

# WHAT PC? AND SOFTWARE



## Cover CD

**4 What CD? number four**  
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

### 82 Family multimedia PCs



More and more people are buying PCs for use at home – computers that provide education, entertainment and serious working tools in one easy-to-use unit. We take a detailed look at some of the latest multimedia models designed for this growing market.

## Features

### 62 Reference software

Encyclopaedias, atlases, dictionaries and other reference material available on CD-ROM provide a mine of information accessible via your PC. We do some research.

### 104 Mid-range colour notebooks

You don't have to sacrifice power, memory and storage capacity for portability. Nor do you have to fork out a fortune. We cast an eye over seven well-specified notebooks costing between £2,000 and £3,000.

### 110 Personal laser printers

After buying a PC, a printer is probably next on your list. And for quick, quality printing, you could opt for a laser model, many of which are now very reasonably priced.

### 124 Eight-speed CD-ROM drives

A fast CD-ROM drive connected to the computer's IDE interface has become the norm on new PCs. We evaluate eight of the eight-speed contenders.

### 136 Tricks of the trade

Software programmers have a mischievous tendency to sneak quirky routines into odd corners of the programs they produce. We reveal some software secrets.

### 99 Live '96 preview

We preview the upcoming home electronics and entertainment show set to ignite Earl's Court.

## Reviews

### 23 Up front

**Psion Series 3c** An exclusive review of the latest Psion.  
**Psion Siena** Also, a first look at the new entry-level model.  
**Packard Bell Executive 916D** 133MHz multimedia PC.  
**GoldMine for Windows 95** Contact management package.  
**HP Omnibook 5500CT** Pentium notebook PC.  
**Paint Shop Pro 4** Image-editing and painting package.  
**Toshiba Portégé 620CT** Sub-A4 100MHz Pentium notebook.  
**IMSI WinDelete 3.0** Removes Windows applications.  
**Dell Dimension XPS 200S** 200MHz Pentium multimedia PC.  
**Kodak DC20** Digital camera that stores images on your PC.  
**Psion 3a with MS Autoroute Express/Philips Routefinder** Two products that calculate the best routes for journeys.  
**ModemBlaster Voice** A voice, fax and data modem.  
**Xerox TextBridge Pro 96** Optical character recognition.

### 52 In brief

**Norton PC Anywhere 7.5** Enables PCs to communicate.  
**NEC MultiSync M500** 15in multimedia monitor.  
**Panasonic KXL-D740** CD-ROM drive for notebook PCs.  
**ComSwitch 350e** For a fax and 'phone sharing a single line.  
**Xyratek MaxIT** External removable hard drive.  
**ATI 3D Xpression with TV tuner** 3D graphics card.  
**GoldStar Studioworks 78i** 17in monitor.  
**Grey Cell 3400 V.34 Modem/Ethernet PC Card** Combo card.  
**Tel-Me version 3** On-line information service.  
**Agent 95** Intended to optimise PC performance.  
**Roland PMA-5** Create and play music without a keyboard.

### 129 Computer class

Kicking off a series of three computer classes on upgrading, Paul Wardley provides a step-by-step guide on how to install a CD-ROM drive and sound card into your PC.

## Regulars

**15 News** hardware and software latest.

**57 Letters** and competition winners.

**59 Competition** Two first-prize winners will get a Canon MultiPass 10 device combining printer, fax, scanner and copier. Plus Broderbund Software's Print Shop Deluxe for fifteen runners-up.

**143 Question time** Write to us with your PC problem – if we print your letter, you'll receive a copy of either MS Works or Publisher.

**194 Reader survey** Give your views and you could get a Reveal Multimedia keyboard.

**194 Faxline** *What PC?* pages via your fax.

**231 Product index**

**232 Back page** Next Month; book reviews; and Wendy Grossman has some doubts about Network Computers.

## What PC? buyer's guide

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



### 185 Buyer's guide contents

getting started

**13,186 Getting started** The ultimate beginner's guide to personal computing.

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

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

**203 Buyer's charter**



## 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/](http://www.vnu.co.uk/vnu/hc/wpc/)

## After hours

**146 Games** We join a Grail-trail with Monty Python, zap back to the days of arcade games, and witness animal antics from Baku Baku and Catz.

**151 Family** We've honey hunting with Winnie the Pooh, a search for Dracula's Secret, and news from *The Times*.

**155 On line** Terry Pinnell continues his search for those essential sites.

**159 On line – special** Terry Pinnell gives some tips on methodical surfing.