Unfortunately, these two components aren't yet available for either Blu-ray or HD-DVD. If it's Blu-ray movies you want, you'll find a number of third-party burners available from companies such as Other World Computing (its Mercury Pro external Blu-ray burner sells for $649, and an internal version goes for $100 less, www.otherworldcomputing.com). But there's currently no DVD-authoring software to make Blu-ray movies. At press time, the only thing current Blu-ray burners could do was burn a data disc (with 25GB or 50GB capacities) filled with computer files. If you want to create HD-DVD movies, you have the opposite problem: Apple's DVD Studio Pro 4 (included with Final Cut Studio 2, $1,299, www.apple.com) can author HD-DVD discs, but there are currently no HD-DVD burners to burn them with.

Hang in there, though. On the HD-DVD front, Toshiba has announced the industry's first burner, which will be available soon. As for Blu-ray, Adobe's Encore CS3 DVD-authoring software (which will ship with Premiere Pro CS3, $799, www.adobe.com) should be available toward the end of the summer, allowing you to use existing Blu-ray burners for recording movies, not just backups. And there's always hope that Apple will add Blu-ray support to a future update of DVD Studio Pro.

In the meantime, until things shape up on the high-definition front, you can always burn your HD video to a standard-definition DVD, using software like iDVD (included in iLife '06) or DVD Studio Pro. These apps will scale down your video to standard-definition resolution and convert it into the MPEG-2 compression that everyday DVDs use. You can then watch your movie as you would any conventional DVD. It won't be in HD resolution, but it should still look respectably sharp on a good TV.

While "the year of HD" may have been two years in the making, there's no doubt that it's finally arrived in 2007. Regardless of the equipment and software you choose for your own HD kit, one thing's certain: Once you work in HD, you'll never want to go back to standard-definition video again.