

WHAT PC? AND SOFTWARE



Cover CD

4 What CD? number five

Our fully-interactive cover CD is now better than ever. Each month, you'll find the latest games and multimedia demos; Internet pages galore; our new interactive Getting Started guide to PCs; a resources section filled with essential shareware and utilities; music, photos and poetry in the arts section; a 12-month back-issues index of *What PC?*; the complete previous issue of the magazine to read on disc; plus more than 500 pages of Hands On articles; and much, much more.

Cover story

62 Best sellers



In our annual best sellers issue, we reveal the top-selling hardware and software products of the past year, based on data from the leading market research companies. And because a best seller isn't necessarily the best product (though it may be) we also include our carefully-chosen alternative in each category to

produce a balanced, detailed buyer's guide. This year there are 28 categories, split between PCs, software and printers/peripherals.

Top-selling software: The best in word processors, spreadsheets, integrated packages, graphics software, personal finance, games, and more.

Top-selling PCs: The market-leading PCs across eight separate categories, from budget desktop models through to high-end notebooks, including the top-selling multimedia machines, Macs, and palmtops.

Top-selling printers and peripherals: Includes budget and office laser printers, mono and colour inkjets, portable printers, modems, scanners and monitors.

Features

124 Shopping for a PC

For this, our best sellers issue, we went off to visit a number of computer retailers to talk to them and their customers to find out at first hand what people are buying and why.

130 Lifestyle software

The booming lifestyle sector offers something for everyone, from garden designers and fishing programs through to wine and travel guides. Following last month's focus on reference software, we bring you a lifestyle software guide.



Reviews

23 Up front

- Microsoft Office 97** Latest edition of MS Office.
- HP Omnibook 800CT** Sub-A4 ultra-portable.
- Corel Click & Create** Multimedia applications creator.
- Mesh Elite Ultima 133** Pentium 133MHz multi-purpose PC.
- Compaq Armada 1100** Entry-level notebook.
- IBM VoiceType 3.0 vs Dragon Dictate Classic Edition** Two voice-recognition systems designed for high-end desktop PCs.
- HP DeskJet 820Cxi** Colour inkjet printer.
- Power Utilities with Crash Proof 96** Six Windows utilities.
- Black Widow ScanPRO 9636 SP** Flatbed scanner.
- OmniPage Pro** OCR software – Windows 95 version.
- Olivetti M24 New** Low-cost Pentium desktop PC.

52 In brief

- miroMEDIA Online** Fax modem and sound card.
- Fujitsu DynaMO230** Data storage for notebooks.
- Quicken Family Lawyer** Prepare your will at home.
- Cirque GlidePoint Touchpad 2** Another mouse alternative
- Font Consultant 3.0** Font management utility.
- Lotus Companions, Travel – Western Europe** Basic tourist information.
- AFD Postcode** Address-finder.
- Colorgraph SOFT copy** Helps towards colour photocopying.
- Visioneer PaperPort ix** Integrated scanner/keyboard.
- SyQuest EZFlyer 230** Removable disk for storage.
- Family Tree Maker v3.01** Genealogical program.

139 Computer class

Paul Wardley continues his series of classes on upgrading your PC by providing a step-by-step guide to installing a new hard disk.

Regulars

- 15 News** hardware and software latest.
- 57 Letters** and competition winners.
- 59 Competition** Two first-prize winners will each get a Visioneer PaperPort Vx – a fax machine, photocopier and scanner in one. Thirty runners-up will receive useful Europress software.
- 147 Question time** Write with your PC problem – if we print your letter, you'll get a copy of either MS Works or Publisher – for Windows 95.
- 238 Reader survey** Give your views and you could receive one of five Xyratex MaxIT 540Mb SCSI hard drives.
- 238 Faxline** *What PC?* pages via your fax.
- 239 Product index**
- 240 Back page** Next Month; book reviews; and James Taylor on the handicaps to business use of the Internet.

What PC? buyer's guide

Essential advice and information for beginners, plus the most comprehensive buyer's tables on the market.



193 Buyer's guide contents

getting started

13,196 Getting started The ultimate beginner's guide to personal computing.

205 How to buy Detailed advice for buyers, including a checklist and a self-questionnaire to help you reach a decision.

213 Buyer's charter

214 Tables Make an informed choice from our comprehensive listings of the latest PCs, software & peripherals – including specifications, prices and manufacturers' contact numbers.



What PC? on the Web

If you have access to the Internet, you can now visit the *What PC?* Web site at: www.vnu.co.uk/vnu/hc/wpc/

After hours

150 Games We try annihilating aliens in Quake, indulge our Need for Speed, and lead a platoon of robots off to war in Z.



155 Family We go up the Mountain-that-smokes in The Stone of Wakan, browse through Webster's Interactive Encyclopedia, and learn to spell with Snoopy and friends

159 On line Terry Pinnell tunes in to a radio programme and plays Pink Floyd fan in this month's site-seeing tour of the Net.