



Group Test **Scanners**

Microtek ScanMaker 3800

£80



Snaazy retro styling wins the ScanMaker our 'best dressed' award



Comparing the scans from the Microtek with both the original and the other scanners' output, we found it gave the image a green hue



Mustek Be@rPaw 2400TA

£77



Mustek's buttons are shaped like a bear's paw, hence the name



The colours in our tests were not accurately reproduced and the scanner's key features are hidden out of sight



Canon scanners also fared well, with the HP and Mustek models falling behind a little, and the Microtek proving disappointing in this test.

We also tested the speed of the various devices and found little more than seconds separating the Canon, Epson, Microtek and Visioneer models. The Mustek and HP models are too slow to be an option for anyone who finds time precious and has a lot of scanning to do.

Ease of use

Canon CanoScan N670U	★★★★★
Epson Perfection 1250 Photo	★★★★★
HP Scanjet 2200c	★★★★★
Microtek ScanMaker 3800	★★★★★
Mustek Be@rPaw 2400TA	★★★★★
Visioneer OneTouch 8700USB	★★★★★

All the scanners here are configured to be easy to use but some models are easier than others. Of the installation routines, the best belongs to Canon because the interface is attractive and you get plenty of control over what software elements you can install.

When it comes to scanning, all of these units bring up a dialogue box when you

initiate them. All the scanners offer at least two sets of options, one for basic scanning and the other offering more advanced functions. We feel both the HP and Mustek scanners attempt to over-simplify the process by hiding key options. The HP software won't let you alter the resolution of a scan unless you go scrabbling around in a set of unfriendly-looking sub-menus. In our minds, resolution is something that a regular user will need to come to terms with very quickly, and while the concept may be a little unfriendly, the functions should be easily accessible for people to experiment with.

The Mustek has two software devices you can call up. The basic one won't share information on the resolution you're scanning at. The advanced version is so well hidden it's only mentioned on the very last page of the manual. We understand why HP and Mustek have chosen this path as it means the absolute beginner won't get bogged down in detail, and you need to get to grips with quite a lot to become a good scanner user. However, in both cases we think the software has been oversimplified, leaving the beginner with too steep a learning curve to further develop their skills.

All of the scanners come with buttons so you can simply place a photo on the glass, select what you want to do with it and scan without any fuss. The Visioneer model has the most options with seven buttons including a custom one, which can be used to automatically transfer your scanned image to any application you like.

Value for money

Canon CanoScan N670U	★★★★★
Epson Perfection 1250 Photo	★★★★★
HP Scanjet 2200c	★★★★★
Microtek ScanMaker 3800	★★★★★
Mustek Be@rPaw 2400TA	★★★★★
Visioneer OneTouch 8700USB	★★★★★

When you stop and consider that only a few years ago, flatbed scanners were things of luxury found only in the realm of the professional, it's amazing that we can now lay our hands on one for less than £60. At this kind of price, buying a decent quality scanner takes little soul searching and it would be wrong to describe any scanner in this selection as poor value for money.

Considering its low price of £69, making it second cheapest in the test, we thought the Canon device was excellent value for



Scanners Group Test

Visioneer OneTouch 8700USB



£100



Visioneer's scanner opens sideways and has the most buttons



The OneTouch fared excellently in all our tests, but is lacking in terms of features



Verdict

Webuser GOLD AWARD



Canon CanoScan N670U

The CanoScan wins out as a good all-rounder, with Epson and Visioneer following close behind



Webuser SILVER AWARD

Epson Perfection 1250 Photo



Webuser BRONZE AWARD

Visioneer OneTouch 8700 USB

- Canon CanoScan N670U ★★★★★
- Epson Perfection 1250 Photo ★★★★★
- HP Scanjet 2200c ★★★★★
- Microtek ScanMaker 3800 ★★★★★
- Mustek Be@rPaw 2400TA ★★★★★
- Visioneer OneTouch 8700USB ★★★★★

money. It doesn't have some of the more extravagant features but it's a solid performer and is simple to use.

The HP is also a bit of a bargain if you're looking for no frills and a minimum cost. Of the more expensive models, we thought the Visioneer offered decent value simply because it turned out such good scans.

The other scanners aren't such bad value for money, but we think they are bubbling under these bargain models.

The Visioneer OneTouch 8700USB produces exceptional quality scans and wins our Bronze Award. It's also very easy to use and good value for money, though it has fewer extra features than its competitors.

We give our Silver Award to the Epson Perfection 1250 Photo. Although this is the most expensive scanner on offer and loses out in the value for money stakes, what you get for that money is an excellent all-rounder. It has some

nice extra features, particularly the transparency adaptor for keen photographers, creates good scans and is easy enough to use.

King of the crop however, and winner of our Gold Award, is the Canon CanoScan N670U. This model performs well, but impresses us most with its ease of use and all-round value for money. The fact that it is small and can easily be hidden away when not in use is also very attractive.

Make and model	Price	Optical resolution	Enhanced resolution	Colour depth	Transparency adaptor?	Separate power supply required?	Dimensions (LxWxH) (mm)	Website
Canon CanoScan N670U	£69	600 x 1,200dpi	9,600dpi	48-bit (281 trillion colours)	No	No	383 x 256 x 34	www.canon.co.uk
Epson Perfection 1250 Photo	£119	1,200 x 2,400dpi	9,600dpi	48-bit (281 trillion colours)	Yes	Yes	438 x 278 x 67	www.epson.co.uk
HP Scanjet 2200c	£59	600 x 1,200dpi	9,600dpi	42-bit (4 trillion colours)	No	Yes	297 x 216 x 60	www.hp.com
Microtek ScanMaker 3800	£80	600 x 1,200dpi	9,600dpi	48-bit (281 trillion colours)	No	Yes	434 x 287 x 79	www.microtek.nl
Mustek Be@rPaw 2400TA	£77	1,200 x 2,400dpi	19,200dpi	48-bit (281 trillion colours)	Yes	Yes	436 x 261 x 80	www.mustek-europe.com
Visioneer OneTouch 8700USB	£100	1,200 x 4,800dpi	4,800dpi	48-bit (281 trillion colours)	No	Yes	427 x 297 x 94	www.visioneer-europe.com

All scanners connect via USB and are capable of scanning up to A4