MONOCHROME LASER AND COLOUR INKJET PRINTERS

Monochrome laser printers — Details	Last month's position	First reviewed	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Installed/ maximum memory	Maximum resolution	Software resolution	Actual print speed	Dimensions (width x depth x height)	Interface type(s)	Toner costs	Print life (pages)
1 Brother HL-1650 0161 931 2354 www.brother.co.uk	1	Sept 01	£519	1-year	8MB/ 136MB	600x 600dpi	1,200x 1,200dpi	13ppm	406x424x 275mm	USB, parallel	£51	6,500
2 Epson EPL-5900 0800 220 546 www.epson.co.uk	2	Apr 02	£269	1-year	8MB/ 136MB	1,200x 1,200dpi	1,200x 1,200dpi	11ppm	399x435x 265mm	USB, parallel	£70	6,000
3 Kyocera Mita FS-1000+ 01189 230 789 www.kyocera.co.uk	3	Sept 01	£299	2-year	4MB/ 132MB	600x 600dpi	1,200x 1,200dpi	11ppm	378x375x 222mm	parallel	£54	6,000
4 Brother HL-1450 0161 931 2354 www.brother.co.uk	4	May 02	£279	1-year	8MB/ 36MB	1,200x 600dpi	1,200x 600dpi	9ppm	360x370x 235mm	USB, parallel	£51	6,000
5 HP LaserJet 1220 0870 547 4747 www.hp.com/uk	5	May 02	£385	1-year	8MB/ 72MB	1,200x 1,200dpi	1,200x 1,200dpi	14ppm	415x487x 417mm	USB 2.0	£57	3,500

Colour inkjet printers — Details	Last month's position	First reviewed	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Installed/ maximum memory	Maximum resolution	Quoted print speed	Actual print speed	Dimensions (width x depth x height)	Interface type(s)	Ink costs	Print life (pages)
1 Canon Bubble Jet S630 0870 616 417 www.canon.co.uk	1	Dec 01	£160	1-year	N/A	2,400x 1,200dpi	B=17ppm C=12ppm	B=9ppm C=4ppm	430x177x 294mm	USB, parallel	B=£9 C=£21	B=310 C=390
2 HP PhotoSmart P1215 0870 547 4747 www.hp.com/uk	2	Dec 01	£175	1-year	N/A	2,400x 1,200dpi	B=15ppm C=12ppm	B=9ppm C=3ppm	440x204x 375mm	USB, parallel	B=£23 C=£28	B=830 C=450
3 Lexmark Z55 Color Jetprinter 0870 444 0044 www.lexmark.co.uk	3	Jul 02	£84	1-year	N/A	3,600x 600dpi	B=17ppm C=13ppm	B=9ppm C=7.5ppm	440x318x 197mm	USB, parallel	B=£26 C=£22	B=600 C=450
4 Lexmark Z35 Color Jetprinter 0870 444 0044 www.lexmark.co.uk	NEW	Aug 02	£50	1-year	N/A	2,400x 1,200dpi	B=11ppm C=6ppm	B=5.4ppm C=2.6ppm	445x206x 130mm	USB	B=£22 C=£19	B=410 C=275
5 Epson Stylus Photo 950 0800 220 546 www.epson.co.uk	NEW	Aug 02	£323	1-year	N/A	2,880x 1,440dpi	B=8.8ppm C=8.5ppm	B=6.4ppm C=5.4ppm	515x333x 209mm	USB, parallel	B=£8.55 C=£8.35	B=370 C=440

MONOCHROME LASER PRINTERS

1 Brother HL-1650

PC ADVISOR BEST BUY

At 14.5kg the Best Buy Brother HL-1650 is a large device, but it's well-built and sturdy so it should cope with a heavy workload. It comes complete with a built-in duplex unit – a bonus if you need to carry out double-sided printing, which can be both more economical and professional-looking. There's a 250-sheet input tray on the front, which feeds through to a 150-sheet output tray on the top of the unit. Considering the HL-1650's price, the maximum resolution of 600x600dpi (dots per inch) isn't high, but text is crisp and it churns out up to 13ppm (pages per minute). Toner spread is uniform with no streaking, even on graphics and images. This is also a cheap printer to run, costing just under a penny a page.

COLOUR INKJET PRINTERS

1 Canon Bubble Jet S630

PC ADVISOR BEST BUY

The Bubble Jet S630 continues to shine at the top of our chart with its combination of high print speed and good-quality output. It's in terms of performance, though, that the Canon distinguishes itself from the crowd. Its full-colour prints are flawless and well defined due to the MicroFine Droplet technology, which delivers microscopic ink droplets (measuring five billionths of a millimetre) on to the paper.

