

## Acer Extensa 5620 notebook

### Bargain basement or bit of a steal?

by Stephen Patrick published on 19 May 2008

Acer creates a wide range of notebooks for both the business and consumer markets but we're not too sure where the Extensa range fits in to the scheme of things. For instance, the design is clearly a business-like one, after all it's based on the old TravelMate style of a thick plastic casing with a keyboard that boasts a five-degree curve, which makes it really comfortable to type on.

Then there is the fact that this machine is loaded with Windows Vista Home Premium Edition and finished with a 15.4-inch Super-TFT screen, which are clearly aimed at home users. Then there is the price, at £399 (inc. VAT), this is a budget notebook that takes an older chassis design but still manages to offer great value for money.

For your money you'll get a fully specified machine that is powered by an Intel 1.66GHz Core 2 Duo T5450 processor, which is more than quick enough for average users. You'll also find 2048MB of memory, which is a bargain at this price, as is the 160GB hard drive, offering plenty of space for storing your media files.

It's not the lightest of machines, weighing 2.9kg, so is more likely to be used on a desk than on the move. That said, we managed to get well over 3 hours from the battery, so it'll certainly last you if you need to carry it around.

The screen may be aimed at home users but this isn't really a multimedia machine as the graphics are integrated, which is fine for movies and surfing the web but you won't be able to play games on this notebook. Images looked bright and there is a nice even tone across the screen, so movies running from the optical drive, which is a standard DVD rewriter, look crisp.

Less impressive was the sound quality of this notebook. The speakers are fitted to the front of



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the chassis and really are poor quality. So much so that we had to add headphones when watching a movie, as the speakers are tinny, lack bass and generally are the worst part of this notebook.

The widescreen display allows for a keyboard with plenty of space between the keys. As we've already mentioned, the keys have a five-degree curve to them, which can initially feel a little odd but the design is more ergonomic than a standard keyboard. We found the typing action to be smooth and reliable. Sure, some of the secondary keys and shortcut strokes can be a bit of a stretch but we liked the feel of this keyboard.

Connectivity is well provided for, as you'll find four USB ports, Gigabit Ethernet, which is often only found on business machines, and 802.11g wireless LAN for connecting to a wireless router. Extra features are kept to a minimum but you'll find a webcam resting above the screen.

## VERDICT

The Acer Extensa 5620 won't blow you away in the style or performance stakes, but for less than £400 (inc. VAT) it's good enough for every day tasks, especially if your needs are basic, but don't consider it if you're looking for a multimedia machine.

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## At a glance

### What is it?

Budget notebook

### Good

Solid design, nice keyboard

### Bad

Design is getting old, poor graphics

### Verdict

Originally designed for business use, the notebook offers plenty of power for minimum spend

**Price** £399

**Our score**

**7/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**