

A poor combination

If you're after a TV with a built-in DVD player, a conventional set has the best picture and sound

If you're short of space – say, in the kitchen or a child's bedroom – and want to avoid a confusion of wires, a combination TV and DVD player sounds ideal. However, none of the TVs tested is truly widescreen, so digital pictures may look squashed or stretched. And none of them has a digital tuner, so when the analogue signal starts being switched off in 2008 they'll become obsolete.

Our tests also show that you may end up compromising on the quality of picture and sound. Overall, the six small TVs with built-in DVD players that we tested were disappointing

compared with separate TVs and DVD players. We managed to find a Best Buy combination based on the traditional cathode ray tube (CRT), but the three liquid crystal display (LCD) and DVD combinations we tested were particularly poor. So avoid these for now.

If you've got your heart set on an LCD TV, buy a separate set (see p55 for our Best Buy portable LCD TVs) and link it to a DVD player instead (we'll have results for our new Best Buys next month). It might cost you a bit more but you'll get much better picture and sound.

USING THE TABLE

We tested best-selling and new models from leading manufacturers. The more stars the better.

Specification

Price For Best Buys we give the cheapest widely available high-street price as we went to press. Online prices are in *italics*. Prices for other models are what you can expect to pay.
Screen Diagonal measurement in inches of the TV screen.

Features

Scarts The number of sockets available to connect extra audio-video equipment to your TV. **Audio out** A dedicated socket for connecting your TV to a hi-fi to enhance its sound. **Bookmark** Marks favourite scenes on the current disc (disc must be left in the player or this feature will be lost). **Resume** See 'What you should look for', opposite. The number indicates how many discs the machine holds data for.

Test performance

Picture/Sound/Ease of use Ratings for picture and sound quality plus ease of use of TV and DVD player, based on technical measurements and expert user assessments.

Score

This ignores price and is based on:
Picture quality **40%**
Ease of use **25%**
Sound quality **20%**
Features **10%**
Power use **5%**

Contacts

Bush
0870 873 0079
www.bush-radio.co.uk

DMTech
020 8232 3296

www.dmtechnology.co.uk
Goodmans
023 9239 1000
www.goodmans.co.uk
Hitachi (Argos)

0870 600 8784
www.argos.co.uk
Philips
0845 601 0354
www.philips.co.uk



65% Philips 15PT6807/05 £140

The picture on this 15-inch flat-screen CRT combi is superb when watching TV broadcasts and playing DVDs. Sound is disappointing, but it has a coaxial digital audio output for linking to a surround-sound amplifier.

The DVD player is easy to use, with some nifty options, including bookmarking for your favourite scenes on a disc, and the resume feature, which can recall where you left off watching up to four DVDs. The TV has one Scart socket, so

you can link it to a set-top box, too. The composite video socket lets you connect it to a portable device such as a camcorder, and you can also plug in a pair of headphones. The Philips is available at Argos and Comet.

WE LIKE The pictures on the Philips are better than on the LCD TVs we tested – and it can be less than half the price.

Cheapest store Comet **Weight** 12.5kg
Sockets One Scart (RGB), headphones, stereo audio **Bookmarking** Yes
Resume Yes **MP3** Yes **Jpeg** CD Yes
Jpeg DVD Yes **Handle** No



Facts & scores

Extra snippets from our testing team

Child protection

These two Philips models are the only combi TVs with a Pin-activated child lock for the front controls of the TV (but not the remote control).

MODEL		PRICE (£)
CONVENTIONAL		
1	PHILIPS 15PT6807/05	140
2	PHILIPS 14PT6107/05	100
3	HITACHI C14D24	100
LCD		
4	DMTECH LM17DS-1V05DM1N	399
5	GOODMANS GLCD17W2DVD	354
6	BUSH LCD15DVD013	250

What you should look for

RESUME

Resume means the DVD player will start the disc where you stopped it (instead of at the beginning each time) – though you usually have to leave the disc in and the player on standby. Models with multi-disc resume remember where to start playing the disc even after you've removed it and reinserted it

DISCS

Not all DVD discs are the same. All DVD players will play pre-recorded DVDs (those you rent or buy). But if you record your own there are several different formats – DVD-R, DVD+R, DVD-RW, DVD+RW and DVD Ram. None of the players we tested plays back DVD Ram discs. However, they can all play standard CDs and discs containing Jpeg picture files, so you can show your holiday snaps on your TV screen, for example

REGIONS

A DVD is coded according to the region in which it will be sold and distributed. The combi TVs we tested play back DVDs from region 2 (western Europe). However, we found that the Goodmans (5) played back discs from region 1 (US) despite not claiming to do so



Don't Buy



None of the LCD combis on test is worth buying, but the picture and sound on the Bush LCD15DVD013 (6) are particularly poor, especially on the DVD player. It's also tricky to use. Inserting a DVD is confusing because you have to put the disc in with the label facing away from you, and the remote control is cluttered, with lots of buttons and tiny writing. The DVD player also lacks useful features, such as bookmarking and resume.



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SPECIFICATION		FEATURES								WHICH? TEST PERFORMANCE						SCORE %
SIZE WxHxD (cm)	SCREEN (in)	SCARTS	AUDIO OUT	BOOKMARK	RESUME	MP3	JPEG CD	JPEG DVD	HANDLE	TV			DVD PLAYER			
										PICTURE	SOUND	EASE OF USE	PICTURE	SOUND	EASE OF USE	
38x40x40	15	1	✓	✓	4	✓	✓	✓		★★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★★★	★	★★★★	65
39x40x38	14	1	✓	✓	4	✓	✓	✓	✓	★★★★	★★	★★★	★★★★★	★★	★★★★	57
37x40x40	14	1	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★	55
48x35x9	17	1		✓		✓	✓	✓		★★★	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	49
48x33x8	17	1	✓	✓			✓	✓		★★★	★★★	★★	★★★	★★	★★	44
49x30x9	15	1	✓			✓	✓	✓		★★	★★★	★	★★	★★	★★★	32