

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/2250/Genius-egromedia-500-games-controller>

## Genius Ergomedia 500 controller

Will this allow you to ditch the keyboard?

by Davey Winder published on 12 April 2007

OK, confession time: I am not the greatest fan of PC gaming on the planet.

The fact that I have just splashed the cash for a PlayStation 3 tends to suggest I prefer my game playing fix on a dedicated console.

I have had to plug in a USB keyboard to my PS3 to enable much easier text entry, which is ironic because it is the use of a keyboard during game play that turns me off the most when it comes to the PC.

And that, dear reader, is where the Genius Ergomedia 500 enters the review equation.

The problem with using a standard PC keyboard during game play is a fairly obvious and straightforward one, the thing wasn't designed for playing games.

Unless your genre of choice is crosswords, hangman or sudoku of course.

Do a little frantic keyboard cashing for half an hour and the discomfort factor kicks in and your fingers really start to flag.

The Ergomedia 500, on the other hand, has been designed solely for playing games and as a result is as comfortable as an old woolly bobble hat, no matter how long you are killing monsters or surveying enemy territory.

The reason for the comfort is the unique hand friendly design, everything has been laid out so that you get the maximum amount of key combo usage with the minimum amount of hand movement. Throw the support for recording and playback of macro sequences (11 programmable keys) into the mix, and you have some seriously flexible key bashing available without any finger



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twisting to speak of.

Installation is easy enough, it's a bog standard USB device so pretty much plug and play. I say pretty much because there was a little problem with the audio setup that is probably worth explaining.

You see this strange big plastic glove of a device comes with its own sound card built-in which, when coupled with the integrated headphone and mic sockets, is absolutely perfect for in-game headset use.

Trouble is, if you prefer to use your own soundcard and audio setup then you have to fiddle around after installation as the process disables these by default, requiring a visit to the Windows sound settings configuration screen.

Also worth mentioning is the total lack of printing facility for any macros that you record, so write them down unless your memory is 101% lest they get lost in the heat of battle.

Apart from that, and given a good few nights spent away from the PS3 and game playing on the PC, it has to be said that the Genius Ergomedia 500 was a sheer delight to use once you get used to the layout of the keys and buttons.

The real trouble is that this an additional peripheral rather than a keyboard replacement. You still need one of those for typing messages and various generic online game controls such as entering an IP address or dropping out of the action as therefore is no ESC key on the Ergomedia.

The blue keypad backlighting is cool though, there's Vista support and it sure does look groovy sitting on your desktop.

## VERDICT

A cool gadget for the committed PC gamer

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## At a glance

### What is it?

USB Gaming Explorer

### Good

Macro programmability, comfort, integrated sound card, mic and headphone socket

### Bad

Does not fully replace a keyboard

### Verdict

Something for the PC gamer with everything, including finger joint pain

**Price** £25

**Our score**

**7/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**

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looking for some much needed finger comfort, but cannot totally replace a standard keyboard and joystick combo.