

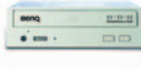









# Top 10 CD drives & DVD writers

			CD drives	Interface type	Average access time	Read/write/rewrite rate	Dimensions (wxdxh)	Internal/external	Weight	Packet writing and burning software	
PC ADVISOR BEST BUY	1		<b>Teac CD-W552E</b> 0870 700 7350 www.insight.com Last month 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £39 inc VAT</li><li>• 2-year warranty</li><li>• First review Jun 03</li></ul>	EIDE	100ms	52x/52x/24x	149x198 x42mm	internal	1kg	InCD, Nero Express
					2MB						
					The Teac took one minute 46 seconds to burn a CD-R and less than three mins to burn a CD-RW, making it the fastest CD writer we've seen in the Test Centre to date. The Intelligent Speed Control determines the highest writing speed available without risking errors, so you won't end up with an unusable disc.						
PC ADVISOR RECOMMENDED	2		<b>Asus CRW-5224A</b> 0870 443 0880 www.asus.com Last month 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £31 inc VAT</li><li>• 2-year warranty</li><li>• First review Feb 03</li></ul>	EIDE	100ms	52x/52x/24x	149x197 x42mm	internal	1kg	InCD, Ahead Nero 5.5
					2MB						
					The Asus offers competitive write and rewrite rates a few seconds behind those of the Teac. Burning errors are kept at bay with Partial-CAV technology that writes the outer and inner parts of the disc at different optimal speeds. Ahead's Nero 5.5 is bundled with a generous number of blank CD-R and CD-RWs.						
3		<b>Benq CRW 5232P</b> 0870 467 0753 www.benq.co.uk Last month 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £29 inc VAT</li><li>• 2-year warranty</li><li>• First review Feb 04</li></ul>	EIDE	80ms	52x/52x/32x	146x198 x42mm	internal	1kg	InCD, Nero Express	
				2MB							
				After an £11 price drop last month, Benq has cut a further £1 off its CRW 5232P. It slightly disappointed by failing to match its quoted speeds though Ahead Software's Nero Express has been bundled with the Benq drive making burning CDs a doddle. Average access time is an impressive 80ms.							
4		<b>MSI CR52-M</b> 0870 755 4747 www.msi.com.tw Last month 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £29 inc VAT</li><li>• 1-year warranty</li><li>• First review Feb 04</li></ul>	EIDE	90ms	52x/52x/32x	149x176 x42mm	internal	1kg	InCD, Ahead Nero 5.5	
				2MB							
				The MSI CR52-M shares the cheaper price tag but we were rather disappointed by the speed at which it burned CD-R discs – a far cry from its claimed capabilities. The 2MB data buffer and average access time of 90ms are good and Ahead Software's Nero 5.5 is a welcome inclusion.							
5		<b>Plextor Plexwriter Premium</b> 01932 828 828 www.plextor.com Last month 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £81 inc VAT</li><li>• 2-year warranty</li><li>• First review Dec 03</li></ul>	EIDE	65ms	52x/52x/32x	149x198 x42mm	internal	1kg	InCD, Ahead Nero 5.5	
				8MB							
				While the Premium is the most expensive drive in the chart, its hefty feature set puts other drives in the shade. The drive boasts the quickest rewrite rate we have seen and is bundled with some excellent software. If you're after full control over every manual configuration then this is a great buy.							

