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Apple Macbook Pro 15-inch

Is the premium in price worth it?

by Stephen Patrick published on 5 February 2007

There was a time not so long ago when choosing an Apple Mac made a definite statement, it said you were willing to fight for the underdog, to bring a little bit of difference, and plenty of style, into your life. However, since Apple moved over to Intel processors, a little bit of that individual flair seems to have died. After all, you can now compare like-for-like on a specification basis and see what you're getting for your money.



So it is with the latest MacBook Pro, as you'll find the latest upgrade brings with it a move to Intel's Core 2 Duo T7600 processor, which is the top-of-the-line chip, means that things really fly. We've been using the Pro for a couple of weeks and it's a great machine for pretty much anything. Of course, the addition of 2048MB DDR2 SDRAM memory really helps, so you never feel as though there is a lag when opening large files or applications.

The use of Intel processors means you can now install a program called Boot Camp onto an Apple laptop, allowing you to run the Windows OS. It's something we've done on all the Mac's we've reviewed lately, as it means you can install Windows software you already own, so saving you money. If you're not too sure about moving to Mac from Windows this is a trouble-free way of having both. That said, Boot Camp is still in Beta stage so you won't find it supports all Windows programs.

In the main, the machine hasn't changed and still comes with the same chassis design and details. Weighing in at a semi-portable 2.6kg, this is a slim machine. The keyboard is pushed to the back of the chassis, leaving plenty of space for the palm rests. The touchpad and mouse button sit flush with the case and are really comfortable to use. As with the build quality, the keyboard and touchpad are of high quality but the keys are a little soft, so you can touch-type with ease.

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When it comes to built-in options, you'll find a slot-loaded DVD rewriter on the front of the machine and a DVI-out on the side, which means you can hook it up to larger monitors and keep a digital signal.

The screen is a standard 15-inch TFT panel, which may seem a little odd when you consider that Apple notebooks are still predominately bought by media users, who need the best screen possible. So, Apple has a neat trick: you can specify whether you want a standard screen or a Super-TFT panel when you order. This is a great idea and one that more companies should adopt.

Regardless of the screen you choose, it's supported by ATi Mobility Radeon X1600 graphics with 256MB of memory onboard. This is a good, if basic card, that allows for decent gaming as well as video editing. It's getting a little dated now, so enquire whether it is about to be upgraded.

VERDICT

One of the problems Apple will have to face is that using the same base specification as many Windows machines you can no longer place a premium on it.

So, for the asking price of £1699 (inc. VAT), this isn't the most affordable notebook in the world but you do get Apple's usual high-standard finish and the options are great.

If you're after a premium machine and are willing to pay for it, you won't feel as if you've over paid for it with the MacBook pro.

At a glance

What is it?

Core 2 Duo notebook

Good

Fast, light, great battery life

Bad

Expensive

Verdict

The look is the same but the performance is now 30% faster, making this a great powerhouse of a portable

Price £1699

Our score

8/10

Your score

10/10