






POWER AND BUDGET NOTEBOOKS

Power notebooks		Last month's position	First reviewed	World-Bench 4	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Processor type/clock speed	RAM	Hard disk capacity	Modem	Network card	Dimensions (width x depth x height)		Weight	Screen size/type	Maximum resolution	Graphics card	Graphics memory	Dual-speed processor	DVD drive speed	Internal/external floppy disk drive	CD-RW read/write/rewrite rate	Battery type	Operating system & other extras	
	1	Hi-Grade Ultinote M6400-1800-I 020 8532 6100 www.higrade.com	1	Apr 02	118	£1,509	2-year return to base	Intel Pentium 4/ 1.8GHz	512MB	40GB	56K	yes	313x263x36mm		3kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	ATI Mobility M6	16MB	N/A	8x (combo drive)	external	24x/8x/4x	lithium-ion	Windows XP Home, Office XP SBE
	2	Hi-Grade Notino R5400-2000 020 8532 6100 www.higrade.com	2	Sep 02	91	£1,509	2-year including accidental damage	Intel Mobile Pentium 4/2.0GHz	384MB	40GB	56K	yes	313x257x30mm		2.4kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	S3 ProSavage DDR	32MB	Intel Speedstep	8x	optional external	24x/8x/8x	lithium-ion	Windows XP Home, Works Suite 2002, McAfee AntiVirus, Office SBE
	3	Dell Inspiron 8200 0870 152 4699 www.dell.co.uk	3	Jun 02	109	£1,549	1-year collect and return	Intel Mobile Pentium 4/1.7GHz	256MB	40GB	56K	yes	331x276x45mm		3.6kg	15in/TFT	1,600x1,200	nVidia GeForce4 440 Go	64MB	Intel Speedstep	8x	internal	24x/16x/10x	lithium-ion	Windows XP Home, Microsoft Office SBE, WinDVD
	4	Rock Quaddra 0870 990 9090 www.rockdirect.com	4	Sep 02	113	£1,514	3-year collect and return	Intel Pentium 4/ 2.4GHz	512MB	40GB	56K	yes	331x280x44mm		3.2kg	15in/TFT	1,024x768	SIS 650	32MB	Intel Speedstep	8x	optional external	20x/4x/4x	lithium-ion	Windows XP Professional, McAfee Virus Scan 2.0
	5	Toshiba Satellite Pro 6100 0870 444 8944 www.toshiba.com	RE-ENTRY	Jun 02	103	£1,799	2-year return to base	Intel Mobile Pentium 4/1.7GHz	256MB	40GB	56K	yes	330x289x35mm		3.1kg	15in/TFT	1,024x768	nVidia GeForce4 420 Go	32MB	Intel Speedstep	8x	internal	24x/8x/8x	lithium-ion	Windows XP Home, WinDVD, Spanworks
Budget notebooks																									
	1	ACI Impression 020 8830 1958 www.aciplc.com	NEW	Oct 02	102	£1,249	1-year collect and return	Intel Mobile Pentium 4/1.6GHz	256MB	20GB	56K	yes	312x266x33mm		2.8kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	nVidia GeForce4 420 Go	32MB	Intel Speedstep	8x	internal	N/A	lithium-ion	Windows XP Home, Lotus SmartSuite Millennium Edition
	2	Mesh Pegasus 14.1 Pro 020 8208 4702 www.meshcomputers.com	1	Mar 02	82	£899	2-year return to base	AMD Mobile Athlon 4/1.2GHz	384MB	20GB	56K	yes	308x254x38mm		3kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	S3 Twister K	user-definable 8/16/32MB	AMD PowerNow	8x	internal	N/A	lithium-ion	Windows XP Home, Microsoft Works Suite 2002
	3	Fujitsu Amilo M-7300 01344 475 555 www.fujitsu-europe.com	2	Sep 02	75	£1,154	1-year collect and return	Intel Mobile Pentium 4/1.6GHz	256MB	30GB	56K	yes	310x255x29mm		2.2kg	15.1in/TFT	1,024x768	S3 Pro Savage 8DDR	user-definable 8/16/32MB	Intel Speedstep	8x	N/A	24x/8x/4x	lithium-ion	Windows XP Home, Microsoft Works Suite 2002
	4	NEC Versa Premium P1200 0870 010 6328 www.nec-online.co.uk	3	Jul 02	89	£1,065	1-year collect and return	Intel Pentium III/ 1.2GHz	128MB	20GB	56K	yes	310x265x40mm		3.4kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	SIS 630ST	user-definable 8/16MB	N/A	8x	internal	24x/8x/8x	lithium-ion	Windows XP Professional, StarOffice, Norton AntiVirus
	5	HP Pavilion zt 1121s 0870 547 4747 www.hp.co.uk	4	May 02	68	£850	1-year return to base	Intel Mobile Celeron/ 1.06GHz	128MB	20GB	56K	yes	318x273x36mm		2.6kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	S3 Savage	32MB	Intel Speedstep	8x	N/A	N/A	lithium-ion	Windows XP Home, Microsoft Works Suite 2002, Works 6.0


POWER NOTEBOOKS




1 Hi-Grade Ultinote M6400-1800-I

Still at number one is the Hi-Grade Ultinote M6400-1800-I, which uses its 1.8GHz Pentium 4 processor to great effect. The processor is twinned with 512MB of RAM and a 16MB DDR (double data rate) RAM ATI Mobility M6 graphics chip. This sterling setup enabled the Ultinote to pull in a WorldBench 4 score of 118, giving it the fastest performance score in our Power notebook chart and, at just £9 over our starting cost of £1,500, the Ultinote is a worthy winner.

