

Toshiba Regza 37XV505D television

Toshiba technology on a budget

by Jamie Carter published on 5 August 2008

Fast becoming the sweet spot in flatscreen TVs, 37-inch LCD TVs are rapidly being fitted with Full HD screens to show-off the most detail from Blu-ray and other high-def sources. Long known for its concentration on value for money, Toshiba's latest is low on eye-catching features and without a flashy design.

The feature that will tempt some is the 37XV505D's game mode, though in reality this is merely a preset picture mode tweaked to reduce blur when the onscreen action gets frenetic. It successfully prevents blur becoming distracting, though we did spot some broken edges, shimmering and a general loss of resolution during gameplay.

Picture processing is taken care of by Toshiba's own Active Vision LCD engine, which lacks the now-common 100Hz double-scan mode designed to prevent motion blur.

Freeview enjoys an 8-day electronic programme guide and a CAM slot for adding subscription channels, though the digital experience is ruined somewhat by some dodgy on-screen menus and a rubbish remote control. Picture quality is rudimentary, with shimmer around people and a lot of video noise, though colour stays strong.

Other connectivity includes a trio of HDMI's, a PC input, two Scarts and some Component video ports. Xboxers will love the latter, whilst newer consoles can take advantage of this set's side HDMI input.

Switch on a Blu-ray player and the level of detail shoots-up, though the panel doesn't contain quite as much as on some rival sets. A touch soft, though with loads of depth and shadow detail, it's actually a tempting picture - apart from one aspect. When large blocks of colour are shown, there are some visible bands separating the



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various shades. The 37XV505D's Natural Colour mode claims to increase the colour palette to the power of four, and looking at its rich colours in general, we'd have to agree, but there's definitely a problem with the gradation.

Despite the issue with colour occasionally appearing on screen, the picture is always watchable. Yes, there is some blur during fast camera pans, and when objects move across the screen they are distinctly low resolution. There's also some picture noise in backgrounds and the occasional jagged edge. But helped along by some deep black levels and some vivid colours, the 37XV505D always provides a comfortable and cinematic picture that will suit most users. Arguably, it achieves this by creating a softer image than its Full HD screen truly deserves.

Significantly increasing its reputation is the 37XV505D's 20W speakers, which pump out some above-average audio as well as reducing the volume of adverts. It's a happy ending to an otherwise uninspiring, yet reasonable value TV.

VERDICT

A basic TV aside from the Full HD resolution, Toshiba has packed in just enough to provide a reasonable value way into high-def, though there are some minor problems with the picture that are hard to ignore

At a glance

What is it?

37-inch LCD TV

Good

Deep black levels, vivid colours, easy to use

Bad

Picture noise in backgrounds, occasional colour banding

Verdict

Toshiba has packed in just enough to provide a reasonable value way into high-def, though there are some minor problems with the picture that are hard to ignore

Price £849

Our score

6/10

Your score

?/10