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Navman iCN530 GPS receiver - EXCLUSIVE

Navman's latest satellite navigation system promises a bigger screen and simple instructions, so does it live up to the promise?

by Stuart Miles published on 2 May 2006

Navman's latest satellite navigation system promises a bigger screen and simple instructions, so does it live up to the promise? We hit the road to find out.

The first thing you are likely to spot on the new iCN530 is the introduction of a large 3.5 inch screen that dominates the unit and compared to Garmin's cricket ball i3 is decidedly massive.

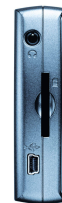
From shying away from large screens on its budget entry level offering the iCN320, it's nice to see that Navman has reinstated it here.

The large screen certainly makes a difference and also means that drivers who like to see road layout or junctions coming up can do so. Alternatively users can opt to change the display and Navman has positioned a button to the right of the screen that allows you to switch views without having to delve into a myriad of menus and preference choices.

Views available consist of 2D, 3D, Instructions Only and the final one borrowed from the iCN320 - Big Arrows.

In addition to the view button the Navman iCN530 like other Navman models in the range also offers two further buttons for finding petrol stations and car parks. One press of the button and the nearest 99 are listed in distance order. A quick selection and the device will automatically re-route to the desired location.

While we think the petrol station option is a bit excessive, the parking can be a godsend if you



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regularly find yourself in towns you aren't familiar with.

When it comes to maps, Navman continues to use the same as before and these are easy to use and understand.

Upgraded from previous model is the inclusion of the new SiRF III chipset and this means you can get a GPS signal indoors. As we've mentioned in previous reviews of other GPS units, this makes a huge difference and means that you can get a route planned and loaded before leaving the house.

To help you even further Navman has included support for eight digit postcodes, not just seven, along with the ability to find addresses via area or town, street, or point of interest.

The iCN530 comes preloaded with the UK and Ireland already on the unit with a CD in the box for the rest of Europe should you feel the urge to go travelling.

Acknowledging that satnav crime is on the up, Navman has paid special attention to making sure the cradle can be easily detached from the windscreen when you leave the car.

While the front bracket looks like it will snap off after a couple of months use, the cradle does pop on and off the windscreen with ease as promised.

The catch? While the iCN530 will be small enough to fit in your pocket, it is only 22mm thick after all, the cradle is still too bulky to be stowed in a bag and no attempt has been made to make this any more compact than it already is.

VERDICT

The iCN530 is a good solid GPS unit that gives a good performance overall. Directions are clear and the maps simple to understand, especially as you can choose your display.

At a glance

What is it?

GPS unit

Good

Big screen, easy to use, optional traffic bolt on

Bad

Cradle is easy to take off, but large. Traffic bolt on is extra

Verdict

Easy to use, this unit offers a viable alternative to the highly praised TomTom range and at £299 is an affordable entry into the world of satnav.

Price £299

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10

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Those looking to expand the system can opt for the optional extra TMC traffic cradle (£100) which in design is a vast improvement on Navman's previous efforts - for starters your dashboard won't be covered in cables.

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