

# TOP 10 FLAT-PANEL DISPLAYS & GRAPHICS CARDS

	Flat-panel displays	Screen size	Max resolution	Pixel pitch	Dimensions (wxdxh)	Weight	Digital connector	USB Port
1	 <b>CTX S530</b> 01923 810 800 <a href="http://www.ctxeurope.com">www.ctxeurope.com</a> <b>NEW</b>	15in	1,024x768	0.29mm	372x171x355mm	3.7kg	no	no
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £249 ex VAT</li> <li>• 3-year warranty</li> <li>• First review Jan 03</li> </ul>	Buying a low-end flat-panel doesn't have to mean putting up with below-par performance. CTX knows what to cut and what to leave in when producing a value-for-money screen, and the S530 belies its specifications to offer a silky smooth picture guaranteed untainted by dead pixels for 101 days.						
2	 <b>CTX PV700</b> 01923 810 800 <a href="http://www.ctxeurope.com">www.ctxeurope.com</a> <b>LAST MONTH 1</b>	17in	1,280x1,024	0.26mm	438x447x166mm	7.5kg	no	no
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £395 ex VAT</li> <li>• 3-year warranty</li> <li>• First review Sep 02</li> </ul>	The PV700 may not have the extras of some of its competitors, and its specifications are lower, but when it comes to what really matters – good visual display and value for money – it's a strong contender. The colour reproduction on DVD playback is especially accurate.						
3	 <b>NEC 1700V</b> 0870 120 1160 <a href="http://www.nec.mitsubishi.com">www.nec.mitsubishi.com</a> <b>LAST MONTH 2</b>	17in	1,280x1,024	0.26mm	434x437x220mm	6.2g	no	no
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £449 ex VAT</li> <li>• 3-year warranty</li> <li>• First review Sep 02</li> </ul>	The 1700V may lack extras, and it costs more than our top two screens, but this flagship model from NEC has one of the best images we've seen on a 17in model. With its 1,280x1,024 resolution at 60Hz and 0.26mm dot pitch, the 1700V yields visual quality way beyond the capabilities of the competition.						
4	 <b>LG Flatron L1810B</b> 0870 607 5544 <a href="http://www.lge.co.uk">www.lge.co.uk</a> <b>LAST MONTH 3</b>	18.1in	1,280x1,024	0.28mm	406x431x223mm	7.8kg	yes	yes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £520 ex VAT</li> <li>• 3-year warranty</li> <li>• First review Nov 02</li> </ul>	The L1810B combines value for money with high performance – an attractive 18.1in flat-panel display at a price that beats many 17in models. There are sacrifices, like the 0.28mm pixel pitch and 350:1 contrast ratio, but generally LG has cut costs in all the right places to produce a value-for-money 18.1in flat-panel.						
5	 <b>Sony SDM-X52</b> 0870 511 1999 <a href="http://www.sony-cp.com">www.sony-cp.com</a> <b>LAST MONTH 4</b>	15in	1,024x768	0.29mm	392x199x358mm	4.8kg	yes	no
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £399 ex VAT</li> <li>• 3-year warranty</li> <li>• First review Oct 02</li> </ul>	Sony brings its design nous to the 15in flat-panel market with the SDM-X52. The 1,024x768 resolution at 75Hz is standard but it offers a wide 150-degree viewing angle. The 400:1 contrast ratio and 300 candelas brightness rating mean display won't be dull but it's let down by the 0.29mm dot pitch.						

