

TOP 10 POWER AND BUDGET NOTEBOOKS

Power notebooks		Last month's position	First reviewed	World-Bench 2000	Price	Warranty	Processor type/clock speed	RAM	Hard disk capacity	Modem	Network card	Dimensions (width x depth x height)	Weight	Screen size/type	Maximum resolution	Graphics card	Graphics memory	Dual-speed processor	DVD drive speed	Internal/external floppy disk drive	CD-RW read/write/rewrite rate	Battery type	Operating system & other extras
1	Dell Inspiron 8100 0870 907 5668 www.dell.co.uk	1	Oct 01	210	£1,999	1-year collect & return	Intel Mobile Pentium III/ 1.13GHz-M	256MB	48GB	56K	Y	326x276x44mm	3.3kg	15in/TFT	1,600x1,200	nVidia GeForce2 Go	32MB	Intel Speedstep	6x (combo drive)	internal	24x/4x/4x (combo drive)	lithium-ion	Windows 2000 Professional, Microsoft Office XP SBE
2	Samsung GT9000+ 020 8862 9311 www.samsung.com	2	Nov 01	193	£1,999	1-year collect & return	Intel Mobile Pentium III/ 1.13GHz	256MB	30GB	56K	Y	325x269x37mm	3.2kg	15in/TFT	1,280x1,024	ATI Radeon Mobility	16MB	Intel Speedstep	8x (combo drive)	internal	24x/8x/4x (combo drive)	lithium-ion	Windows 2000 Professional, Norton AntiVirus
3	Fujitsu Celsius Mobile A 01344 475 555 www.fujitsu-siemems.co.uk	NEW	Jan 02	212	£2,411	3-year parts & labour	Intel Mobile Pentium III/ 1.13GHz	256MB	30GB	56K	Y	340x278x40mm	3.1kg	15in/TFT	1,400x1,050	ATI Mobility Radeon M6	32MB	Intel Speedstep	8x	internal	24x/12x/4x	lithium-ion	Windows Me, Easy CD Creator
4	Pico Professional 0870 729 6199 www.picosystems.co.uk	3	Nov 01	192	£1,475	1-year return to base	Intel Pentium III flip chip/ 1GHz	512MB	30GB	56K	Y	358x280x50mm	4.2kg	15.1in/TFT	1,400x1,050	ATI 3D Rage Pro	16MB	N/A	8x	internal	N/A	lithium-ion	Windows 2000
5	Hi-Grade UltiNote AS8400-1000 020 8532 6111 www.higrade.com	4	Jun 01	167	£1,199	1-year collect & return	Intel Mobile Pentium III/ 1GHz	192MB	20GB	56K	Y	310x256x35mm	3kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	S3 Savage MX 2X AGP	8MB	Intel Speedstep	8x	internal	N/A	lithium-ion	Windows 2000, MS Work Suite 2001, Norton AntiVirus, Win DVD
Budget notebooks																							
1	Atlas Flyer 3400 1.2T Celeron 020 8532 6111 www.hi-grade.com	NEW	Jan 02	153	£1,099	1-year collect & return	Intel Tualatin Celeron/ 1.2GHz	256MB	30GB	56K	Y	315x256x39mm	2.9kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	Sis 630/730	user definable 8/16/32MB	N/A	8x	internal	40x/6x/4x	lithium-ion	Windows XP, Office XP
2	Hi-Grade Notino T9400 020 8532 6111 www.higrade.com	2	Dec 01	162	£1,249	1-year collect & return	Intel Mobile Pentium III/ 1GHz	256MB	30GB	56K	Y	310x255x29mm	2.2kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	onboard	shared 8/16/32MB	Y	8x	internal	N/A	lithium-ion	Windows Me, Power DVD, McAfee AntiVirus
3	Packard Bell Easy One Silver 3100 01628 508 200 www.packardbell.co.uk	3	Dec 01	148	£1,155	1-year collect & return	Intel Pentium III flip chip/1GHz	256MB	20GB	56K	Y	310x256x40mm	3.4kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	onboard	shared 8/16/32MB	N/A	8x	internal	N/A	NiMH	Windows Me, MGI PhotoSuite, Norton AntiVirus
4	Samsung VM8090 CXTD 020 8862 9311 www.samsung.co.uk	4	Nov 01	125	£949	1-year collect & return	Intel Celeron/ 900MHz	128MB	10GB	56K	Y	316x256x39mm	3.2kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	onboard	shared 8/16/32MB	N/A	8x	internal	N/A	lithium-ion	Windows Me
5	Mesh Discovery 14.1-933 020 8208 4702 www.meshcomputers.com	5	Jun 01	151	£1,039	1-year return to base	Intel Pentium III flip chip/933MHz	256MB	20GB	56K	Y	308x254x38mm	3.2kg	14.1in/TFT	1,024x768	onboard	user definable 8/16/32MB	N/A	8x	internal	N/A	lithium-ion	Windows Me, Microsoft Works, IBM ViaVoice, McAfee AntiVirus

