

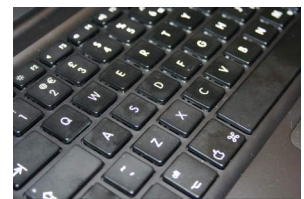
<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/1544/apple-macbook-laptop-notebook-pro>

Apple MacBook laptop

Apple has now gone completely Intel based with its notebook range, but does the new MacBook live up to the hype?

by Stuart Miles published on 18 May 2006

With the announcement of the new MacBook, Apple has now gone completely Intel-based with its notebook range. Pocket-lint was one of the first in the UK to get a unit in for review, so should you be accidentally dropping your current PowerBook so you've got an excuse to upgrade? We take a proper look rather than a glance at a security tagged unit in store. Gone is the PowerBook moniker, gone are the 12-inch and 14-inch models, and in comes three new 13-inch widescreen models to get you excited. So what do you get for your £750 to £1030? The three models offer the same basic spec with variations between them being processor speed (1.83GHz to 2GHz) and hard drive space (80GB to 120GB). At the top of the new range is the Black MacBook which will cost you an additional £130 for the privilege over the standard white version. While on paper it sports a bigger hard disk drive, even an upgrade means this model's paint job makes this £40 more expensive. The paint job however is impressive. It certainly got plenty of ooohs and arrhhhs when we whipped it out of the box. The black unlike the white, isn't shiny - it's matt - and Apple is keen to point out that even the inside of the ports on the side of the device are black, however that attention to detail hasn't stretched to the catches under the keyboard so you still get bits of white to distract you if you choose to use it on your lap. Additionally we were slightly (only slightly) disappointed that none of the cables or the accompanying apple remote was black. At this point we realise that we are being picky, but if it wasn't for Apple expressing the attention to detail we would have let it slide. Put that aside and the only other complaint is that the matt black version picked up finger prints like a bad rash. Get past the paint job and the retro ZX Spectrum looking keyboard (minus the rubber keys) is easy to use,



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although we had a rather unresponsive clicker on our trackpad. Right, now we've got the paint job out the way, we can talk about the other features the MacBook has. Gone is the catch that keeps the lid shut, and it has been replaced with a magnet like the MagSafe Power adapter found on the MacBook Pro. What this means is that where a catch would be now sits a digital camera. But the iSight and MagSafe power socket isn't the only thing the MacBook has borrowed from its older brother. As we've mentioned it takes the MacBook Pro's magnetic powercable and the MacBook Pro's iSight. However its also taken the MacBook Pro's large trackpad, and even the MacBook Pro's figure; its only slightly thicker, but still kept to around an inch thick. Worryingly however all the features do make it on the heavy side still. New to the mix is highly glossy screen, which interestingly has been added to the MacBook Pro as well. Apple has said that the introduction of the new screen, which is similar to Sony's XBlack technology, is to add a high gloss sheen to movies, images and basically everything. In use the new screen certainly adds a nice gloss to watching movies or even surfing the web, however in sunlight it is certainly more reflective than Apple would have you believe. As for performance the increased speed is certainly noticeable over our PowerBook G5 we use in the office. Other notable features worth talking about are the introduction of DVI support, not new to the PowerBook or MacBook Pro range, but certainly new to Apple's entry level range. As for connectivity, Bluetooth, Wi-Fi and a Gigabit Ethernet connection comes as standard, as does a firewire and two USB2.0 sockets on the left of the machine.

VERDICT

Like the MacBook Pro the MacBook is very good, however for every good point we've found a bad point that equals it out. We like the black, but it smudges easily. We like the white, but are sure that it will just become dirty like the previous iBooks did a couple of months in. Then there is the screen. We certainly like it and the new

At a glance

What is it?

Apple laptop

Good

Screen, size, styling

Bad

Reflective screen, black coating, keyboard

Verdict

Like most people's Mother-in-laws, the verdict is still out.

Price £1030

Our score

7/10

Your score

9/10

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brightness over previous PowerBook models however the screen is reflective in sunlight more than we would have liked. The list goes on. We like the keyboard, but are worried about the gaps between the keys catching biscuits crumbs. Like the performance, but not when it comes to doing anything heavy duty like games. Overall then, the MacBook is a mixed bag. If you are an occasional user looking for laptop that is perfect for doing basic entry level things such as basic photo editing, emailing and watching the odd movie then the MacBook is certainly one to look at. The price while expensive for an entry level laptop, certainly compared to a PC variant, is to a point justifiable as the MacBook does have more flare about it than something that will cut your fingers every time you try to turn it on. Like most people's Mother-in-laws, the verdict is still out.