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Mio C520 GPS receiver

Can Mio's widescreen give you the big picture?

by Stuart Miles published on 6 July 2007

Like Garmin and TomTom, Mio have followed the pack and gone widescreen with their latest range of satnav devices, but does the extra width help? We drove across the country to find out.

Tech specs of the C520 include a 4.3-inch widescreen display with split-screen view, Tele Atlas maps (2007.1), Mio's MioMap v3 software, speed camera alerts for a year, Bluetooth so you can connect your phone and maps of 22 Western European countries on its 1GB internal memory all for £269.99.

In use and that new size isn't that pocketable anymore, however it is slim enough to fit into Mrs Pocket-lint's handbag. That said, the extra screen size is very handy not only for seeing the bigger picture, i.e., of the surrounding roads, but also when it comes to using the screen's split screen interface.

Using the screen's retail space to the full, the screen is split in two and information such as distance to the next junction, road name and things like estimated time of arrival are all displayed in one area rather than dotted around the screen like in other units we have tested. The end result is a clear and easy to use display that allows you to get the information you are after quickly.

Other points worth mentioning include the overall ease of use of the device including setting up, getting directions, using the unit's points of interest and blocking roads due to traffic problems. It's not all plain sailing however and we got very frustrated with the postcode entry system until we realised that you had to include the space (you don't normally), but we are sure this wouldn't annoy newcomers as much.

So what didn't we like? Call us picky, but there is



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only one voice, and its kinda dull. We want choice in our life, and here, the C520 doesn't offer it. Then there is the postcode issue listed above and the leather cover that while attached will protect your satnav from scratches does make it bigger than a sumo wrestler with a bag of pick and mix.

VERDICT

With an optional traffic plug-in (not included in the box), the Mio C520 at £269.99 is a middle of the road offering that will suit those looking for a widescreen offering and not much else.

Compared to the competition, we would still probably opt for the TomTom One XL for widescreen on the cheap, mainly because of the TomTom's interface, however we do like the split screen view championed in this design.

Good, but basic, this still gets the job done.

At a glance

What is it?

Widescreen satnav

Good

Display, ease of use, size, Bluetooth

Bad

Cover, Postcode needs that space in between, Only one voice

Verdict

We would still opt for the TomTom One XL, however we do like the split screen view championed in this design

Price £250

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10