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## ASUS M51SE notebook

Great specs, but does it deliver?

by Stephen Patrick published on 20 August 2008

Asus may be best known at this time for introducing the Netbook to the world but it's main line of notebooks are aimed at the more power-hungry sector of the market.

The Asus M51SE is an attractive machine finished in silver and black plastic that comes with a swirling design on the glossy black lid. The build quality is reassuringly high and the notebook feels solid in the hand. Weighing 3kg, this is a heavier than normal machine that will make a great desktop alternative. This was borne out with a battery life of less than 3 hours, which is fine for carrying around the home but isn't ideal for work purposes.

Fitted with a 15.4-inch Super-TFT screen, we found it had a good contrast ratio. Sadly, colours looked a little washed out when we were trying to edit and colour match digital images. However, for everyday use it's a reasonable compromise for the price.

Graphics use an integrated solution, but instead of opting for the basic Intel version, Asus has opted to use the latest ATI chip, the Mobility Radeon HD 3470, which offers support for high-def connections as well as for editing images and running DVDs. It hasn't been optimised for games, though.

Beneath the screen is a good-sized keyboard. The keys are firmly mounted, well spaced and we found it comfortable to use. The touchpad and mouse buttons are also of the best quality, as we found they responded well with the mouse buttons having a reassuring click. Unlike most machines of this size, you'll also find a dedicated numeric keypad fitted, which is ideal if you need to number crunch.

It's not only the build quality and keyboard that impress, as the core specification of the M51SE is



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impressive for the price. You'll find an Intel Core 2 Duo T8100 processor, which runs at 2.1GHz, supported by 3072MB of memory. This is great if you need to run multiple applications at the same time. We found Windows Vista Home Premium booted quickly and ran with a fair degree of responsiveness. Even the hard drive is impressive, as the 320GB drive will allow you to store all your multimedia content with ease.

There is a DVD rewriter fitted as standard and connections consist of 802.11n for hooking up to wireless networks, while fixed networks can be connected to using Gigabit Ethernet.

Other features include a biometric fingerprint scanner that allows you to log on at the swipe of a finger. Alternatively, you can use it to configure applications to launch at a finger stroke. You'll find a DVI-out port for connecting to digital outputs, while the eSATA port offers a faster connection for peripherals than the three USB 2 ports.

## VERDICT

The Asus M51SE is a stunning notebook for the price. We found it loaded and ran quickly and the large keyboard means you can type in comfort. While battery life is less than ideal, the sheer raw power of this notebook makes it ideal for anyone needing a quality, and affordable, powerhouse machine.

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## At a glance

### What is it?

Desktop replacement notebook

### Good

Great price, powerful spec, well built

### Bad

Poor battery life, basic screen

## Verdict

The processing power and quality keyboard are what makes this notebook but the less than perfect screen detracts from the overall finish

**Price** £599

**Our score**

**8/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**