



top 10 charts

## TOP 10 Flatbed scanners

Details	Last month's position	First reviewed	Price (ex VAT)	Warranty	Maximum scanning area	True colour depth	Interface connection	Optical resolution	Software interpolated resolution	Graphics software
<b>1</b> Epson Perfection 1240U 0800 220 546 www.epson.co.uk	1	Jul 01	£144	1-year	A4 (216x297mm)	42bit	USB	1,200x 2,400dpi	9,600x 9,600dpi	Adobe PhotoDeluxe
<b>2</b> Visioneer OneTouch 5600 USB 01483 445 480 www.visioneer-europe.com	2	Jun 01	£60	2-year	A4 (216x297mm)	42bit	USB	600x 1,200dpi	2,400x 2,400dpi	MGI PhotoSuite III, PhotoEnhancer
<b>3</b> PrimaScan Colorado 2600U 01483 445 480 www.visioneer-europe.com	3	Sept 01	£50	2-year	A4 (216x297mm)	42bit	USB	600x 1,200dpi	2,400x 2,400dpi	MGI PhotoSuite
<b>4</b> Visioneer OneTouch 8100 USB 01483 445 480 www.visioneer-europe.com	4	Jul 01	£85	2-year	A4 (216x297mm)	42bit	USB or parallel	600x 1,200dpi	2,400x 2,400dpi	MGI PhotoSuite II SE
<b>5</b> Canon CanoScan N650U 0121 680 8062 www.canon.co.uk	5	Jul 01	£69	1-year	A4 (216x297mm)	42bit	USB	600x 1,200dpi	9,600x 9,600dpi	ArcSoft PhotoStudio 2000
<b>6</b> Epson Expression 1680 0800 220 546 www.epson.co.uk	6	Sept 01	£649	1-year	A4 (216x297mm)	48bit	USB/SCSI	1,600x 3,200dpi	12,800x 12,800dpi	Adobe Photoshop 5.0 SilverFast A15
<b>7</b> Microtek ScanMaker 4600 01908 317 797 www.microtekeurope.com	7	May 01	£102	2-year	A4 (216x297mm)	42bit	USB	1,200x 2,400dpi	9,600x 9,600dpi	Adobe PhotoDeluxe
<b>8</b> Umax AstraNET iA 101 0870 906 4400 www.umax.co.uk	8	Jan 01	£51	2-year	A4 (216x297mm)	42bit	USB	600x 1,200dpi	9,600x 9,600dpi	Adobe PhotoDeluxe Home
<b>9</b> Agfa SnapScan e20 020 8231 4903 www.agfa.co.uk	9	Feb 01	£79	1-year	A4 (216x297mm)	36bit	USB	600x 1,200dpi	4,600x 4,600dpi	Corel PrintOffice
<b>10</b> HP ScanJet 2200C 0870 547 4747 www.hp.com	10	Jul 01	£50	1-year	A4 (216x297mm)	42bit	USB	600x 1,200dpi	9,600x 9,600dpi	HP PrecisionScan LTX

### 1 Epson Perfection 1240U



Although Epson's 1240U scanner isn't the cheapest model on the market, the Perfection's consistently high performance and unsurpassed scan quality make it the obvious choice for our Best Buy award for yet another month. We were impressed by the 1240U's resolution support because the higher the resolution, the more detail is packed into each image.

The optical resolution – in this case 1,200x2,400dpi (dots per inch) – refers to the scanner's physical capabilities. Software drivers can fool most scanners into producing images of far higher resolutions, but these interpolated figures can be misleading so they should be taken with a pinch of salt.

The Epson scores well for both hardware and software resolution. While the relatively high optical resolution gives it a comfortable advantage over the majority of scanners.

When it comes to scan quality, the Perfection 1240U is a winner, capturing detailed scans of every document and image thrown at it with aplomb.



### 2 Visioneer OneTouch 5600 USB



The 5600 is the first of two Visioneer models in our top four. The enticing £60 price tag makes this an attractive deal. The hardware specifications aren't

astounding but, as the Top 10 chart reveals, they're no worse than those of most sub-£100 models. The optical scan resolution of 600x1,200dpi (dots per inch) can be stretched to 2,400dpi through software interpolation. Most other scanners beat this figure but, to be honest, there's little benefit to be had from going beyond the native 600dpi.

The 5600 takes just under 50 seconds to zip through an A4 scan at 300dpi, while a 5x7in photograph is captured in less than half a minute. Scan quality is reasonable, although the 8100's is slightly superior. We wouldn't expect a £60 scanner to be the best choice for professional users, but we can confidently recommend the 5600 for everyone else. This Visioneer is a competent performer and, when you consider the £60 price tag, it represents excellent value for money.