TOP 10 POWER NOTEBOOKS

1 Dell Inspiron 8100

Dell just can't seem to keep off our top slot. The Inspiron 8100 is one of the most worthy winners of a Best Buy award we've ever seen – without doubt the best notebook to pass through our Test Centre. It may not be the most portable notebook around, nor the most stylish, but its speed is absolutely astonishing, making it the first mobile PC to leave many of the fastest desktops for dust.

It is powered by Intel's latest incarnation of the Mobile Pentium III, running at 1.13GHz – the fastest mobile processor on the market today – backed up by 256MB of RAM, 48GB hard drive and 32MB GeForce2 Go graphics card. This outstanding hardware setup won the Inspiron 8100 a WorldBench score of 210. And space is saved by the choice of a DVD-ROM/CD-RW combination drive, offering six-speed DVD playback and quad-speed CD-rewriting.

2 Samsung GT9000+

Samsung's new notebook, which entered the chart a few month's ago, stays at number two. The GT9000+ is the third notebook we've seen using Intel's latest 1.13GHz Mobile Pentium III processor, but a fast CPU is not the only thing that sets the Samsung apart. The shiny gold recessed square, located next to the touchpad, is for fingerprint recognition. You may think this is just a gimmick, and for some users this level of security may be overkill. However, if you use your notebook to store sensitive information, ensuring that it's protected from prying eyes is vital – especially if you're a regular traveller.

Thanks to it's nippy processor, 256MB of RAM and 16MB ATI Mobility Radeon graphics card, it reached 193, the third highest score in the WorldBench 2000 test.

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TOP 10 BUDGET NOTEBOOKS

1 Atlas Flyer 3400 1.2T Celeron

Atlas has updated its Flyer notebook and, despite gaining a slightly slower WorldBench 2000 score, it still reached number one in our chart. This model is one of the first to run Windows XP Home, which could explain the slight fall in the WorldBench 2000 performance score from 161 to 153, although this is unlikely to significantly impact on the speed in use of the Flyer. The processor is a 1.2GHz Intel Celeron – again this is a desktop processor, like the flip chip, which means battery life will be reduced and overheating could be a problem, but equally that performance is also higher for a lower price. The rest of the spec of 256MB of RAM, 30GB hard drive and 14.1in screen is the same as its predecessor, but you do get a DVD/CD-RW combo instead of just a DVD-ROM. Software comes courtesy of Office XP. Although not a major upgrade, the Flyer 3400 does enough to keep it at number one and retain the Best Buy award.

2 Hi-Grade Notino T9400

Hi-Grade is renowned for introducing cutting-edge technologies in its notebooks and the Notino T9400 is no exception. Though only a budget model, it backs up powerful specs with original features. The Mobile Pentium III processor, 256MB of SDRAM and 30GB hard drive result in our highest Budget notebook WorldBench score of 162. Hi-Grade has opted for Intel's 815EM integrated graphics, which use between one and 11MB of system memory. The Notino T9400 is a slim 2.2kg model, so the floppy and eight-speed DVD-ROM drives are external, but it does have a 14.1in screen, which can display at resolutions up to 1,024x768.

Another bonus is the removable MP3 that can be slotted into the front of the notebook and holds about an hour's worth of music.