As with all notebooks using a power-hungry desktop processor, battery life is not this model's particular strong point, and the Hi-Grade claims a life of just 1.5 hours. However, if you are happy to use the Ultinote as a desktop replacement PC, this won't be a problem. It comes with a 40GB hard drive and a combo DVD/CD-RW drive, offering eight-speed DVD and 24-/eight-/quad-speed (read/write/rewrite) CD-RW facilities. It also features a 14.1in screen capable of a maximum resolution of 1,024x768. In terms of software, the Hi-Grade is bundled with a copy of Windows XP Home and Office XP SBE.






2 Hi-Grade Notino R5400-2000


The Notino bundles Intel's fastest mobile chip into a military-approved chassis. Its 2GHz Mobile Pentium 4's performance failed to better previous P4M machines seen by *PC Advisor*, only managing a WorldBench 4 score of 91. Where the Hi-Grade did fair well was in our video encoding tests – crunching down 500MB of DV (digital video) footage to Mpeg-2 took just 10 minutes 53 seconds.

The R5400 is well equipped, bundling 384MB of DDR (double data rate) RAM, a 40GB hard drive, DVD/CD-RW combo drive, three USB 2.0 ports, FireWire and TV-out as standard. There's also optional integrated Bluetooth. The Recommended Notino doesn't offer the highest performance score, but it will cope with life on the road. The keyboard is spill-proof and the machine passes the military 810E standard, covering shock and vibration resistance. Hi-Grade supplements this with a two-year international warranty that even covers accidental damage.

→ Turn to page 146 to continue the Power notebooks chart



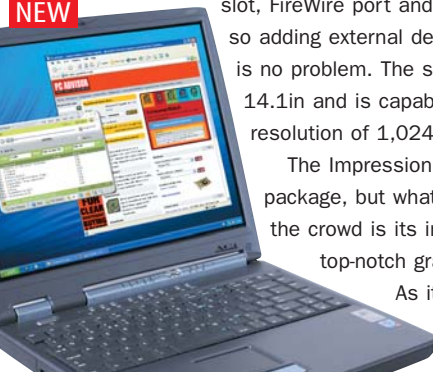
BUDGET NOTEBOOKS




1 ACI Impression

ACI makes an impression this month, swooping in to steal the Best Buy from our longstanding chart-topper, the Mesh Pegasus. Its outstanding performance is due in part to an unbeatable WorldBench score of 102. This top score can be attributed to the winning combination of a 1.6GHz Mobile Pentium 4 processor, 256MB of RAM and an nVidia GeForce4 420 Go graphics card with 32MB of DDR (double data rate) RAM. The Impression also offers some handy extras including a hotswappable floppy disk, which changes places with the eight-speed DVD-ROM drive. There's also a built-in SmartMedia slot, FireWire port and three USB ports, so adding external devices to the setup is no problem. The screen measures 14.1in and is capable of a maximum resolution of 1,024x768.

The Impression offers an attractive package, but what sets it apart from the crowd is its immense speed and top-notch graphics capabilities. As it stands, ACI has won a deserved award this month.






2 Mesh Pegasus 14.1 Pro

Mesh's well-considered package has to make way for ACI this month, but is still our Recommended Budget notebook. Although the Pegasus 14.1 Pro couldn't match the performance of all its competitors and lacks a CD-RW drive, it has many redeeming features. The machine's plain metallic design isn't a head-turner, but it's a sturdy model with plenty of beauty on the inside.

At the heart of the Mesh Pegasus is AMD's Mobile Athlon 4 processor, running at a speed of 1.2GHz, which is twinned with 384MB of SDRAM. As the WorldBench 4 score of 82 demonstrates, there's little difference in performance between Intel's and AMD's processors. A 20GB hard drive is standard and there are enough ports to make it a decent desktop replacement, although we'd like to see a FireWire port included. The rest of the specification is reasonable – a DVD drive, user-definable graphics memory and a 14.1in screen.

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POWER NOTEBOOKS

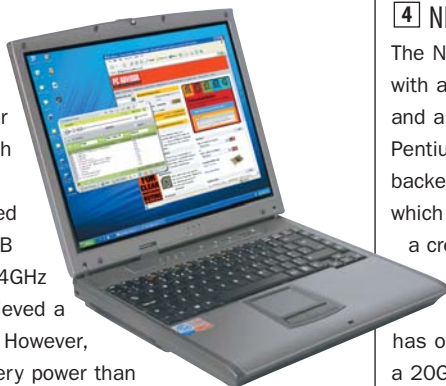
3 Dell Inspiron 8200

The clunky-looking Inspiron operates on a level that is way beyond aesthetics. Its 256MB of RAM is combined with a 40GB hard drive and Speedstep-enhanced Mobile Pentium 4 chip running at 1.7GHz. This specification achieved a WorldBench 4 score of 109 which, although powerful, isn't far ahead of the competition. However, thanks to the new 845MP chipset, the Inspiron has been designed to perform better in multimedia content creation and, as an entertainment system, the 8200 is second to none. The Dell manages to be a decent business performer and entertainment system in one, while defying the standard specifications of both. Another bonus is that Dell has reduced the price of the Inspiron 8200 to £1,549, so it's slightly more affordable.



