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TomTom Go 530 GPS receiver

Better than the entry-level offering?

by Stuart Miles published on 24 June 2008

Sitting at the bottom end of the Go range of the company's satnav line, what can the TomTom Go 530 offer? We jump in the car and find out.

Bigger than the TomTom XL in terms of design and features, the Go 530 sits below the Go 730 and 930 in the features that it offers and is ideal for those not fussed about maps of North America (included with the Go 930) or maps of Europe (included with the Go 730).

Cased in black body, a welcome respite from the silver clones that seem to dominate the satnav market, the TomTom Go 530 like the other two models in the range has a simple, clutter-free, design - the front dominated by the 4.3in touchscreen. The only button is the discreet power button on the top - it's almost a shame TomTom didn't decide to use their logo as the power switch.

You also get the software suite for TomTom HOME, to really get the most out of your device, using the supplied desk dock. The maps on this version cover just the UK.

The best thing about TomTom, and one of the reasons it has been so popular, is that it is incredibly easy to use. Out of the box, turn it on and away you go, it is as simple as that. The suction mount is worth a mention because it is fairly low-profile, slipping into the back of the device, although it has to be said not as nice as the new EasyPort sucker shipped with the new One range.

The power cable has a 90 degree plug meaning your TomTom can be mounted flush with the dashboard and it is this sort of attention to detail that really impresses with TomTom.

Of course, on this level of device you get the Bluetooth link for your phone, and an FM



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transmitter built-in. Connection also enables features like TomTom Weather once you have established a data connection - but you will end up paying the data rates for these sorts of options. You can also access your address book and have incoming text message read out, which is a nice touch.

This being the non-traffic version you won't get the TMC cable in the box and means that your dash will be free from cables. That's not to say you can't get traffic, you'll just have to use your mobile phone for the data.

Connection is via said Bluetooth and fairly easy to set-up, though our suggestion would be to do this at home rather than in a traffic jam where you'll merely pick up everyone else's mobile phone. You'll also have to bear in mind that if you use a headset, as is the law, that you'll only be able to connect to one device at a time.

You also get IQ routes, which calculates your route based on real average speed data, so you get a more realistic picture of your journey time. Advanced Lane Guidance is a gem to make sure you take the right turning on a motorway and don't end up heading north instead of south, a problem that has blighted satnav in the past.

The Go 530 also supports voice commands, which sounds smart, and works pretty well. It basically pulls up the location menu, so you say "London" and it offers you a list of cities, with London at the top, for you to press, and again with street names. It works, but doesn't save much time as the interface is relatively simple anyway. Perhaps it is designed to stop drivers pressing too many buttons whilst driving, but you do have to access the menu first to enable the voice input, so doesn't really satisfy that demand.

Unlike the Go 930 you don't get a remote control in the box but it's no big loss.

Of course the best feature is being able to access

At a glance

What is it?

Satnav with Bluetooth

Good

Advanced Lane Guidance, Bluetooth, screen, easy to use interface

Bad

Suction mount not the best that TomTom offer, traffic via mobile phone

Verdict

While you'll save some money on not getting the North America and European maps if you aren't planning on travelling outside the UK this may be too much

Price £249.99

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10

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the wider community and update maps. Maps were invariably out of date on older versions, but now at least you get the chance to edit them as well as download updates from other users. In reality you will probably correct things near your home, to stop a route down a closed road and so on.

VERDICT

All in all, this is TomTom doing what it does best. As a navigation solution, we think this is the best around.

The Go 530 offers plenty and is surprisingly a large step up from the cheaper TomTom XL adding plenty of features be it better mapping guidance, Bluetooth or FM transmitter support.

If you are looking for all those features this will offer you just that, although you have to ask whether you will use them?

While you'll save some money on not getting the North America or European maps if you aren't planning on travelling outside the UK we would recommend the XL. It is likely to suit your needs saving you a fair wad of cash.