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TOP 10 POWER NOTEBOOKS

3 Fujitsu Celsius Mobile A

Fujitsu has been very security conscious with the Celsius Mobile A. It incorporates a Bios-lock password system, hard disk protection, fingerprint recognition and support for SmartCards. Sadly our review unit was a preproduction model so we couldn't test all of these features.

In our WorldBench 2000 test it scored 212, the highest score so far, thanks to its combination of a 1.13GHz Mobile Pentium III processor and 256MB of RAM. The review unit came with Windows 2000 installed, whereas when it ships it will have Me at this price point, which doesn't tend to turn in such a good score. However, at £2,411 it's expensive, and it's only down to the Celsius' excellent performance and array of features that it makes our chart at all.



4 Pico Professional

Pico's Professional desktop replacement notebook is no oil painting, but it does have a lot to offer. Not least of its qualities is a 1GHz Pentium III flip chip, a massive 512MB of RAM, 30GB hard drive and 16MB ATI 3D Rage Pro graphics card. This hardware setup delivered a WorldBench 2000 score of 192.

The Professional's screen measures 15.1in and manages a maximum resolution of 1,400x1,050. There is a full keyboard, including the numeric keys normally missing from a notebook, plus a floppy drive and eight-speed DVD-ROM drive. If you want a powerful desktop replacement notebook for a good price it's a great choice – if you can put up with its ugly design.



5 Hi-Grade UltiNote AS8400-1000

The Hi-Grade UltiNote moves down to number five this month. However, it still provides high-speed performance thanks to its 1GHz Mobile Pentium III processor, which is twinned with 192MB of RAM. This managed a WorldBench 2000 performance score of 167.

However, its 8MB S3 Savage MX graphics card looks poor in the face of Dell's 32MB GeForce2 Go model, and its 20GB hard drive pales beside the 48GB on offer from the Best Buy.



TOP 10 BUDGET NOTEBOOKS

3 Packard Bell Easy One Silver 3100

The Easy One Silver 3100 takes the number three spot thanks to its impressive specs. With a 1GHz Pentium III flip chip processor, 256MB of SDRAM and 20GB hard drive, this offers home users all they need. However, the WorldBench 2000 score of 148 is low by current standards.

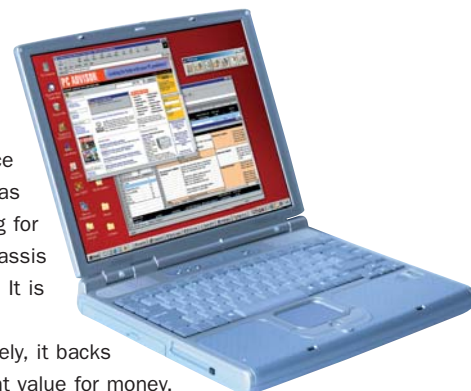
If you want to play DVD movies on the notebook you'll appreciate the 14.1in TFT screen, but the maximum resolution is only 1,024x768. If you want to upgrade to Windows XP the 3100 is a good choice as it comes with an upgrade card that offers the new operating system for £79.



4 Samsung VM8090 CXTD

The majority of Budget notebooks are not the sleekest of products, as costs are cut with design to pack in as much performance as possible. But Samsung has taken a different tack, opting for less power and a prettier chassis on the VM8090 CXTD. It is finished in silver and

metallic blue and, fortunately, it backs up good design with excellent value for money. It may not be the most powerful notebook with a 900MHz Celeron processor, 128MB of RAM and an integrated graphics card that can share up to 16MB of memory, which is reflected by its WorldBench score of 125. But it is plenty fast enough for everyday tasks, and you get a good quality 14.1in TFT screen.



5 Mesh Discovery 14.1-933

This former Best Buy is hanging on in our chart, and is still worth a look.

The Discovery turns in an impressive WorldBench score of 151, with its 933MHz Pentium III flip chip processor and 256MB of RAM aiding its speedy performance.

However, you will need to free some of this RAM to handle graphics; the integrated chip can be allocated up to 32MB of system memory. Mesh's choice of an onboard graphics chip means that images are adequately rendered but aren't of the best standard.

