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Epson PictureMate 100 compact photo printer

Ease of use or picture quality? Epson hopes to offer both with the Epson PictureMate 100, but can it pull it off?

by Stuart Miles published on 11 March 2006

Ease of use or picture quality? Epson hopes to offer both with the Epson PictureMate 100, but can it pull it off? When we reviewed this model's previous incarnation the original PictureMate we have to admit we weren't too impressed. In fact our verdict was that "we were decidedly disappointed with this model". Over a year on and the picture (excuse the pun) is very different. A new paint job to appeal to the gadget iPod loving fan and improved printing means that the PictureMate 100's price tag makes this a very appealing prospect indeed. The model comes in virtually an identical casing as before, which is slightly on the large side, and includes a overly large carrying handle but certainly not as large as the Canon Selphy DS810. The design, like other printers from other manufacturers revolves around a central screen on which to view images without the need for a computer. The drawback to the design on the PictureMate 100 is the small 1.5-inch screen and this does mean you've got to strain to see the images you've taken amongst the other on-screen information, like how many copies you would like, battery power if you've opted for the optional battery and print instructions. That said the controls surrounding the screen are easy to use. As this is an entry-level option the printer doesn't feature any trimming or cropping capabilities although you can opt to enhance photos before you print them with Epsoms one-off auto-enhance tool. The printer can be connected to a computer if you've got images you want to print already stored and the PictureMate 100 also supports a variety of memory cards through its memory card reader. Formats supported include Fujifilm and Olympus' xD Picture Card Format and of course SD and CompactFlash, although Sony camera users luck



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out once again. When it comes to print quality the Epson printer is one of the best we've tested this year at Pocket-lint and on the default settings the print quality was very good. Rated against the Canon Selphy DS810 and the HP 475 the prints were stronger in its black tones than both competing models, although like the Selphy DS810 the whites were bleached out slightly. One thing to bear in mind however is that print times were slower, and depended heavily on what colours the picture featured.

VERDICT

The Espon PictureMate 100 surprised us, because following our experiences with the original version we weren't too impressed. This time around however, the 100 has more than made up for it. The design isn't as slick as the HP Photosmart series - it's still on the large side, but the print quality was certainly up to scratch. And at the end of the day you aren't going to be looking at the printer in 20 years time. If you can get around the smaller screen and overall size of the printer, this certainly offers value for money.

At a glance

What is it?

Compact Photo Printer

Good

Prints, memory card support, price

Bad

Small screen, on the large side

Verdict

If you can get around the smaller screen and overall size of the printer, this certainly offers value for money

Price £99

Your score

?/10