The text output may not match that of a laser printer, but the S630 remains as clean as any inkjet's. A small niggle is that, with the Canon's slightly high price tag, you might expect lower running costs. Having said that, the rates of 2.9p and 5.4p for a page of mono and colour respectively are still far from excessive.

MONOCHROME LASER PRINTERS

2 Epson EPL-5900

RECOMMENDED PC ADVISOR

Laser printers may be known for their clean output, but it's still rare to see a sub-£300 model that offers resolution support above 600x600dpi (dots per inch). Not afraid to break away from the crowd, Epson has produced a tremendous printer capable of achieving 1,200dpi. The EPL-5900 achieves a print speed of 11ppm (pages per minute) at 600x600dpi, which is only bettered by the HP LaserJet 1220. At just £269, the EPL-5900 delivers a fine performance, winning our recommendation.

3 Kyocera Mita FS-1000+

The Mita FS-1000+ may not be the cheapest printer in the chart, but its top-notch performance is comparable to that of a much more expensive model. The Kyocera boasts a consistently good combination of speed and quality, beating all the competition on time to print the first page of each job. A final bonus is that it's economical, offering very cheap running costs.

4 Brother HL-1450

Brother gets another chart entry with the low-cost HL-1450. It might not have the speed to match its rivals, but it's easy to use and has low running costs. Despite the decent maximum resolution of 1,200x600dpi (dots per inch) we got mixed results from our print tests. At 300dpi printing is good, but the default setting when printing at 1,200x600dpi is extremely dark. The HL-1450's print speed of 9ppm (pages per minute) proves that it's not a speed demon, but the Brother is still a great budget option.

5 HP LaserJet 1220

If you can get over the LaserJet's high price and running costs, this versatile printer could be a good choice. Though not labelled as a multifunction device, it does have an additional scanner and copier facility. The maximum resolution of 1,200x1,200dpi (dots per inch) is complemented by a quoted print speed of 14ppm (pages per minute). Unfortunately the 1220 loses points for its toner, which is expensive and only lasts for 3,500 pages, so running this printer is almost twice as costly as some of the competition.

COLOUR INKJET PRINTERS

2 HP PhotoSmart P1215

RECOMMENDED PC ADVISOR

HP's PhotoSmart P1215 holds at number two this month, setting a high standard for all-round excellence. It comes complete with memory card slots, allowing you to print out your digital camera snaps without the need to connect to a PC. It supports CompactFlash, SmartMedia and IBM Microdrive cards. The incredibly detailed control panel is also superior, giving instant access to its many options. The PhotoSmart offers outstanding performance, with vibrant graphics and clean character definition, and its actual print speeds are reasonable. The installation routine will also be welcomed by printer newcomers – it has videos and tutorials to get you up and running.

3 Lexmark Z55 Color Jetprinter

The Z55 may at first glance seem overshadowed by the its cheaper sibling, the £50 Z35, but it offers better performance and cheaper total cost of ownership – in fact, at 4.9p a page, colour printing is cheaper than on more expensive models. At top speed, the Lexmark Z55 can generate 9ppm (pages per minute) of text and 7.5ppm of colour graphics. The printer supports a resolution of 3,600x1,200dpi (dots per inch) on glossy media, or 3,600x600dpi using standard paper, but image quality doesn't justify this.

4 Lexmark Z35 Color Jetprinter

NEW

Lexmark is renowned for offering low-cost inkjet printers and the Z35 is no exception. But despite a £50 price tag it is a competent performer, with print speeds of 5.4 and 2.6ppm for mono and colour respectively, although to get the best results you have to opt for the top resolution setting of 2,400x1,200dpi, which slows things down quite a bit. What stops it from coming higher in our chart is the poor build quality, which struck us as distinctly flimsy, and the fact that it doesn't come with the USB cable necessary to connect it to your PC.

5 Epson Stylus Photo 950

NEW

It is perhaps unfair that the Epson should languish at the bottom of our chart as its position is due entirely to its relatively high price. But as with everything you get what you pay for and this printer is perfect if you want top-quality printouts. It is aimed at the professional market and image quality is fantastic in the highest-quality modes, and the high resolution support (2,880dpi) and glossy paper makes a resounding impression. Times aren't too poor either, and even at the highest-quality settings it takes less than five minutes for a page to print.