

Canon Digital IXUS 50

PC PRO
A LIST

PRICE £201 (£237 inc VAT)

SUPPLIER www.camerasdirect.co.uk

VERDICT Great image quality, both for stills and video, all wrapped up in a desirable, well-built chassis that slips easily into a pocket. It's packed with features too.

PC PRO
LABS
WINNER



Anyone who used the IXUS 40 might wonder how Canon could possibly improve on it, but that's precisely what the company has done. For starters, it adds handy features such as a USB 2 interface and compatibility with external flash units. Plus, it now has a 5-megapixel rather than 4-megapixel CCD. But it's the quality of the lens that makes or breaks a camera's image quality.

Fortunately, Canon has decades of experience at making lenses, and the 3x optical zoom is impressive given its size. It produced consistently great-quality results – our only complaint is a slight softness at the edges. This is one area where the IXUS 50's arch-rival, the Sony DSC-W5, pulls ahead, being marginally better for general indoor and outdoor shooting. However, the Canon certainly didn't do a bad job: it produced perfectly exposed and nicely

saturated images both indoors and out.

The IXUS is also flexible. The great macro mode captures an area of just 28 x 21mm, while the excellent 30fps VGA movie mode might even tempt you away from a DV camcorder. The IXUS 50 has plenty more plus points in use. For a start, it's incredibly compact, slipping easily into a trouser pocket, and it weighs 100g less than the Sony too. It also uses the cheaper, more widely available SD cards – 16MB is included.

Then there's the range of features on offer. Manual white balance, panorama assist, ISO and EV adjustment are all useful, and you can set focus and metering modes too. We also love the nine-point AiAF system, which shows the focus points that have been chosen. An orientation sensor automatically rotates portrait images, while you can review images at up to 10x magnification.

Like the Sony, a Sport

scene preset is missing. There's no manual control over shutter speed or aperture either, but the My Colours mode allows creativity: you can replicate colour accents (as used in *Schindler's List*) in stills and movies. Also, the burst mode is the best on test, shooting at maximum quality at over 2fps until the memory card is full.

The lithium ion battery lasts for scores of shots and we also like the 2in LCD, which is bigger than previous IXUS models. With a quick ready-to-shoot time, just 1.7 seconds, and a shot-to-shot time of about three seconds, you'll never miss a photo opportunity again.



PC PRO RATINGS

IMAGE QUALITY	★★★★★
FEATURES & DESIGN	★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★★