

Projector in Disguise

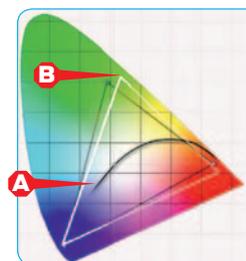
A familiar 720p PJ gets a bit of a going over. **Jim Hill** is suffering déjà vu



→ Specifications

HD Ready: YES
Video scaling: YES up to 720p
Progressive scan: YES 576p and 720p
Composite video in: YES for emergencies only
S-Video in: YES the next step up
Component video in: YES two of these
Scart: NO as expected
HDMI/DVI: YES one HDMI socket
PC input: YES VGA
Dimensions:
 119(h) x 315(w) x 279(d) mm
Weight: 4kg
Features: DLP technology; 1280 x 768 resolution; 30dB fan noise in 'Eco' mode; 1200 ANSI Lumens brightness; 6500:1 contrast ratio (claimed); Auto Power Off; 5x Speed, 6 Segment Color Wheel

→ Tech Labs



A: Using the 6,500K preset, colour was still a little 'hot' until adjusted manually
B: Slightly high green readings gave no significant picture problems

Two thoughts are possibly going through your mind as you look at this mid-priced DLP projector from Eiki. The first is probably, 'Who the heck is Eiki?', and the second might be, 'Haven't I seen this PJ somewhere before?'

Eiki is actually a Japanese brand that's just begun to get distributed in the UK and yes, this is indeed a re-badged Sharp XV-Z3000, but with a few tweaks and a more competitive price point. This means you're getting a relatively small HD Ready projector, with a native 720p DMD chipset by Texas Instruments and Sharp's finely-honed light engine and optics, for a very reasonable £1,500.

Feed the Eiki some hi-def material and it'll show you what an HD Ready DLP projector is capable of: vivid colours, high contrast, sharp edges and lots of fine detail. Colour reproduction and contrast are stronger than any of the LCD contenders in this price range and there's no visible pixel structure on screen – until you put your face right next to it anyway.

It takes a while to get the contrast levels right, but when you do, Blu-ray delights like the *Oceans Deep* episode of *Planet Earth*, get the inky blackness of the ocean bottom reassuringly black rather than just dark grey.

Before you rush out and snap up Eiki's entire stock though, there are a few caveats. **This is definitely step-up territory in terms of price** and yet there's no variable iris and no optical lens shift. Instead you have to rely on digital keystone correction, which significantly compromises the picture. The throw ratio is very short and the zoom seems to have little effect on the image size, so you're limited as to where you can install it. And the operating noise level –30dB in 'eco mode', 33dB at other times – is a bit distracting.

Conclusion

Keenly priced and well made, this Eiki is worthy of consideration. Yet, pressure from increasingly competitive Full HD projectors make it not the bargain it might once have been ●

Brand new brand:

Eiki may not be a household name, but the EIP-1600T could change that

Before calibration

Colour temperature: 7,969K
Luminance: 1636fL

After calibration

Contrast ratio: 3500:1
Luminance: 1620fL



HCC VERDICT

Eiki EIP-1600T
 £1,500 Approx

Highs: Vivid 720p imaging and accurate DVD upscaling; good blacks
Lows: Some fan noise; short throw ratio and no lens shift limits installation options

Performance: 1 2 3 4 5

Design: 1 2 3 4 5

Features: 1 2 3 4 5

Overall: 1 2 3 4 5