

MONOCHROME LASER AND COLOUR INKJET PRINTERS

Monochrome laser printers												
Details	Last month's position	First reviewed	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Installed/maximum memory	Hardware resolution	Software enhanced	Actual print speed	Dimensions (width x depth x height)	Interface type(s)	Toner costs	Print life (pages)
 1 Oki OkiPage 14ex 01753 819 819 www.oki.co.uk	1	Sept 02	£272	1-year	4MB/ 36MB	600x 1,200dpi	no	13ppm	345x395x 215mm	USB, parallel	£26	4,000
 2 Lexmark E320 0870 444 0044 www.lexmark.co.uk	2	Sept 02	£239	1-year	4MB/ 68MB	600dpi	no	13ppm	380x362x 221mm	USB, parallel	£71	3,000
3 Brother HL-1850 0870 830 4000 www.brother.co.uk	3	Sept 02	£425	1-year	16MB/ 144MB	600dpi	1,200dpi	14ppm	425x424x 275mm	USB, parallel	£51	6,500
4 Minolta-QMS PagePro 1200W 01784 442 255 www.minolta-qms.co.uk	4	Sept 02	£169	1-year	8MB/ 8MB	1,200dpi	no	10.2ppm	515x362x 381mm	USB, parallel	£70	6,000
5 Minolta-QMS PagePro 1250E 01784 442 255 www.minolta-qms.co.uk	5	Sept 02	£295	3-year	16MB/ 144MB	1,200dpi	no	12.6ppm	389x441x 259mm	USB, parallel	£70	6,000

Colour inkjet printers												
Details	Last month's position	First reviewed	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Maximum paper size	Maximum resolution	Quoted print speed	Actual print speed	Dimensions (width x depth x height)	Interface type(s)	Ink costs	Print life (pages)
 1 HP PhotoSmart P1215 0870 547 4747 www.hp.com/uk	2	Dec 01	£175	1-year	A4	2,400x 1,200dpi	B=15ppm C=12ppm	B=9ppm C=3ppm	440x204x 375mm	USB, parallel	B=£23 C=£28	B=830 C=450
 2 Lexmark Z55 Color Jetprinter 0870 444 0044 www.lexmark.co.uk	3	Jul 02	£84	1-year	A4	3,600x 1,200dpi	B=17ppm C=13ppm	B=9ppm C=7.5ppm	440x318x 197mm	USB, parallel	B=£26 C=£22	B=600 C=450
3 Lexmark Z35 Color Jetprinter 0870 444 0044 www.lexmark.co.uk	4	Aug 02	£50	1-year	A4	2,400x 1,200dpi	B=11ppm C=6ppm	B=5.4ppm C=2.6ppm	445x206x 130mm	USB	B=£22 C=£19	B=410 C=275
4 Epson Stylus Photo 950 0800 220 546 www.epson.co.uk	5	Aug 02	£323	1-year	A4	2,880x 1,440dpi	B=8.8ppm C=8.5ppm	B=6.4ppm C=5.4ppm	515x333x 209mm	USB, parallel	B=£8 C=£8	B=370 C=440
5 Epson Stylus Color C80 0800 220 546 www.epson.co.uk	RE-ENTRY	Feb 02	£126	1-year	A4	2,880x 720dpi	B=20ppm C=11ppm	B=5ppm C=1.5ppm	452x320x 201mm	USB, parallel	B=£21 C=£9	B=1,240 C=420

MONOCHROME LASER PRINTERS

1 Oki OkiPage 14ex



The Best Buy OkiPage looks basic, but its design works in its favour. The paperfeed system, for instance, is simple but flawless. Printouts are always uncreased and the mechanism is strong enough to withstand wear and tear. In contrast to most sub-£300 lasers, the Oki has a comprehensive control panel built in, so you can adjust important settings without touching the PC. The 14ex is a performance printer, and its fine text definition and detailed graphics reproduction certainly reinforce this title. Speed is impressive – 13ppm (pages per minute) is a fantastic achievement at 300dpi (dots per inch). The Best Buy Oki is also

one of the cheapest models to run. Whether you want a well-priced inkjet replacement for your home office, or a heavy-duty page churner for work, the 14ex stands up to the task.