	Graphics cards	Graphics processor	Installed RAM	DDR RAM	Ramdac	8xAGP	Maximum resolution @ 75Hz	DirectX version	DVI
1	 <b>Gigabyte Maya II R9700 Pro</b> 01908 362 700 <a href="http://uk-giga-byte.com">http://uk-giga-byte.com</a> <b>LAST MONTH 1</b>	ATI Radeon 9700 Pro	128MB	yes	400MHz	yes	1,920x1,440	9.0x	yes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £260 ex VAT</li> <li>• 3-year warranty</li> <li>• First review Dec 02</li> </ul>	The image quality from this Radeon 9700-based card is astonishing. Although the GeForce4 Ti 4600 chip could keep close to its 200fps (frames per second) in Quake III, at higher resolutions it dropped behind. Top performance, a three-year warranty and bumper software bundle win Gigabyte a Best Buy award.							
2	 <b>Sapphire Radeon 9700 Atlantis Pro</b> 0870 467 0753 <a href="http://www.sapphiretech.com">www.sapphiretech.com</a> <b>LAST MONTH 2</b>	ATI Radeon 9700 Pro	128MB	yes	400MHz	yes	1,920x1,440	9.0x	yes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £250 ex VAT</li> <li>• 1-year warranty</li> <li>• First review Dec 02</li> </ul>	This 128MB version of the Radeon 9700 Pro trounced the GeForce4 Ti 4600, regularly collecting between 10 and 20fps (frames per second) more. The Sapphire is slightly slower than our Best Buy, software is sparse and the warranty is just one-year, but it's also slightly cheaper.							
3	 <b>AOpen Aeolus Ti 4200 S-DV128</b> 0800 138 5196 <a href="http://www.aopen.nl">www.aopen.nl</a> <b>LAST MONTH 3</b>	nVidia GeForce4 Ti 4200	128MB	yes	350MHz	no	2,048x1,536	8.0x	yes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £125 ex VAT</li> <li>• 2-year warranty</li> <li>• First review Dec 02</li> </ul>	The Aeolus unlocks the full potential of the GeForce4 Ti 4200. Performance is boosted by 128MB of DDR RAM. At lower resolutions it comes close to the Ti 4600 and doesn't tail off when detail is increased. Its older technology will date it, but it's still a great budget card.							
4	 <b>Sapphire Radeon 9000 Atlantis Pro</b> 0870 467 0753 <a href="http://www.sapphiretech.com">www.sapphiretech.com</a> <b>LAST MONTH 4</b>	ATI Radeon 9000 Pro	64MB	yes	400MHz	yes	1,920x1,440	8.1x	yes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £70 ex VAT</li> <li>• 1-year warranty</li> <li>• First review Dec 02</li> </ul>	This budget Radeon 9000 Pro card has modest specifications, but these don't hinder performance too much. It is only when you hit the 1,600x1,200 resolution that it starts to struggle. You will also miss out on full-screen anti-aliasing, but it does offer a cheap DualView option.							
5	 <b>PNY Verto GeForce4 Ti 4200</b> 01844 261 872 <a href="http://www.pny.co.uk">www.pny.co.uk</a> <b>LAST MONTH 5</b>	nVidia GeForce4 Ti 4200	64MB	yes	350MHz	no	2,048x1,536	8.0x	yes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £145 ex VAT</li> <li>• 5-year warranty</li> <li>• First review Dec 02</li> </ul>	PNY uses a GeForce4 Ti 4200 chip. While it's a good performer its high price and low 64MB of DDR RAM leave it bringing up the rear. As a bonus it has a five-year warranty, but of the mid-range cards the Aeolus is a more polished performer.							

## Buying advice: flat-panel displays

Expect to pay around £250-£300 ex VAT for a 15in flat-panel as opposed to around £450 for a 17in display. Bear in mind that the actual screen size is about an inch more than on CRT (cathode ray tube) monitors because the image goes right to the edge. If you purchase a model with a DVI (digital visual interface) connector it'll

ensure future compatibility with graphics cards. Buying a flat-panel with a built-in USB hub will make it easier to connect peripherals such as printers, scanners, and digital cameras.

Watch out for dead pixels. Many flat-panels (particularly older or budget models) that conform to IS13406-2 class 2 or 3 standard have a few defective pixels that, on an entirely black background, will

show up as white or coloured spots. Only a class 1 category display (such as the CTX S530) is guaranteed free of pixels – and that's for 101 days only.

Where strong audio quality isn't a must, built-in speakers will give you adequate sound while keeping desk clutter to a minimum. Some flat-panels also have pivot support, allowing the screen to rotate 90 degrees.