

VCRs

An update on our Best Buys

BEST BUYS

VCRs still offer the cheapest way to record TV programmes. But with all the new alternatives – from DVD recorders (see p44) to personal video recorders (see opposite) – manufacturers aren't investing much in developing the humble VCR. Many are drastically cutting back their range.

Consequently, there are fewer models available than a few years ago. We could find only four new ones for our latest test update. We show their results, and those of previously tested models that

are still available, in the table. The previously tested **Panasonic (1)**, £100 from Miller Brothers, Powerhouse and John Lewis, is easy to use, but picture quality isn't as good as the best we've seen.

The newly tested **Panasonic (2)** uses S-VHS tapes for superior picture quality, though it can play back regular VHS recordings, too. It certainly scored well with our viewing panel, which gave it a top rating. It had good sound quality and was easy to use, too. It's available from Miller Brothers for £170.

WHICH? EXTRA

To read more about VCRs, including details of features to look for, and frequently updated test results, go to www.which.co.uk/vcrs



TABLE NOTES

Specification

Price Typical high-street price if you shop around.

Features

AV/Scart sockets The number of connectors for linking to other equipment.

VideoPlus Allows you to program the VCR by typing in codes shown in TV listings magazines.

VideoPlus Deluxe Lets you program recordings from more than one digital

channel at a time. It works only with digital satellite and some digital cable set-top boxes, not Freeview boxes. **Scart loop through** Lets you link your set-top box to your TV via the VCR.

Handy if you don't have an additional Scart output on your set-top box for linking direct to the TV. **Scart link recording** Can program via a set-top box on-screen guide. Compatible only with Sky boxes and some of the latest Freeview boxes.

SCORE

This ignores price and is based on:

Picture quality	40%
Sound quality	25%
Ease of use	20%
Features	15%

KEY

★	☆	○	◐	●
Best				Worst
■ Best Buy				

VCRs	Specification			Features					Performance			Score (%)
	Price (£)	Size wxdxh (cm)	S-VHS	AV/Scart sockets	Video-Plus	VideoPlus Deluxe	Scart loop through	Scart link recording	Picture quality	Sound quality	Ease of use	
MODEL												
1 Panasonic NV-HV61EB	100	44x28x10		2	✓		✓	✓	☆	★	☆	85
2 Panasonic NV-SV121EBS	170	43x28x9	✓	3	✓		✓	✓	★	☆	☆	85
3 Sharp VC-MH705HM	80	36x23x10		3			✓		★	★	◐	84
4 JVC HR-V605EK	70	40x28x10		2	✓	✓		✓	☆	☆	○	75
5 JVC HR-S5975	100	40x29x9	✓	2	✓		✓	✓	★	○	◐	75
6 Sony SLV-SE830	130	43x25x10		3	✓		✓		○	★	○	73
7 Panasonic NV-HV60EBS	120	43x29x9		2	✓		✓	✓	○	☆	☆	71
8 Sony SLV-SE740G	100	44x26x10		2	✓		✓	✓	○	☆	☆	69
9 Toshiba V634UK	50	37x25x10		2			✓		○	★	○	69
10 Sanyo VHR-H803E	90	36x28x10		3	✓		✓	✓	◐	★	○	67
11 Sharp VC-MH715HM	75	36x23x9		2	✓		✓		○	☆	○	65
12 Toshiba V754UK	100	43x24x10		3	✓		✓		○	○	○	61
13 JVC HR-V616	80	40x29x9		2	✓	✓	✓	✓	○	○	◐	60
14 Sanyo VHR-H804E	75	37x24x9		3	✓			✓	◐	○	☆	58