

TOP 10 POWER & BUDGET NOTEBOOKS

		Power notebooks	Processor	RAM	Dimensions (wxhxd)	Battery type	Screen size	
			Dual-speed	Hard disk capacity	Weight		Max resolution	
1		Acer TravelMate 800 0870 900 2237 www.acer.co.uk LAST MONTH 1	• £1,399 ex VAT	1.6GHz Intel Pentium M	256MB	330x272x30mm	lithium-ion	15in
			• 2-year onsite, 1-year international warranty	Speedstep	40GB			2.6kg
			WorldBench 4		126			
2		Hi-Grade Ultinote M6600-2500 020 8532 6100 www.higrade.com LAST MONTH 2	• £1,500 ex VAT	2.5GHz Intel Mobile Pentium 4	512MB	331x284x47mm	lithium-ion	15in
			• 3-year international, collect & return warranty	Speedstep	80GB			3.4kg
			WorldBench 4		119			
3		Dell Inspiron 8500 0870 152 4699 www.dell.co.uk LAST MONTH 3	• £1,500 ex VAT	2.4GHz Intel Mobile Pentium 4	512MB	276x361x39mm	lithium-ion	15.4in
			• 3-year onsite warranty	Speedstep	40GB			3kg
			WorldBench 4		117			
4		Sony Vaio PCG-Z1SP 0870 542 4424 www.vaio.sony-europe.com NEW	• £1,701 ex VAT	1.5GHz Intel Pentium M	512MB	316x247x39mm	lithium-ion	14.1in
			• 1-year return-to-base warranty	Speedstep	60GB			2.1kg
			WorldBench 4		118			
5		Asus M2N 0870 755 4747 www.scan.co.uk LAST MONTH 4	• £1,599 ex VAT	1.6GHz Intel Pentium M	512MB	306x246x22mm	lithium-ion	14.1in
			• 2-year collect & return warranty	Speedstep	40GB			2.2kg
			WorldBench 4		112			

		Budget notebooks	Processor	RAM	Dimensions (wxhxd)	Battery type	Screen size	
			Dual-speed	Hard disk capacity	Weight		Max resolution	
1		Rock Agenda XP 0870 990 8888 www.rockdirect.com LAST MONTH 1	• £999 ex VAT	AMD Athlon XP Mobile 2200+	256MB	328x283x27mm	lithium-ion	15in
			• 3-year collect-and-return warranty	PowerNow	30GB			3.1kg
			WorldBench 4		121			
2		Rock Xeno SP 0870 990 8888 www.rockdirect.com NEW	• £899 ex VAT	2.66GHz Intel Pentium 4	512MB	305x270x25mm	lithium-ion	14.1in
			• 3-year collect-and-return warranty	no	40GB			2.4kg
			WorldBench 4		118			
3		Multivision Ionix XT 0870 066 0882 www.multivision.co.uk LAST MONTH 2	• £999 ex VAT	2.53GHz Intel Pentium 4	512MB	332x281x40mm	lithium-ion	15in
			• 1-year collect-and-return warranty	no	60GB			3.4kg
			WorldBench 4		115			
4		Toshiba Tecra S1 0870 444 8944 www.toshiba.co.uk LAST MONTH 3	• £999 ex VAT	1.3GHz Intel Pentium M	256MB	312x274x37mm	lithium-ion	14.1in
			• 3-year international onsite warranty	Speedstep	30GB			2.5kg
			WorldBench 4		115			
5		Advent 7018 0870 546 4464 www.pcworld.co.uk LAST MONTH 4	• £1,191 ex VAT	2GHz Intel Mobile Pentium 4	512MB	260x352x30mm	lithium-ion	15.2in
			• 1-year collect & return warranty	Speedstep	60GB			2.7kg
			WorldBench 4		109			

Buying advice: notebooks

- Processor If you want a machine to use on the go then a mobile chip is a must. Centrino (Pentium M) is Intel's latest offering, while AMD targets its Mobile Athlon 4 at users that want to maximise battery life. At the Power end of the market look for at least a 1.8GHz chip. Bear in mind that although Pentium M runs at a slower clock speed (maximum

of 1.6GHz) it's one of the fastest chips available. For Budget machines, Intel's Pentium 4 chip is rapidly taking over the PIII while AMD's Mobile Athlon 4 is also strong. Ensure your CPU is at least 1.2GHz.

- Memory RAM is also important as it ensures smooth performance. Power notebooks should have at least 256MB of RAM, with 512MB a preferable amount. Buyers investing in a Budget model can settle for 256MB.

- Hard drive Since notebook users tend not to load their hard disks with huge applications, 30GB of space should be fine on both categories.

