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iRiver B20 MP3 player

Can iRiver catch up on lost ground?

by Stuart Miles published on 18 September 2007

iRiver, the brand that pretty much launched MP3 players and then disappeared from the UK and is now back with a new flash-based MP3 player, but can the company still impress? We take a closer look.

The iRiver B20 comes in 1GB, 2GB, and 4GB sizes to go up against the Creative Zen, Sony's new S-Series Walkman and Apple new iPod nano in offering video and a host of other features on the go.

The design of the player is focused around its 2.4-inch TFT LCD screen, the same size of the Creative Zen, and the volume, power and main menu buttons can be found on the sides.

Rather than opt for a click wheel or d-pad, the whole screen has been turned into the button, push down on the bottom of the screen (it's not a touchscreen) and you scroll down through the menu system.

At first we thought that it was shoddy build quality, but the system works well once you see what you are supposed to do.

Trying to do one better than the competition, the B20 also features a DAB radio complete with aerial for you to extend to improve performance, and failing a decent signal, users can fall back on the unit's FM radio instead.

As for video, the player offers video playback alongside the ability to view pictures and the screen is good enough to watch content on, although surprisingly comes across smaller than the Creative Zen even though they are the same size.

In addition to the video capabilities the B20 also features a miniSD card slot rather than a standard SD Card slot and a built-in mono speaker.



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You can also view images and play Flashlite games, although these are very rudimentary.

VERDICT

The B20 is a good little unit that takes the current offering from companies like Creative, Apple and Sony and adds to them with the introduction of DAB and games.

In fact we were pleasantly surprised, with the only thing holding this player back being the price.

Against the Nano, fans are expected to pay a premium of £50 for the DAB radio; £149.99 for 1GB, £169.99 for 2GB, and £209 for 4GB.

One worth a closer, but only if you can afford it.

At a glance

What is it?

MP3 player

Good

Screen size, video, DAB radio with aerial

Bad

Design of the screen d-pad makes the build quality come across cheap

Verdict

The B20 is a good little unit that takes the current offering from companies like Creative, Apple and Sony and adds to them with the introduction of DAB and games

Price £149.99

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10