











TOP 10 POWER & BUDGET NOTEBOOKS

			Power notebooks	Processor Dual-speed	RAM Hard disk capacity	Dimensions (wxdxh) Weight	Battery type	Screen size Max resolution	
1		Acer TravelMate 800 01753 699 200 www.acer.co.uk LAST MONTH 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,550 ex VAT • 2-year onsite, 1-year international warranty • First review May 03 	1.6GHz Intel Pentium M Speedstep	256MB 40GB	330x272x30mm 2.6kg	lithium-ion	15in 1,400x1,050	WorldBench 4 126
2		Hi-Grade Ultinote M6600-2500 020 8532 6100 www.higrade.com NEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,574 ex VAT • 3-year return-to-base warranty • First review Jun 03 	2.5GHz Mobile Pentium 4 Speedstep	512MB 60GB	331x284x47mm 3.4kg	lithium-ion	15in 1,400x1,050	WorldBench 4 121
3		Dell Inspiron 8500 0870 152 4699 www.dell.co.uk NEW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,500 ex VAT • 3-year onsite warranty • First review Jun 03 	2.4GHz Mobile Pentium 4 Speedstep	512MB 40GB	276x361x39mm 3kg	lithium-ion	15in 1,920x1,200	WorldBench 4 113
4		Evesham Voyager 5815 2.4 0870 160 9500 www.evesham.com LAST MONTH 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,500 ex VAT • 2-year return-to-base warranty • First review Spr 03 	2.4GHz Mobile Pentium 4 Speedstep	512MB 60GB	332x280x42mm 3.6kg	lithium-ion	15in 1,024x768	WorldBench 4 119
5		Hi-Grade Ultinote M6400-1800-I 020 8532 6100 www.higrade.com LAST MONTH 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,509 ex VAT • 2-year return-to-base warranty • First review Apr 02 	1.8GHz Pentium 4 no	512MB 40GB	313x263x36mm 2.95kg	lithium-ion	14.1in 1,024x768	WorldBench 4 118

			Budget notebooks	Processor Dual-speed	RAM Hard disk capacity	Dimensions (wxdxh) Weight	Battery type	Screen size Max resolution	
1		Rock Agenda XP 0870 990 8888 www.rockdirect.com LAST MONTH 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £999 ex VAT • 3-year collect-and-return warranty • First review Spr 03 	Athlon XP Mobile 2200+ PowerNow	256MB 30GB	328x283x27mm 3.1kg	lithium-ion	15in 1,400x1,050	WorldBench 4 121
2		Multivision Ionix XT 0870 066 0882 www.multivision.co.uk LAST MONTH 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £999 ex VAT • 1-year collect-and-return warranty • First review Spr 03 	2.53GHz Intel Pentium 4 no	512MB 60GB	332x281x40mm 3.4kg	lithium-ion	15in 1,280x1,024	WorldBench 4 115
3		Toshiba Tecra S1 0870 444 8944 www.toshiba.co.uk LAST MONTH 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £999 ex VAT • 3-year international onsite warranty • First review May 03 	1.3GHz Intel Pentium M Speedstep	256MB 30GB	312x274x37mm 2.5kg	lithium-ion	14.1in 1,024x768	WorldBench 4 115
4		Hi-Grade Notino W6700-2000 020 8532 6100 www.higrade.com LAST MONTH 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,069 ex VAT • 2-year collect-and-return warranty • First review Apr 03 	2GHz Mobile Pentium 4 Speedstep	256MB 40GB	352x260x30mm 2.7kg	lithium-ion	15.2in 1,280x854	WorldBench 4 109
5		Hi-Grade Ultinote M6600-2400 020 8532 6100 www.higrade.com LAST MONTH 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1,299 ex VAT • 2-year collect-and-return warranty • First review Mar 03 	2.4GHz Mobile Pentium 4 Speedstep	512MB 60GB	332x285x35mm 3.4kg	lithium-ion	15.1in 1,280x1,024	WorldBench 4 119

Buying advice: notebooks

- **Processor** If you want a machine to use on the go then a mobile processor is a must. Centrino is Intel's latest offering with AMD targeting 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 Centrino 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. Make sure your processor 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 in 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/8x/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, Microsoft Works 7.0, Panda AntiVirus, PowerDVD	The Ultinote is built around Intel's P4 2.5GHz chip. Rather than compromising on quality to achieve this, though, the M6600-2500 houses top-notch components. At £1,599 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	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.
	nVidia GeForce4 420 Go 32MB	8x	24x/8x/8x	Windows XP Home	Boasting a fast Mobile P4 chip running at an impressive speed of 2.4GHz, the Evesham Voyager achieved a WorldBench 4 score that at the time wouldn't have looked out of place in our Power PC chart. The 15in display and GeForce4 420 Go card means that you can expect crystal-clear output. A robust and speedy notebook, the Evesham's best feature is its price.
	ATI Mobility M6 16MB	8x	24x/8x/4x	Windows XP Home, Microsoft Office XP SBE	Even though its 1.8GHz Mobile Pentium 4 processor is starting to age, let us not forget the Hi-Grade's WorldBench 4 score of 118. Weighing just under 3kg, the Ultinote is also one of the lighter models in our charts. This machine's major flaw lies with the dedicated graphics memory – 16MB is miserly compared to what's on offer from the opposition.

	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 move. With a price tag of just £999, Rock deserves our Best Buy award.
	ATI Mobility Radeon 9000 64MB	8x	24x/8x/8x	Windows XP Home	Multivision's Ionix offers a high-quality 15in screen and an ATI Mobility Radeon 9000 graphics card, which together provide an excellent display. It's lightweight yet sturdy and offers an unbeatable combination of performance and components, while coming in at a pleasingly low £999 ex VAT. This all adds up to a worthy Recommended candidate.
	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 wireless Wi-Fi features 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 too.
	nVidia GeForce 440 Go 64MB	8x	32x/16x/8x	Windows XP Home, Microsoft Works 7.0, McAfee AntiVirus, Nero & PowerDVD	With its magnesium chassis and slimline design the Notino bears more than a passing resemblance to Apple's PowerBook. The 15.2in display is capable of a maximum resolution of 1,280x854 and there's a slot-loading combo DVD/CD-RW drive. The top-notch specs – including a 2GHz Mobile Pentium 4 – unfortunately failed to set our WorldBench test alight, though.
	nVidia GeForce4 420 Go 32MB	8x (1x write, 1x rewrite)	24x/16x/10x	Windows XP Home, Microsoft Works 6.0	With a WorldBench 4 score of 119, the Ultinote is a high-performing machine. It offers decent components and there's even a bundled DVD-RW drive. It's the M6600's price tag of £1,349, which is close to the ceiling of the Budget price range, that stops it achieving a higher chart placing. If cost isn't an issue, this notebook is well worth a look.

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 Power notebook with excellent graphics facilities

