

TOP 10 CD DRIVES AND DIGITAL PROJECTORS

CD drives										
Details	Last month's position	First reviewed	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Interface type	Read/write/rewrite speed	Data buffer size	Average access time (milliseconds)	Dimensions (width x depth x height)	
 <b>1</b> Philips 20x10x40x 0800 896 324 www.pdstuff.philips.com	1	Jan 02	£119	1-year	EIDE	40x/20x/10x	2MB	100ms	146x200x40mm	
 <b>2</b> Plextor PlexWriter 24/10/40A 01932 828 828 www.plextor.com	2	Nov 01	£129	1-year	EIDE	40x/24x/10x	4MB	140ms	146x202x42mm	
<b>3</b> Teac CD-W516EK 020 8906 9111 www.teac.de	3	Aug 01	£131	1-year	EIDE	40x/16x/10x	2MB	85ms	146x192x42mm	
<b>4</b> Cyberdrive 16x12x40x 01256 707 070 www.cyberdrive.com	4	Jan 02	£80	1-year	EIDE	40x/16x/12x	2MB	100ms	148x206x42mm	
<b>5</b> Memorex 24x10x40x 0870 727 1771 www.memorexlive.com	<b>NEW</b>	Feb 02	£107	1-year	EIDE	40x/24x/10x	2MB	80ms	146x196x40mm	

Digital projectors											
Details	Last month's position	First reviewed	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Brightness (Ansi lumens)	Lamp life	Lamp power	Replacement bulb	Weight	Maximum resolution	Dimensions (width x depth x height)
 <b>1</b> Epson EMP-505 0800 220 546 www.epson.co.uk	1	Jun 01	£2,499	2-year	1,100	1,500 hours	150 Watts UHP	£389	2.7kg	800x600 pixels	267x213x 72mm
 <b>2</b> CTX PS-5100 01923 810 800 www.ctxeurope.com	2	Dec 01	£1,275	2-year	1,000	4,000 hours	120 Watts UHP	£199	3.5kg	800x600 pixels	325x275x 92mm
<b>3</b> NEC MultiSync LT155 0645 404 020 www.nec.co.uk	3	May 01	£3,400	3-year	1,200/ 970	1,000/ 2,000 hours	130/110 Watts UHP	£281	2.2kg	1,024x768 pixels	207x266x 63mm
<b>4</b> Epson EMP-800 0800 220 546 www.epson.co.uk	4	Jan 02	£3,799	2-year	1,500	1,500 hours	200 Watts UHP	£395	4.2kg	1,024x768 pixels	349x274x 104mm
<b>5</b> Epson EMP-50 0800 220 546 www.epson.co.uk	5	May 01	£1,359	2-year	1,000	1,500 hours	150 Watts UHP	£110	3.1kg	800x600 pixels	300x220x 80mm

TOP 10 CD DRIVES

1 Philips 20x10x40x

Philips holds the top spot for another month with a drive that confounded us with its superior performance. Philips' drive may have a slower write rate of 20-speed compared to that of Plextor's 24-speed drive, but it beats it hands down in the performance stakes. The 20x10x40x took just three minutes 25 seconds to write our mixed test files to a CD-R – the fastest time we've seen by a long way. This performance didn't diminish when we tested it with CD-RWs. The 20x10x40x took just over five minutes to transfer the same files to a CD-RW.

The Philips drive is compatible with every CD format under the sun and comes with buffer underrun technology. Philips has also bundled an abridged version of Nero and InCD. This is a complete package for anyone who wants to burn their own CDs. And, at only £119 it's worthy of our Best Buy award.



TOP 10 DIGITAL PROJECTORS

1 Epson EMP-505

The quality and functionality of Epson's EMP-505 projector would make it an excellent purchase even if it cost £3,000. But, with a price tag of just £2,499, it's a deserving winner of our Best Buy award.

Epson's EasyMP technology lends a welcome dash of flair. Like many digital projectors, this model comes with a PC Card slot. This allows users to download presentations and carry them on a memory card, rather than having to lug around a laptop as well. The EMP-505 contains all the tools and help functions that you could need, and the remote control is simple to use. There's even a secret panel that can be flipped open to access advanced features. The EMP-505's image quality is good, with sharp definition and a refined but vibrant colour palette, guaranteeing a warm reception for your presentations.



TOP 10 CD DRIVES

2 Plextor PlexWriter 24/10/40A

This former Best Buy is still a top-notch drive. This was one of the first CD drives with 24-speed writing and it didn't disappoint. The drive took just four minutes 22 seconds to write 336MB of mixed files to a CD-R. However, Plextor admits some media may not be suitable for 24-speed writing and lists the ones it supports on its website. The 24/10/40A is bundled with an abridged version of the versatile Nero 5.5 and InCD packet writing software for the drive.



3 Teac CD-W516EK

Teac's CD-W516EK drive made a good impression on us but, with the quality of competition in our chart, it only made the number three spot. The CD-W516EK lives up to its promise, taking just four minutes 15 seconds to write the mixed test files to a CD-R. While the CD-W516EK has a buffer of only 2MB, it does include WriteProof technology, Teac's own version of BurnProof, which prevents recording problems.



4 Cyberdrive 16x12x40x

Cyberdrive is a relatively new company from Taiwan that hasn't yet established its reputation in this country. But this drive can hold its own, delivering good performance and value for money. It managed to write our 336MB test files to a CD-R in four minutes 18 seconds and the same files to a CD-RW in four minutes 26 seconds. However, the one thing that troubled us was the lack of buffer underrun support, which could lead to wasted media.



5 Memorex 24x10x40x

This 40-/24-/10-speed (read/write/rewrite) drive features Just-Burn buffer underrun technology to ensure that your valuable media don't get ruined. In tests the drive took six minutes 36 seconds to write 336MB of mixed files to a CD-R, which is the kind of speed we were getting from CD-RW drives six months ago. However, at £107, this is a cheap, reliable option for burning your own CDs.



TOP 10 DIGITAL PROJECTORS

2 CTX PS-5100

Although the price of a high-quality projector has almost halved in the last 12 months, the move towards affordable sub-£1,000 models has been less pronounced. Thankfully, the £1,275 PS-5100 – CTX's first projector in two years – marks a step in the right direction. You won't get a wealth of options, but the hardware specifications are solid, and the brightness of 1,000 Ansi lumens is surprising in such a budget projector. The picture isn't the largest and resolution support is confined to 800x600. Despite these faults, the CTX is good enough to display clear and uncluttered PowerPoint presentations, and the video output is extremely palatable.



3 NEC MultiSync LT155

The MultiSync LT155 offers a superior combination of portability and performance. This former Best Buy projector boasts a healthy brightness rating of 1,200 Ansi lumens but, by dropping the setting to 970 Ansi lumens, lamp life can be extended by as much as 1,000 hours. Considering its many strengths, the LT155 is extremely well priced. It offers sharp image quality, great portability and plenty of image-adjustment features.



4 Epson EMP-800

Since its launch last June, the Epson EMP-505 has topped our digital projectors chart with an irresistible combination of portability and performance. The EMP-800 offers something of a contrast, having more sizeable dimensions and a substantial weight. The high brightness rating could attract buyers but, overall, the EMP-800 can't justify its heavyweight £3,799 price tag.



5 Epson EMP-50

With digital projectors, higher prices generally mean more features and better brightness ratings. The EMP-50 is the exception to that rule. At only £1,359, the Epson has enough features and special touches to bring more expensive models to their knees. Its picture display quality isn't the best in the chart, but this is an impressive projector with an affordable price tag.