- Screen To maximise portability, opt for a 13in screen. A 15in display will increase the model's size and weight but, as these offer almost as much workspace as a 17in CRT, such a move will pay dividends in terms of productivity. You can usually plug in an external monitor for use in the office

Graphics card Memory	DVD read rate	CD-RW read/write/ rewrite rate	Operating system, software and extras	Comments
ATI Mobility Radeon 9000 64MB	8x	24x/10x/8x	Windows XP Professional	Intel's Centrino platform encompasses a Pentium-M chip, 855 chipset and wireless LAN facilities. The technology is known for its portability and long battery life, but the lightweight Acer is also a speedy model with excellent graphics facilities. In terms of actual viewing area the crisp 15in TFT screen is only 0.5in or so shy of the space offered by a bulky 17in CRT monitor.
nVidia GeForce4 440 Go 64MB	8x/1x/1x (DVD-RW)	24x/16x/10x	Windows XP Home	The Ultinote is built around Intel's Mobile P4 2.5GHz chip. Rather than compromising on quality to achieve this, though, the M6600-2500 houses top-notch components. At £1,500 it's expensive, but you get what you pay for. At just a few WorldBench points behind the record-breaking TravelMate, the Ultinote grabs its well-deserved Recommended award.
nVidia GeForce4 4200 Go 64MB	8x	24x/24x/10x	Windows XP Home, Microsoft Works 7.0, Panda antivirus	The Inspiron 8500 is a striking notebook, not least because of its massive footprint. Its larger-than-average size is down to its widescreen 15.4in TFT display and, combined with an impressive resolution of 1,920x1,200, the Dell is perfect for multimedia-hungry movie fans. The 8500 is also a sleek performer, while its three-year onsite warranty offers peace of mind.
ATI Mobility Radeon 16MB	8x	24x/8x/4x	Windows XP Professional	The PCG-Z1SP looks good and, though its performance is not outstanding, it's perfectly adequate for everyday use. This notebook could be an outright desktop replacement and, at a lightweight 2.1kg, could just as easily adapt to life on the road. The £1,701 ex VAT price tag may be steep, but you're getting top quality for your money.
Intel 855GM 64MB	8x	24x/24x/16x	Windows XP Professional	The Asus M2N is a dedicated business model that hits the spot between good functionality and true mobility. It's expensive but a great choice for road warriors who demand true performance and mobility. If you want a larger entertainment model that you'll keep at home then look elsewhere, but for mobile business the Asus is a good buy.

Graphics card Memory	DVD read rate	CD-RW read/write/ rewrite rate	Operating system, software and extras	Comments
ATI Mobility Radeon 9000 32MB	8x	24x/8x/8x	Windows XP Home	Mobile processors, like the Athlon XP Mobile 2200+ housed in the Rock, use less power than standard chips which means that battery life lasts longer. Combine this with a slimline case and a weight of 3.1kg and the Agenda is ideal if you regularly use your notebook on the train. With a price tag of just £999, Rock deserves our Best Buy award.
onboard 32MB	8x	24x/24x/10x	Windows XP Home Ability Office 2002	Matching portability with performance, the Xeno SP is a true all-rounder. Although the lack of Bluetooth and wireless LAN capabilities is disappointing, not everyone needs them. The Rock may not be the prettiest notebook on the market but it's easy to carry around and has a good battery life. A worthy winner of our Recommended award.
ATI Mobility Radeon 9000 64MB	8x	24x/8x/8x	Windows XP Home	Multivision's Ionix offers a high-quality 15in screen with a maximum resolution of 1,280x1,024 and an ATI Mobility Radeon 9000 graphics card. Together these components provide an excellent display. The Ionix is lightweight yet sturdy and offers a decent combination of performance and features, while coming in at a relatively low £999.
ATI Mobility Radeon 9000 32MB	8x	n/a	Windows XP Professional	The Tecra offers a solid performance, but there are plenty of notebooks better equipped to handle Windows apps. It does, however, boast long battery life while its low weight and Wi-Fi features will make it a good acquisition for the executive on the move. With its three-figure frame rates, the 32MB ATI Mobility Radeon 9000 graphics engine will please gamers.
nVidia GeForce4 440 Go 64MB	8x	24x/8x/8x	Windows XP Home, Microsoft Works Suite, Wireless LAN	Advent PCs tend to be low-cost, first-time-buyer systems but this budget notebook breaks the mould. The 7018 combines great features and specifications at a reasonable price. It is let down by the miserly one-year warranty, but it's still a good machine. If you're after a home entertainment notebook then it's well worth investigating.

so, depending on where you'll use your notebook, a large screen may not be essential. All our Budget models offer 1,024x768 resolution and 32bit colour. Resolutions beyond this are possible but they sometimes can't display all the information – you'll end up scrolling around the screen to view all of a document.

- Graphics Notebook graphics tend to be a step behind the desktop market, but if you're after good 3D performance then

look for nVidia's GeForce4 Go or ATI's Mobility Radeon chips. At the Budget end, onboard graphics with user-definable RAM are the most popular choice. They use system memory that can often be pushed up to 64MB, but can be minimised if you want to enhance other functions. You might be able to track down a standalone card, though, as they're becoming more common at this price point.

→ The Acer TravelMate is a lightweight but speedy model with excellent graphics facilities

