

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/review/797/benq-pe-5120-digital-projector>

## BenQ PE 5120 Digital Projector

by Debbie Davies published on 10 January 2005

We never knew it, but BenQ is the world's largest manufacturer of DLP projectors. Until recently, it has made projectors for better-known companies like Hewlett Packard. The PE5120 is BenQ's first home cinema projector bearing the company's name. Aimed at the entry-level market, the projector is designed to work straight out of the box. The projector itself is a fairly small, anonymous off-white box with a third of the back panel taken up with connection options. Pictures can be input via component video, S-video or VGA-DVI cable. This gives you the option to switch between set top box, DVD player, camcorder, games console and PC as your picture source and explains why BenQ calls this a home entertainment, rather than home cinema, projector. It also means that if your output source is high quality, such as a DVD player with component output, you are not losing quality when it comes to feeding in your picture. The remaining rear panel houses the fan, which, while quiet, blows air out of the back of the projector. Some projectors blow air to the side and this sort of detail affects where you position it. A rear fan makes it more difficult to sit a projector on a bookshelf mounted against a wall, for instance. The all-important picture controls on the remote control work very much like the scenic modes used in digital cameras but in place of beach, snow or underwater settings, the PE 5120 has pre-sets for gaming, video, cinema and economic as well as 16:9 (widescreen) or 4:3 (standard) format. If you find calibrating pictures hit and miss then having settings to optimise the picture at the touch of a button is ideal. The gaming pre-set for example, reduces the video contrast and increases the lumens which you will need for playing games during the day. The remote also lets you adjust the picture with the keystone control so it sits squarely. The remote is useful, but it is ridiculously bulky (way too big to measure with our six inch ruler) and obviously a design that has been left over from office projectors. So with all our gadgets connected, and



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picture set to optimum, how did we rate the pictures? The projector uses a digital light processor (DLP) which is generally regarded as superior to LCD for home cinema and it also boasts a fairly good contrast ratio at 2000:1. Despite all this, we found ourselves not falling in love with the picture, but this was subjective. Colours were accurate and there was no rainbow effect but the picture seemed to lack depth. The other disappointment was the throw on the projector. It threw a picture about half the size we expected. This would be an advantage if there were plenty of distance between where you want to sit a projector and where the image hits the wall or screen. If you want a short distance, which can be more practical in the home, you will be disappointed with the size of the image and the 1.2 zoom control gives you hardly any option to change the size of the picture using the lens.

## VERDICT

The PE 5120 was easy to set up and operate and having a choice of component, S-video and DVI (DVI-D and DVI-A) turned it into an all round home entertainment device. When it comes to the picture, whether you like it or not is very subjective, as it is when you choose one TV over another. What surprised us was the difference in throw between this projector and others we have tested. Deciding on a home entertainment projector is not unlike deciding on a new pet: there really are a lot of detailed questions to think about like exactly where in the house is it going to live and who will decide whose turn it is to play.

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## At a glance

### What is it?

Home entertainment projector

### Good

Designed for gaming as well as home cinema

### Bad

Remote control, start up time

### Verdict

We say A good projector for all round home entertainment

**Price** £1000

**Our score**

**7/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**