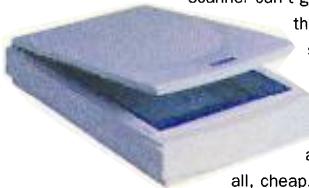
## TOP 10 Flatbed scanners

### 3 PrimaScan Colorado 2600U

The PrimaScan 2600U offers an excellent combination of price, ease of use and quality. It may never live up to the quality settings of the more expensive models, but it performs well enough given its hardware specifications.

The 42bit colour depth is impressive and the 600x1,200dpi (dots per inch) optical resolution ensures detailed scanned images, although colours can be a little washed out. Another advantage is high-speed scanning. We scanned a colour A4 image at 600dpi in just 58 seconds, making this one of the fastest scanners we've looked at.

Anyone interested in getting a first scanner can't go wrong with this bargain. It's simple to operate, fast, relatively good quality and, best of all, cheap.



### 4 Visioneer OneTouch 8100 USB

The 8100 is targeted at the lower end of the scanner market, but the OneTouch's low price tag doesn't stop it providing high-speed scans and good image quality. Ultimately, we felt the 8100 USB didn't exhibit the same all-round value for money as the 5600, but it's still worth serious consideration.

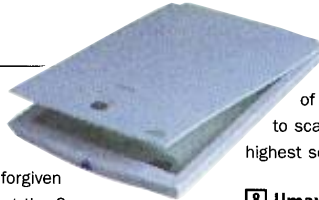
The maximum software-interpolated resolution of 2,400dpi (dots per inch) may seem modest, but you're unlikely to need more than the optical mode of 600x1,200dpi. The OneTouch 8100 is a smooth performer at lower resolutions, and can comfortably scan an A4 page at 300dpi in under 40 seconds, but it struggles with more complex workloads.



### 5 Canon CanoScan N650U

You could be forgiven for thinking that the Canon would struggle on hardware specifications, but its optical resolution of 600x1,200dpi (dots per inch) matches that of its rivals.

We also found Canon's Lide technology resulted in bright and realistically-coloured scans. In fact, its performance belies the price tag of £69. If the CanoScan has a failing, it's a lack of speed. The N650U is no slouch when it comes to scanning photos, but it takes almost two minutes to scan an A4 page at 300dpi.



of speed: it took 30 minutes to scan a colour photograph at the highest setting.

### 8 Umax AstraNET iA 101

Umax customers get 50MB of online storage space, and the unit's one-touch scan button and software make it easy to publish and share pictures on the web.

The AstraNET boasts a respectable set of specifications. The 42bit colour and optical resolution of 600x1,200dpi (dots per inch) result in fine-looking images. Speed isn't the AstraNET's greatest asset, but the £51 price tag represents good value for money.



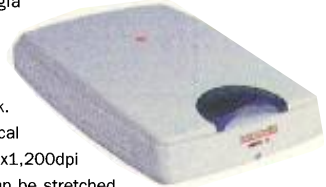
### 6 Epson Expression 1680

The Expression 1680 matches the impeccable performance levels we've come to expect from Epson, resulting in picture-perfect scans even in tricky areas like shadow reproduction and at high resolutions. Resolution support is first-class, with an optical resolution of 1,600x3,200dpi (dots per inch). Speed is unsurpassed too – try and beat 30 seconds for a 600dpi photograph, or three and a half minutes for the full 1,600x3,200 treatment. A high price keeps it in sixth position.



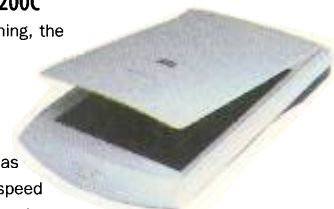
### 9 Agfa SnapScan e20

With so many good scanners dipping under the £80 mark, the competition for a place in the PC Advisor chart is intense. The Agfa SnapScan e20 is a solid product, but it doesn't quite hit the mark. Although the optical resolution of 600x1,200dpi (dots per inch) can be stretched to 4,600dpi with software interpolation, experienced users won't be pleased with its lack of advanced options.



### 10 HP ScanJet 2200C

If price was everything, the HP ScanJet 2200C would have left an impressive mark. However, it fails to deliver in other areas such as scanning speed and picture quality: colours are washed out and are pale imitations of the original images. The optical resolution of 600x1,200dpi (dots per inch) can be stretched to 9,600dpi with software interpolation, but in reality it's not worth venturing beyond 300dpi.



### 7 Microtek ScanMaker 4600

The ScanMaker 4600 is an extremely capable scanner, but its £102 price tag is steep in comparison to the Canon and Visioneer models. The versatile specifications – an optical resolution of 1,200x2,400dpi (dots per inch) with 9,600dpi possible using software interpolation – produced impressive results, but at the expense

