Toshiba Portege Z20t

SILENT, LONG-LASTING AND WITH DESIGN GEARED TOWARDS RELIABLE USEABILITY

Another Core M-based device lets us see further evidence of its advantages – and cons. Toshiba is pitching the Portege Z20t as a business device, but also hopes to sell them into schools, so it's a sturdily built device with thoughtful features.

The fanless Core M CPU allows this transformer to operate silently, and with impressive battery life. Indeed, the battery function is its most impressive feature. Both the keyboard unit and tablet section pack a battery. When running with the keyboard attached (and not connected to the mains), it draws power first from the keyboard battery, then the tablet battery when that's drained. Conversely, when connected to the mains the tablet battery is charged first. This, so you always have the maximum possible charge for tableting. On the tablet battery alone 9 hours of operation is possible, and an impressive 17.5 hours with the keyboard.

On the downside, the Core-M's fan-less design creates a lot of heat, a trend we've seen in all Core M devices so far. The hotspot is on the right rear of the tablet – exactly where your right hand falls. In gaming, spreadsheet and video tests it became very warm indeed. Never painful, but still distractingly warm.

The tablet-to-keyboard connector allows the tablet screen to be positioned facing backwards or forwards. Two large and sturdy-looking metal lugs keep it in place. It's not as discrete as other connectors, but looks to be the goods for maximum durability and strength.

A big thumbs-up for the matte screen, which shows up clearly even with bright overhead office lights.

It's available in three models (4 or 8GB RAM, 128 or 256GB RAM), all with the same Core M-5Y71 CPU, which scaled between 800MHz and 2.86GHz (of a 2.90GHz maximum) in our testing. The dual-core Core M can't compete with an i5 or i7, and for a similar price many i5 or i7 ultrabooks beckon for your dollar. However, if a sturdy and flexible design plus silence and battery life are the priorities, it's a very impressive piece of kit.

Ben Mansill

KEY SPECS

$1672 - $2310 · www.toshiba.com.au

Intel Core M-5Y71 CPU · 4 or 8GB DDR3L RAM · 128 or 256GB SSD · 12.5in 1920x1080 touch screen · active digitiser stylus · HDMI, 2xUSB 3, 10/100/1000 LAN · Kensington lock

OVERALL

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