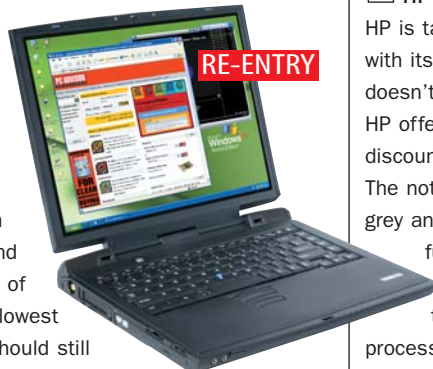
4 Rock Quaddra

Rather than taking the usual Mobile processor route, Rock has opted for a desktop Pentium 4 processor in its Quaddra notebook. With 512MB of DDR (double data rate) RAM, 32MB of dedicated graphics memory and a 40GB hard drive backing up the 2.4GHz Pentium 4, the machine achieved a WorldBench 4 score of 113. However, the P4 consumes more battery power than Intel's Mobile offering and runs at a higher temperature. The Quaddra's screen offers good-quality visuals, and the DVD/CD-RW combo drive provides extra backup and entertainment. If you want a notebook that will sit on your desktop and you're not particular worried about battery life the Rock is a good buy, especially with its three-year warranty.



5 Toshiba Satellite Pro 6100

The Toshiba may look like a giant compared to some of the sleek offerings in the Power notebook chart, but it's what's on the inside that counts. The 6100 houses a Mobile Pentium processor running at 1.7GHz and pulled in a WorldBench 4 score of 103. This may be the second-slowest in the chart, but the Satellite should still prove powerful enough. The Toshiba also boasts a top-notch graphics setup, with a 15in TFT display combined with nVidia's GeForce4 420 Go graphics mobile chipset. Overall, the Satellite Pro is a decent desktop replacement – if you've got the money, that is. At £1,799 this hefty portable is too expensive to sit further up the table.



BUDGET NOTEBOOKS

3 Fujitsu Amilo M-7300

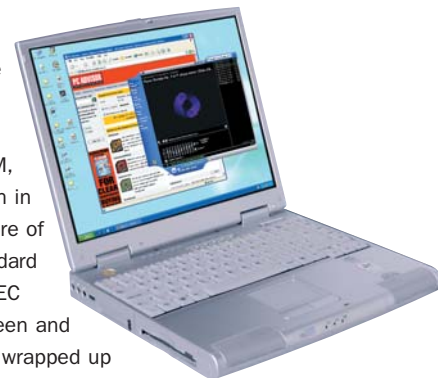
The Amilo M-7300 loses its Recommended award this month due to ACI's new entry, the Impression. The Fujitsu's WorldBench 4 score of 75 may be average but the review model we looked at only had 128MB of DDR (double data rate) RAM.

Production units will be sent out with 256MB so expect better performance. Inside the Amilo you'll find a Mobile Pentium 4 chip running at 1.6GHz, a 30GB hard drive, combo DVD/CD-RW drive and, although there's no floppy disk, you will find a memory card slot. The lid overhangs slightly to accommodate a large, crisp 15.1in screen which is well complemented by the graphics chipset. The Amilo M-7300 comes with XP Home and the handy bonus of a good software package. We'd like to see a better warranty than a one-year collect-and-return, though.



4 NEC Versa Premium P1200

The NEC Versa Premium comes with a combo DVD/CD-RW drive and a slightly ageing 1.2GHz Pentium III processor. This is backed up by 128MB of SDRAM, which helped the system to turn in a creditable WorldBench 4 score of 89. As is becoming standard in a Budget notebook, NEC has opted for a 14.1in TFT screen and a 20GB hard drive, which is all wrapped up in an attractive matt silver case. Although the P1200's price tag is starting to look reasonable, it doesn't back this up with outstanding performance. On saying this, it is a reasonable powerful machine and has the added security of coming from a reputable brand.



5 HP Pavilion zt 1121s

HP is targeting the home and student market with its Pavilion zt 1121s. It doesn't run to a floppy drive, but HP offers you the option of a discount on an external USB unit. The notebook has an attractive grey and silver finish and some funky purple lights around the touchpad. Performance from the 1.06GHz Mobile Celeron processor twinned with 128MB of RAM, a 20GB hard drive and S3 Savage graphics card is not the best by any means – it could only achieve a WorldBench 4 rating of 68. However, what prevents this low score from taking the HP out of the chart altogether is its equally low price. You can get more for your money if you shop around, but not from a brand with such a good record for quality.

