

WHAT PC? AND SOFTWARE



Cover CD

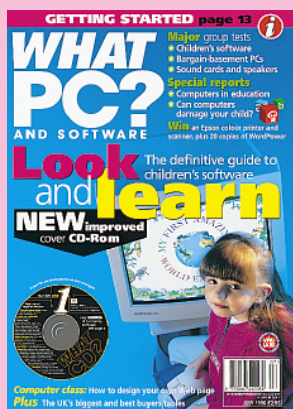
4 What CD? number one

Our fully-interactive cover CD is now better than ever. Each month, you'll find the latest games and multimedia demos; Internet pages galore; our new interactive Getting Started guide to PCs; a resources section filled with essential shareware and utilities; music, photos and poetry in the arts section; plus a 12-month back-issues index of *What PC?*, the complete previous issue of the magazine to read on disc; and much, much more.



Cover story

66 Children's software



A personal computer can open up a world of knowledge for your children – and, through gameplay and interactive stories, learning will be fun as well as factual. We take a look at the vast array of educational software designed to captivate and concentrate the minds of children of all ages.



Features

88 Bargain-basement PCs

Multimedia systems that meet the requirements of everybody in the family needn't cost the earth. We review seven, costing between £900 and £1,300.



108 Sound cards

Whether it's grunts and groans from a gory game or the sophisticated strains of an orchestra, the quality of sound depends on your sound card. We test ten cards.

122 Speakers

You've sorted out the sound card but, to do it justice, you'll need a decent set of speakers. We sample the sound emanating from eleven speaker systems.

139 Computers and your child's health

Children can be faced with violence and problems of addiction through the software they use on their PC. We report on the possible health risks associated with computer games.

147 Computers in education

An understanding of technology and the ability to use it are essential to your child's education. We investigate how computers are being used in schools.



Reviews

23 Up front

Viglen Genie PCI Executive P5/200 200MHz Pentium PC.
CorelDraw 6 for Power Macintosh Corel arrives on the Mac.
Canon BJC-4100 Four-colour 730x360dpi inkjet printer.
Caere Omniform version 2 Electronic form-creation program.
Internet-to-Go One-box bundle to get you on to the Internet.
Mindlink Problem Solver 1.0 Lateral-thinking aid.
Mannesmann Tally T9108 An 8ppm, 600dpi laser printer.
Viglen Dossier CD Notebook with integrated CD-Rom drive.
Primax Compact 4800 An A4, 24-bit flatbed colour scanner.
SOS Help! Info-Author 2.3 Design tool for Windows help files.
Digital HiNote VP CSS575 Pentium colour notebook.
Poser Design package for 3D body modelling.
Okipage 4w A 4ppm, 600dpi LED page printer.
Computer Skills College City & Guilds distance learning of IT.

52 In brief

Video Artist Video-editing program for budding directors.
Fractal Imager Compress graphics files, retain picture quality.
Aztech Zeta eight-speed CD-Rom Speedy CD-Rom drive.
Autofill 500 Ink-refilling for HP Deskjet 500 and 600 inkjets.
3D Walkthrough Home Designer Interior design program.
Deadlock 96 Lite Provides a safe storage area for personal files.
PlanIT Letters Business and personal letter-writing software.
Stardraw 2D Cad package useful for stage-lighting design.
Learn Windows 95 Interactive tutorial.
Time's Up Designed to restrict children's use of the PC.
Geoff Hamilton's Garden Designer PC landscape gardening.

126 Computer class

In the second of two classes, Jane Dorner tells you how to get on line and mount your newly-designed page on the Web.

Regulars

15 News hardware and software latest.

59 Letters and competition winners.

61 Competition An Epson GT-5000 flatbed scanner and Stylus Color II inkjet is the double first prize, plus twenty copies of WordPower.

151 Question time Write to us with your PC problem – if we publish your letter, you'll receive a copy of either MS Works or Publisher.

192 Reader survey Tell us what you think and you could win a copy of Serif PagePlus.

192 Faxline *What PC?* pages via your fax.

223 Product index

224 Back page Next Month; book reviews; and Wendy Grossman finds recent moves to outlaw indecency on the Net hard to swallow.

What PC? buyers guide

Essential advice and information for beginners, plus the most comprehensive buyers tables on the market.



181 Buyers guide contents

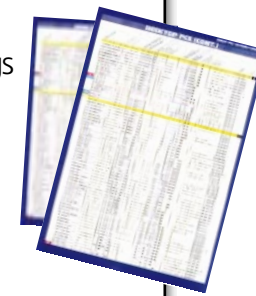
getting started

13,182 Getting started The ultimate beginner's guide to personal computing.

193 How to buy Detailed advice for buyers, including a checklist and a self-questionnaire to help you reach a decision.

196 Tables Make an informed choice from our comprehensive listings of the latest PCs, software & peripherals – including specifications, prices and manufacturers' contact numbers.

203 Buyer's charter



What PC? on the Web

If you have access to the Internet, you can now visit the *What PC?* Web site at: <http://www.vnu.co.uk/vnu/hc/wpc/>

After hours

156 Games We've hunted down some big game goodies, with adventure from Time Gate, action from Big Red Racing, a touch of Abuse, and some jungle fun from Timon and Pumbaa.

163 Family Under examination this month is the History of Medicine, a project to perfect your presentation and a guide to dogs.

167 On line Board Terry Pinnell's Internet Express for this month's trip down Information Highway.

