

TOP 10 PERSONAL PRINTERS

		Colour inkjet printers	Max paper size	Max resolution	Quoted print speed	Actual print speed	Dimensions (wxdxh)	Supported interface types	Ink costs	Print life (pages)
	1 Canon Bubble Jet i850 0870 514 3723 www.canon.co.uk LAST MONTH 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £140 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • First review Apr 03 	A4	4,800x1,200dpi	B=22ppm C=14ppm	B=9ppm C=7ppm	418x274x159mm	USB 2.0, parallel	B=£10 C=£8	B=330 C=460
		Canon delivers on all fronts – speed, quality and ink nozzle technology – but it doesn't come cheap. The i850 is loaded with a generous software bundle, supports USB as well as parallel and is quiet across all print jobs. The Best Buy's forte, though, is high-res photo printing where it produces detailed and natural-coloured images.								
	2 Epson Stylus C62 0800 220 546 www.epson.co.uk LAST MONTH 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £65 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • First review Nov 02 	A4	1,440x720dpi	B=14ppm C=13.9ppm	B=7ppm C=5ppm	480x260x181mm	USB, parallel	B=£23 C=£19	B=640 C=300
		The low-maintenance Epson offers a top combination of low price, good-quality output and cheap running costs. All our printing tests above draft mode yielded great results and in speedy times, although if you'll be using the C62 for photo printing it's best to invest in some high-quality paper. Ideal for first-time buyers.								
	3 Canon Bubble Jet i70 0870 514 3723 www.canon.co.uk LAST MONTH 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £189 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • First review Jun 03 	A4	4,800x1,200dpi	B=13ppm C=9ppm	B=5ppm C=3ppm	310x174x52mm	USB 2.0	B=£13 C=£20	B=390 C=100
		The Bubble Jet i70 may be the most expensive model in our chart but it offers something other inkjet printers don't: portability. The beautifully designed Canon weighs only 1.8kg, making it the perfect travelling companion. Text and photo quality is great, although we don't recommend this model for heavy-duty use.								
	4 Epson Stylus C82 0800 220 546 www.epson.co.uk LAST MONTH 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £101 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • First review Jun 03 	A4	5,760x1,440dpi	B=22ppm C=11ppm	B=9ppm C=5ppm	470x301x237mm	USB 2.0, parallel	B=£26 C=£12	B=1,240 C=420
		The compact Stylus C82 sports an optimised resolution of 5,760x1,440dpi but end users don't have any control over settings – you choose the paper type, select the print mode and the C82 decides on a resolution for you. We would have liked speedier print times and photo prints could have been more vibrant.								
	5 HP DeskJet 6122 0870 547 4747 www.hp.com LAST MONTH 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £123 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • First review Jun 03 	A4	1,200x1,200dpi	B=20ppm C=13ppm	B=9ppm C=6ppm	454x378x184mm	USB 2.0 parallel	B=£28 C=£31	B=833 C=450
		The 6122 is a business inkjet with plenty of features designed to cope with heavy-duty output. Given the DeskJet's target market, there's no photo-configuration controls and it copes badly with photo-quality output. Print jobs are okay across the board as long as you stay away from draft mode.								

		Mono laser printers	Memory installed maximum	Resolution hardware software	Quoted A4 print speed	Actual print speed	Dimensions (wxdxh)	Supported interface types	Cost of toner	Print life (pages)
	1 Brother HL-5050 0870 830 4000 www.brother.co.uk LAST MONTH 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £206 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • First review Jun 03 	16MB 144MB	600x600dpi 2,400x600dpi	16ppm	14ppm	382x383x252mm	USB 2.0, parallel	£52	6,500
		Though designed for heavy-duty use, Brother's HL-5050 has a price tag that puts smaller home-based printers to shame and has generous running costs to boot. It might not offer the best print quality, but when it comes to performance and value for money the HL-5050 wins our Best Buy award hands down.								
	2 HP LaserJet 1150 0870 547 4747 www.hp.com LAST MONTH 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £189 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • First review Jun 03 	8MB 8MB	600x600dpi 1,200x1,200dpi	17ppm	16ppm	415x486x241mm	USB 2.0, parallel	£65	2,500
		HP's low-end mono laser is in direct competition with Canon's LaserShot LBP-1210. The LaserJet 1150, however, managed to beat its rival on price and running costs while having slightly faster print speeds. We were sceptical about HP's claimed print speed of 17ppm but our test results speak for themselves.								
	3 Canon LaserShot LBP-1210 08705 143 723 www.canon.co.uk LAST MONTH 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £186 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • First review Jun 03 	2MB 2MB	600x600dpi 2,400x600dpi	14ppm	13ppm	388x254x259mm	USB, 2.0, parallel	£66	2,500
		The LBP-1210 produces sharp black text and everything from installation to selecting printing options is easily done. Its maximum resolution helps produce clear text and graphics output. While we couldn't reach the LaserShot's claimed print speed of 14ppm, it remains fast when printing at higher resolutions.								
	4 Lexmark T420dn 0870 444 0044 www.lexmark.co.uk LAST MONTH 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £537 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • First review Jun 03 	32MB 288MB	600x600dpi 1,200x1,200dpi	22ppm	20ppm	406x425x258mm	USB 2.0, parallel	£69	5,000
		Lexmark's mid-range mono laser solution isn't cheap but it crams in pretty much every feature you could possibly need, making the T420dn a good, if expensive, buy. This network-ready model is built to print black text documents quickly and it does the job well – ideal for small offices with high demands.								
	5 Lexmark E320 0870 444 0044 www.lexmark.co.uk RE-ENTRY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £239 ex VAT • 1-year warranty • First review Sep 02 	4MB 68MB	600x600dpi n/a	16ppm	13ppm	380x362x221mm	USB parallel	£69	3,000
		The E320 delivers exceptional speed and image quality for a low price. It operates more like an inkjet than a laser printer thanks, in part, to the rear-mounted paperfeed. It's in performance that this unit shines: graphics and text reproduction is clean and precise at 600dpi and print speeds stay close to 13ppm.								

Buying advice: colour inkjet printers

For a good mid-range printer we'd suggest paying around £100; there's no point in spending over this amount if you only want to print text documents. However, if you're after photo-quality output you'll need to spend more.

When choosing a model, make sure it'll connect to your PC. A lot of printers

still come with a parallel connection but that's being phased out in favour of USB as it's easier to install and quicker to use.

If you're only printing text or graphics there's not much point in printing beyond 600x600dpi for the best results. Photo printing will require a minimum resolution of 1,200x1,200dpi (dots per inch).

Speed depends on the resolution at which you're printing. On average, 6ppm

(pages per minute) or higher in mono and 3.5ppm or higher in colour are good. But remember that many manufacturers quote print speeds far in excess of what the hardware is capable of.

Always check the page coverage and expected print life of ink cartridges. If you have a mid-range inkjet you shouldn't pay more than 4p per page for black printing or 7p per page for colour.