



Buyer's guide

Reviews adapted from PC Advisor magazine. March issue on sale soon



Scan the options

For those who have yet to be prised from their prints, and refuse to yield to the digital-camera revolution, a scanner can be an inexpensive way to reap the benefits of e-photography. By having your snaps printed the conventional way, then scanning them, you can

have your cake and eat it. Once scanned, the photos can be enhanced using specialist software, distributed instantly via e-mail or published in an online photo album.

Attached to a computer and printer, a scanner can also double up as an impromptu photocopier —

although this is not a practical solution for those with heavy photocopying needs.

Our hand-picked selection has scanners of varying sophistication and price, suitable for keen amateurs and design professionals.

PROFESSIONAL'S CHOICE

EPSON EXPRESSION 1680

Typically £649, £564 from www.dabs.com

***** An impressive scanner, but its high price makes it suitable only for professionals

The 1680 adheres to Epson's usual impeccable performance levels. Scanned images are preserved in glorious technicolour, and the difficult areas that have tripped up many a home scanner (reproducing shadows, for example) are brushed aside. With a high maximum resolution, attention to detail is guaranteed, and the scanner's speed is unsurpassed. The



Expression is ideal for professionals; for an extra £200, the Pro edition includes (among other features) a transparency scanner.
Specifications 1,600x3,200 dpi resolution, A4 scanning area, 332x562x133mm, Windows and Mac compatible



FAMILY'S FIRST SCANNER

MUSTEK BE@PAW 2400TA

Typically £80, £76.94 from www.redstore.com

*** The Be@rPaw's simplified approach is great for first-time buyers

Ease of use is this scanner's main draw. Installation is as automated as possible, the software bundle (including Photo Express) is friendly, and it is versatile enough to keep most people happy. Resolution is adequate for day-to-day scan jobs, detail shows through and the colour palette is realistic. The only bones of contention are the lack of speed and the overcast look on default mode. The transparency adapter is a welcome addition.
Specifications 1,200x2,400 dpi resolution, A4 scanning area, 427x297x94mm, Windows only

CRYSTAL-CLEAR QUALITY

VISIONEER ONETOUCH 8700USB

£99.99 from www.visioneer-europe.com

***** The OneTouch offers good value for money, and gives great results, but make sure you have a computer that can cope

The OneTouch is a fine combination of specifications, features and price. The resolution is stunning, showing crystal-clear quality across all scan jobs, with speedy delivery as well. However, an A4 image scanned at the highest resolution consumes a staggering 1.5gb of hard-disk space, so ensure that your system has enough capacity.
Specifications 1,200x4,800 dpi resolution, A4 scanning area, 427x297x94mm, Windows only



Maximum rating

 All prices include Vat