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COLOUR INKJET PRINTERS

1 HP PhotoSmart P1215



Due to the discontinuation of the Canon Bubble Jet S630, HP's PhotoSmart P1215 moves up to the Best Buy position. This colour inkjet printer sets a high standard for all-round excellence. It comes complete with memory card slots, allowing you to print out your digital camera snaps without the need to connect to a PC. The P1215 provides facilities for CompactFlash, SmartMedia and IBM Microdrive cards. The incredibly detailed control panel is also superior, giving instant access to its many options. In terms of output quality, the PhotoSmart offers outstanding performance, with vibrant graphics and clean character definition, and its actual print speeds are reasonable. HP's installation routine isn't the fastest in the world, but printer newcomers will welcome the selection of videos and detailed tutorials that help you get the printer up and running quickly.

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2 Lexmark E320

 Proving once again that it knows how to keep performance high and the price low, Lexmark has delivered exceptional speed and image quality for a mere £239.



In practice, the Recommended E320 operates more like an inkjet than a laser printer thanks, in part, to the inkjet-style rear-mounted paperfeed. It's in performance, however, that the E320 shows what it's made of. Graphics and text reproduction is clean and precise at 600dpi, and the print speeds remain close to 13ppm (pages per minute).

3 Brother HL-1850

Even though the HL-1850 falls short of its stated 18ppm (pages per minute) it's still impressive. The Brother's design is clean and uncluttered and its paper tray can hold up to 250 pages. We experienced no problems with page curling or jamming, and the intuitive installation routine means operating the Brother is simple. This isn't the cheapest printer, but the low running costs will compensate frequent users.

**4 Minolta-QMS PagePro 1200W**

Costing a mere £169, the 1200W's maximum 1,200dpi (dots per inch) resolution is superior to the 600dpi Brother, which is over double the price. Inevitably, though, there are flaws. The paper handling is poor, and Minolta uses a plastic paper support instead of a proper tray. This is acceptable for small print jobs, but isn't going to stand up to the strain of heavy use. The PagePro's onboard memory won't guarantee high speed, but if you're used to inkjets then 10ppm (pages per minute) won't seem much of a drop.

**5 Minolta-QMS PagePro 1250E**

The PagePro 1250E is a good choice for the home or the office, although its fragile casing may not last well in a busy business environment. The Minolta-QMS handles text and graphics with equal aplomb, giving most of the similarly priced printers a run for their money. Again, speed was relatively good, but the 1250E did drop to more average rates at the highest resolution.



COLOUR INKJET PRINTERS

2 Lexmark Z55 Color Jetprinter

 The Z55 may at first glance seem overshadowed by its cheaper sibling, the £50 Z35, but this Recommended Jetprinter offers better performance and cheaper total cost of ownership – in fact, at 4.9p a page, colour printing is cheaper than on more expensive models. At top speed, the Lexmark Z55 can generate 9ppm (pages per minute) of text and 7.5ppm of colour graphics. The printer supports a resolution of 3,600x1,200dpi (dots per inch) on glossy media, or 3,600x600dpi using standard paper, but image quality doesn't justify this.

**3 Lexmark Z35 Color Jetprinter**

Lexmark is renowned for offering low-cost inkjet printers and the Z35 is no exception. Despite a value-for-money £50 price tag, this third-placed model is a competent performer, with print speeds of 5.4 and 2.6ppm for mono and colour respectively. To get the best results, though, you have to opt for the top resolution setting of 2,400x1,200dpi, which slows things down quite a bit. What stops it from coming higher in our chart is the poor build quality, which struck us as distinctly flimsy, and the fact that it doesn't come with the USB cable necessary to connect it to your PC.

**4 Epson Stylus Photo 950**

Epson moves up to number four this month, although it's perhaps unfair that it should languish near the bottom of our chart. In fact, if it wasn't for the Photo 950's high price tag, then it would have fared better.



This printer is perfect if you want top-quality printouts. It is aimed at the professional market – image quality is fantastic in the highest-quality modes, and the high resolution support (2,880dpi) and glossy paper makes a resounding impression. Times aren't too poor either, and even at the highest-quality settings it takes less than five minutes for a page to print.

5 Epson Stylus Color C80

With print speeds of 5ppm (pages per minute) in mono and 1.5ppm in colour, the C80 is the slowest inkjet in the chart. However, Epson's inkjets have always been geared towards producing high-quality images rather than delivering them at high speed, and in this regard the Stylus Color is true to form. If you're happy to settle for a printer that takes its time, you'll be rewarded with excellent results.



RE-ENTRY