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Magellan 3050T GPS receiver

Can Magellan challenge TomTom and Navman with its latest creation?

by Stuart Miles published on 21 October 2006

Satnav systems, it seems, come in all shapes and sizes these days in an attempt to try and differentiate themselves from every other model on the market. Magellan, with the 3050T, has gone for the "Let's make it big" option.

Probably the biggest GPS unit we've had at Pocket-lint, the 3050T promises to offer plenty; maps pre-installed on its 4GB hard drive, 3.5-inch colour screen, live traffic data and multimedia features including picture viewer and MP3 player.

In practice however and the Magellan 3050T is very rough around the edges with the overall build quality looking decidedly ropey compared to previous efforts from the company that we've seen.

For those with kids, the 3050T reminds us of the LeapFrog Leapster kids handheld computer. Buttons like the screen are large and it's the said large screen that dominates the front of the display. Filling in around the edges are a series of buttons down each side, which when turned on glow an annoying blue (why does it always have to be blue?) and due to the design means that you can't see what they are actually supposed to be when driving.

Turn the device on and the software is any much better than the build quality with clunky looking graphics that look like they've been drawn with a calculator and not the most intuitive of interfaces.

Admitted we like the fact that typing in the address via the on-screen keyboard removes unavailable characters. Type in Ascot for example and according to the software there is no other place in the UK that begins with "ASC" as all other characters become void. But then this isn't anything new.



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Maps are very basic lacking the shine that companies like Navman and TomTom add to their maps. While it's easy to read, it's not really that graphically nice to look at night or day.

Of course, as with most GPS units, the 3050T comes with an MP3 player and picture viewer and one up on the TomTom Go 910, the unit does come with an SD Card to play data from over and above its built-in hard drive.

VERDICT

While the Magellan 3050T ticks all the boxes from traffic support via the RAC Trafficmaster Telematics service (although unlike other makers you'll have to pay a subscription service each year of £27) to being able to play MP3s, the finish just isn't there for us compared to other devices from TomTom, Navman, Garmin and Sony.

Because of that you end up feeling you've been cheated. You might have the best idea in the world but if you can't present it properly then its as about as useful as a chocolate teapot.

Those keen to use there mobile phone with the device to make phone calls via Bluetooth can opt for the company's 6000T offering however it suffers the same problems in build quality.

Why this is so different from the Magellan we've seen before we're not sure, but Magellan the explorer would be turning in his grave if he saw this.

Disappointing.

At a glance

What is it?

GPS unit

Good

Traffic data, picture viewer with SD Card support, 4GB hard drive

Bad

Build quality, graphics look naff, maps very basic

Verdict

While the Magellan 3050T ticks all the boxes the finish just isn't there for us compared to other devices on the market

Price £299.99

Our score

6/10

Your score

?/10