

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/3518/cyberlink-power-dvd-8-ultra>

CyberLink PowerDVD 8 Ultra - PC

The solution to your movie watching?

by Stephen Patrick published on 9 October 2008

If you watch movies on your PC then it's likely you've already come across CyberLink as its software is bundled with more PCs and notebooks than just about anyone.

CyberLink PowerDVD 8 Ultra takes that basic movie watching experience and moves it into the world of Blu-ray and Full HD. This is the only package in the range to offer Blu-ray and AVCHD support and at £60, this is a costly investment.

Thankfully, it's worth it as we found it the easiest Blu-ray player to use so far. It's a quick install, as the software only takes up 100MB of space. The program loads quickly and as with other CyberLink updates of late, the interface is now black rather than silver. This move has been made to downplay the presence of the interface as the human eye is less likely to notice it, so emphasis is placed on the movie screen instead.

The layout is simple and works well. Instead of trying to replicate your remote control, the buttons are in a strip along the bottom of the screen and all given equal weight. There is even a slider bar allowing you to speed up clips or show it in reverse, which is better than skipping through scenes.

Along with HD support this edition also offers better sound quality through SPDIF splitting. Then there is support for 7.1-surround sound, while 5.1 is the best you can have in lesser editions.

One issue we have with the installation is being forced to use Movie Live! During installation you can choose not to install the components, which basically offers you information on feedback and film synopses and not something everyone will want or use. We chose to skip this feature but before you're allowed to watch a movie for the first time you are forced to sign up to Movie Live!, which is annoying at best.



...cont.

Movie Live! Presents itself as three buttons on the right of the display screen and offers movie info, a view of your downloaded movie collection and finally Remix that allows you to tag sections of any film and add effects.

As always seems to be the case with multimedia software, there are a number of versions on offer. This Ultra Edition is the most expensive and feature-rich, while the Deluxe Edition (£40) offers the same program but without Blu-ray or HD support, except for MPEG4. At the low-end there is the Standard Edition (£30) that lacks any form of HD support.

VERDICT

CyberLink PowerDVD 8 is as powerful and versatile as previous editions but in order to make the most of it you'll need to upgrade to this Ultra version. Blu-ray support is slick, as is the interface, and we found it worked well. If movies are a key component to your PC setup, you need this software.

At a glance

What is it?

DVD playback software

Good

Full HD and AVCHD support, neat interface

Bad

Forces you to use Movie Live! Software

Verdict

You have to pay for Full HD support but it's an investment worth making as this is a great all-round package

Price £60

Our score

8/10

Your score

7/10