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LG DP391B portable DVD player

Will this give you movie action on the move?

by Chris Hall published on 3 September 2008

Portable DVD players are in an awkward place with the ascent of an increasing number of portable media players, leading to an increasing emphasis on design and usability. We take a look at LG's latest offering.

The LG DP391B moves away from the clamshell design toward the more modern tablet style. The design allows you to lift up the screen to a viewing angle of your choice. The stand is actually the battery, whilst the thick screen opens into two pieces to expose the disc bay. Whilst this design gives you a more modern approach it does feel fairly thick at 40mm.

The screen gives you an 8-inch WVGA display, which is very crisp and bright giving you fantastic quality playback from your DVDs. The neat black bezel under the front plastic panel completes a modern clutter-free design, aping the look of digital photo frames (a secondary function of this device). Whilst it looks good, the reflective front does mean that brighter conditions make it difficult to see anything, although in a darkened room the results are impressive.

The front has a single four-way clickable controller highlighted with a blue LED ring, which thankfully goes off when not in use. There are no other controls on the front, and the four-way controller unfortunately does nothing other than navigate the menus during film playback. Main controls range across the top and right side of the player and it is a shame the front controller serves no function - a simple play/pause or volume control would have been good.

The top controls give you power, menu (DVD menu) and setup options. Importantly you'll find an LCD mode option, giving you a quick way to flip between 4:3, 16:9 aspect ratios, as well as turning the screen off - for music, for example.



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Finally you have an option to switch modes, allowing you to access content on the 256MB of internal memory, switch to the AV or USB input. You'll also find volume controls here.

The right side controls give you basic disc playback options, stop, play/pause and skip track. Behind these you'll find a 3-in-1 card reader that will allow you to playback or copy to the internal memory media stored on SD, MMC and MS.

The left side provides access to the various different inputs and outputs, including the Mini-USB, AV in/out, and two headphone sockets. The unit comes with a remote control and a USB adaptor cable, so you can easily hook up a USB stick to the Mini-USB. The AV in/out allows you to play content from other devices, as well as hook up to a TV, perhaps in your hotel room.

The basic file manager gives you the chance to play, make a slideshow of images or copy your JPEG, DivX or MP3/WMA files to folders on the internal memory. These secondary functions do make for a more versatile device, allowing you to view camera images whilst on holiday and so on.

Mounted on the back of the unit is a speaker for the audio track of your film or for music playback although it isn't much cop - as this is a portable player the likelihood is that you will be using headphones anyway, which provides a much better experience all round. The dual headphones mean you can keep twice as many children quiet while you have a siesta. A remote control is also supplied which covers all the major functions and is generally easier to use than fiddling around with the buttons.

Battery life comes in at about 3.5 hours, so will cover the playback of most films. Supplied in the kit you get a mains charger and a 12V charger for hooking up to the car. Considering the large screen, it is good that LG have also included a case - essential for avoiding scratches.

VERDICT

Aside from all the "extras", at its core you know Pocket-lint.com, the premier gadget news and reviews website in the UK

At a glance

What is it?

Portable DVD player

Good

Good modern design, excellent crisp screen, dual headphone, plenty of extra functions

Bad

A little bulky

Verdict

Our only complaint would be the overall thickness of the device, but if you are in the market for a portable DVD player, then this is certainly worth considering

Price £170

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10

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the DB391B is a DVD player - after all, when you insert a DVD, it just starts playing, everything else requires you to dive into menus. The screen is excellent and watching movies on the move is a pleasure as a result.

Our only complaint would be the overall thickness of the device, but if you are in the market for a portable DVD player, then this is certainly worth considering.