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Asus G50v notebook

Compact gaming powerhouse?

by Stephen Patrick published on 17 September 2008

Asus has a small but effective range of gaming notebooks that often buck the trend for building the largest, heaviest design possible. The look of the G50v tells you it's aimed at gamers, as the black and orange glossy finish has a sporty feel to it. Just to emphasise the look, and entice its target market further, there are blue LED lights adding to the overall effect. The speakers are positioned for the best gaming experience.

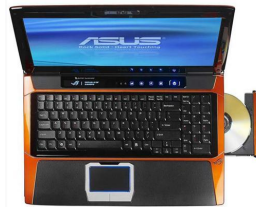
With a 15.4-inch Super-TFT screen, weight is kept to a more than reasonable 3.3kg. So, if you do want to take this machine on the road with you it's not too much of a burden. Sure, you don't get the full gaming impact a 17-inch screen can offer but we think it's an acceptable compromise.

You'll find a Blu-ray drive is built-in as standard, so you can watch high-def movies. To make things easier, the screen has a native 1366 x 768 -pixel resolution, which isn't Full HD but still qualifies as high-def. Images look sharp and we were happy with the results.

Gaming prowess is excellent as the Nvidia GeForce 9700M GT manages to easily be the most powerful single card solution we've seen. It comes with 512MB of its own memory and we found frame rates more than acceptable.

It's not just the gaming side of this notebook that manages to pack a punch, as the core specification is impressive in its own right. Based around Intel's latest Core 2 Duo, the 2.26GHz P8400 is one of the fastest chips available and backed by 4096MB of memory we were able to run multiple applications with ease. The 320GB hard drive offers plenty of space for your media files and overall we were impressed with the performance on offer.

All this power does mean battery life suffers, as we found this machine could last a little over 2



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hours from a full charge.

Additional features are commonplace on this machine. This wouldn't be a gaming machine without highlighted WASD keys and the near full-sized keyboard feels great to the touch.

A feature Asus will be rolling out across all its high-end notebooks is ExpressGate. This is a basic Linux kernel that we've seen on other multimedia notebooks but Asus has added a wider range of functions.

You can drop into ExpressGate in less than 10 seconds, rather than booting into Windows Vista, which can take up to 90 seconds with an average load. It allows you to access your media files but you can also connect to the Internet as well as load files from an external drive or USB memory stick.

VERDICT

The Asus G50v is a great gaming notebook. The build quality and performance are amazing for such a compact machine. It's also great value for the price. If there is any problem with this machine it's the lack of Full HD support, which would have easily made this a Hot Product.

At a glance

What is it?

Gaming notebook

Good

Great look, fast, reasonable price

Bad

Not Full HD screen, average battery life

Verdict

This is a gaming notebook for those who like to play on the move - it's got a powerhouse spec and the 15.4-inch screen means it doesn't weigh a tonne

Price £1100

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10