

A > SHARP ZQ-750, \$350

ONE of the prime advantages of this is not having to sit there squinting at the screen, going tap, tap, tap with a fake pencil. Yes, it's as big and heavy as metaphysics, but you get a lavish amount of keyboard space in return. The 2.5MB memory will let you carry around all the info a man needs in a day, but don't expect it to stand up and sing for you.

★★★★

B > SHARP ZQ-190, \$90

THE ZQ-190 may be light, but it's still a rather careless size, considering the screen is the smallest of the lot and the keyboard's poky as hell. The underwhelming 256KB memory might cope with the details of very close friends, but not much more.

★★

C > CASSIOPEIA E200 POCKET PC, \$1399

THEY'RE not joking with this "pocket PC" business. It used to take whole rooms full of whirring and clicking to give you the 206MHz of processing power and 64MB of RAM that now lie (albeit slightly heavily) in your hand. It's less intuitive and less sexy than the Palms, but the colour screen's huge and you'd have to have a BIG life to fill it up.

★★★★★

D > PALM M500, \$799

THE 500 is Palm cute and Palm, er, friendly, with sharp graphics – but a monochrome screen. It's an odd omission (corrected on the Palm M505) as everything else is right there: the zippy processing speed, the mammoth memory, and the ability to take a boatload of useful accessories on-board.

★★★★★

E > COMPAQ IPAQ POCKET PC H3870, \$1499

ONCE the big rubber overcoat of a travelling case has been removed, this is a great-looking piece of kit. The controls are easy to find your way around, including the ergonomic rocker switch that makes you want to scroll forever. Well, a bit longer, anyway. It is another PDA with a colossal 64MB memory, and this model has Bluetooth capability for all that wireless fun. Damn fine.

★★★★★

F > HP JORNADA 565, \$1249

A VERY respectable 32MB of memory here, but the payoff is something that will sit in your pocket as heavy as a killer's conscience. Friendly controls and the Windows operating system make it a good use, and the plastic shell will withstand the drop when it eventually wears out the lining of your jacket.

★★★

G > TOSHIBA POCKET PC E570, \$1249

TOSHIBA has entered the market at the high end and done a really good job of it, too. It might be slightly on the heavy side, but it's got a lot of speed and power (32MB flash ROM, 64MB RAM, 206MHz processor) and a sharp colour screen. It's also got one of those amusing handwriting-recognition packages, so you can write "John Smith" on the screen and up pops "Mrs Glenda Sheeptrouser".

★★★★★

H > PALM M505, \$999

CLAIMS to be the best computer-in-your-pocket around, and can't be far off. Why buy the Palm 500, when for that bit of extra cash you can get all the same features plus a colour screen? The batteries get a bit of a hammering, but this not only looks the absolute business, it will do everything except tell you not to wear that horrible mint-green tie again.

★★★★★



<< BEST VALUE FOR MONEY

PALM M125, \$489

The 125 is ideal for someone who just wants to store and retrieve a decent amount of info quickly. The graphics are in reasonably bright monochrome and the memory and processing power are amazing for the price. You won't be able to carry around 20 digital pictures of your girlfriend, but you'll probably still remember her OK when you see her again.

★★★★★

Photos > Richard Mortimer