			DVD writers	Drive type	Interface type	CD-RW read/write/rewrite speeds	DVD read/write/rewrite speeds	Average access time	Burning software includes
PC ADVISOR BEST BUY	1		<b>Teac DV-W50DK</b> 0870 700 7350 www.insight.com Last month 1	• £113 inc VAT • 2-year warranty • First review Feb 04	DVD-R/+R/-RW /+RW	EIDE	32x/16x/10x 12x/4x/4x (DVD-ROM/-R/+R) 2x/2.4x (DVD-RW/+RW)	160ms	Ahead Nero 5.5, Pinnacle Studio
	The combination of a low price, steady performance and great features means the Teac is a worthy Best Buy winner. It's a speedy drive: writing 3GB of data to both DVD+R and DVD-R discs in very impressive times. There's a great software bundle and the warranty is equally generous, lasting two years.								
	PC ADVISOR RECOMMENDED	2		<b>Benq DW800A</b> 0870 467 0753 www.benq.co.uk Last month 2	• £99 inc VAT • 2-year warranty • First review Feb 04	DVD+R/+RW	EIDE	40x/24x/10x 12x/8x (DVD-ROM/+R) 4x (+RW)	160ms
The Benq jumps to second place this month due to its generous £41 price drop. The DW800A only writes to DVD+R/+RW, so you won't be able to burn or read DVD-R/-RW discs. But in our tests DVD+R/+RW proved itself more than a match for DVD-R/-RW, consistently scoring the fastest burn times.									
3			<b>Asus DRW-0402 P/D</b> 0870 443 0880 www.asus.com Last month 3	• £113 inc VAT • 2-year warranty • First review Feb 04	DVD-R/+R/-RW /+RW	EIDE	32x/16x/10x 12x/4x/4x (DVD-ROM/-R/+R) 2x/2.4x (DVD-RW/+RW)	140ms	Ahead Nero 5.5,
The Asus matches the price of the Teac, but it just lags behind in terms of burning speed. Still this is an excellent choice. A 2MB data buffer isn't the biggest in the chart but should prove adequate to prevent errors in the burning process. The Ahead Nero 5.5 software bundle is also a great addition.									
4		<b>LG Super Multi DVD Writer Plus GSA-4040B</b> 0870 607 5544 www.lge.co.uk Last month 4	• £99 inc VAT • 2-year warranty • First review Oct 03	DVD-R/+R/-RW /+RW/-RAM	EIDE	32x/24x/16x 12x/4x/4x (DVD-ROM/-R/+R) 2x/2.4x/3x (DVD-RW/+RW/-RAM)	145ms	B's Recorder Gold5, NeoDVD	
The LG isn't the fastest DVD writer despite having quad-speed DVD+R facilities – it copied our 3GB test files in 17 mins 34 secs. However, the ease-of-use afforded by DVD-RAM makes the LG a top choice for those who value flexibility and seamless recording above speed. Its price drop takes it to fourth place.									
5		<b>Sony DRU-510A</b> 0870 243 0056 www.sony-cp.com Last month 5	• £165 inc VAT • 1-year warranty • First review Nov 03	DVD-R/+R/-RW /+RW	EIDE	32x/24x/16x 12x/4x/4x (DVD-ROM/-R/+R) 2x/4x (DVD-RW/+RW)	200ms	RecordNow DX, Sonic MyDVD	
It may have dropped to fifth place, being the most expensive in the chart, but the Sony's performance still makes it excellent value. This model is capable of writing 3GB test files to a DVD+RW in just 16 mins 31 secs, while the bundled Veritas titles offer a host of facilities from data backup to advanced video editing.									

## Buying advice

### DVD writers

• **DVD-R** This write-once standard, first developed in 1997, has a capacity of 4.7GB and offers the best compatibility with DVD-ROM drives and 'domestic' DVD players. It is recognised by the DVD Forum, a consortium of companies that designed the original DVD standard, and tends to be the cheapest format.

• **DVD-RW** This is also recognised by the DVD Forum. Its 4.7GB discs are reusable up to 1,000 times, although they aren't as compatible as DVD-Rs.

• **DVD+RW** Rewritable format not endorsed by the Forum. Its 4.7GB discs offer 1,000 rewrites and good compatibility. DVD+R is the write-once equivalent, and offers perhaps the highest overall write speeds.

• **DVD-RAM** The DVD-RAM format is rewritable, best suited to data use and recognised by the DVD Forum.

The discs are rewritable 100,000 times but are housed in a caddy so they aren't very compatible.

Single-sided discs store 4.7GB while double-sided ones store 9.4GB. The great thing about DVD-RAM is that it's extremely easy to use – after installation, you can drag and drop files to DVD-RAM media just as you would with a floppy disk.

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