



● BUDGET NOTEBOOK

HP Compaq nx6125

PRICE £529 (£621 inc VAT)

DELIVERY £10 (£12 inc VAT)

SUPPLIER HP 0845 270 4142

INTERNET www.hp.co.uk

VERDICT Excellent value for money, the nx6125 is solidly built, looks professional and is portable enough for travelling. Our only criticism is of the screen's viewing angles.

Intel's Centrino Mobile Technology may have stolen most of the notebook limelight over the past two years, but AMD is fighting back with its Turion Mobile Technology. Unlike Intel's offering, this consists purely of the Turion 64 processor itself, rather than bundling the chipset and wireless card into a platform. It may not be a comfortably branded all-in-one product, but it's a good deal more flexible in terms of specification, helping to keep costs down. And with the nx6125 being HP's first non-consumer AMD notebook, it's clearly attracting the right sort of attention.

At the heart of the nx6125 is the Turion ML-28 processor. At 1.6GHz, it's the slowest of AMD's 35W-rated chips and, backed up with 512MB of RAM, it scored 0.60 in our new benchmarks.

This makes it perfectly sufficient for most day-to-day jobs, but not the logical choice for tough video-editing or 3D-rendering tasks.

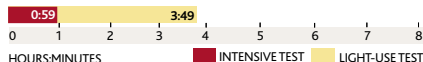
The 15in screen has a low resolution of 1,024 x 768, so it isn't suited to applications that require multiple windows either. While we were pleased with the low-gloss, low-glare finish on the screen, it displayed poor vertical viewing angles; even seated directly in front of the screen we could discern differences in contrast between the top and bottom. If you're sitting still it's fine, but the slightest movement changes the apparent contrast, which can be distracting. Horizontal viewing angles were slightly less than we'd hope for too, although they do assure an element of privacy. It's also well built, and feels like it will easily handle long business trips.



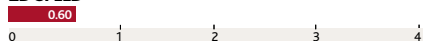
Not the slimmest of notebooks, but we can't criticise its 2.8kg weight considering the price.

● RESULTS

BATTERY

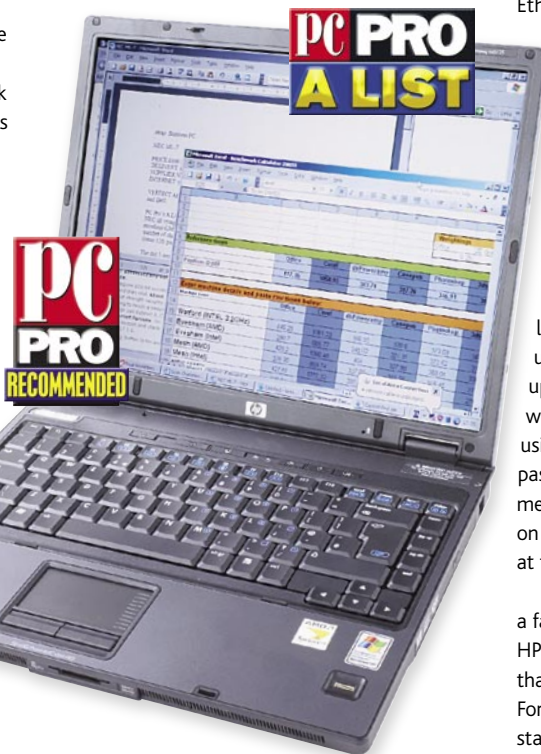


2D SPEED



OFFICE: 2.36 2D GRAPHICS: 2.23
ENCODING: 1.55 MULTITASKING: 1.88

See p50 for an explanation of our new benchmark results.



HP's business-like nx6125 is topped off with a fingerprint reader and good security software.

There's good news with the keyboard, which is a pleasure to type on: a firm response from the keys and a good length of travel makes accurate typing easy. The layout is good too, with full-sized keys all round and no aggravating relocation of the Windows or Control keys. The trackpad is smooth, although the mouse buttons are slightly less positive than we'd like.

Along the top of the keyboard, you'll find volume and wireless-disable buttons, as well as a handy Presentation button that fires up the program of your choice, changes your power settings for maximum brightness and can automatically switch to an external display via the VGA port on the side.

At 2.8kg, this isn't a machine you'll want to haul about with you all day, but battery life is respectable. The nx6125 didn't fare overly well in our demanding intensive tests, running for 59 minutes before running out of juice. Under light use, it ran for a far better three hours, 49 minutes. If, however, you need more time away from the mains, you can also buy the nx6125 with a half-price, eight-cell travel battery for an extra £55 exc VAT from www.hp.co.uk

Storage takes the form of a 60GB hard disk spinning at 5,400rpm. It offers plenty of space for applications and files, and is accompanied by a DVD writer for backups. At the front of the unit, there's a memory card reader catering for SD/MMC cards, SmartMedia, xD-Picture Cards and Memory Sticks. Elsewhere, there's a trio of USB 2 ports, as well as a mini-FireWire port. We were also pleased to note Gigabit Ethernet and 802.11b/g WLAN capabilities built in. Bluetooth is another handy addition for those with suitably equipped mobile phones.

Although you won't find a Trusted Platform Module in the nx6125, security is bolstered by the inclusion of a fingerprint reader. HP's ProtectTools Security Manager is a range of security features that allow you to set a power-on password, scan fingerprints for Windows logon and change which devices can be used for booting. It's also possible to set up HP's Credential Manager to work with websites, so you can access online accounts using a fingerprint instead of typing a password. It's an unobtrusive peace-of-mind measure for anyone with sensitive information on their system. And it's almost unheard of at this price point.

The nx6125 might be a budget notebook, a fact reflected in its one-year warranty, but HP supplies a wide range of accessories that will make it perfect for business users. For £79 excluding VAT, you can buy a docking station that incorporates parallel and serial ports as well as D-SUB and DVI ports. You can also buy an adjustable docking stand to allow you to easily desk-mount the nx6125.

Although we're not big fans of the screen, the nx6125 is a great bargain at less than £600. It has a strong suite of security features that will please professionals, and enough in the way of features to make it a basic primary PC for the home. It isn't the fastest machine out there, but, unless you're opening huge spreadsheets or working with large image files, it doesn't need to be. If you need a good compromise between power and portability, the HP is exceptional value for money.

DAVE STEVENSON

PC PRO RATINGS

PERFORMANCE	★★★★★
FEATURES & DESIGN	★★★★★
VALUE FOR MONEY	★★★★★
OVERALL	★★★★★

SPECIFICATIONS 1.6GHz AMD Turion ML-28; 512MB PC2700 DDR RAM; 60GB hard disk; TEAC DV-W28EW DVD rewriter; 128MB ATI Radeon X300 graphics; 15in 1,024 x 768 TFT; 56K modem; Gigabit Ethernet; 802.11b/g WLAN; Bluetooth; 3 x USB 2, mini-FireWire; 1 x Type II/III PC Card slot; VGA out; S-Video out; Windows XP Professional; 1yr RTB warranty. Dimensions 330 x 269 x 43mm (WDH). Weight: 2.8kg. Part code: PY418ET.