



NEC MultiSync EA271U

It may be expensive, but your eyes – or employees – will thank you for the investment in the long run

SCORE ★★★★★

PRICE £712 (£854 inc VAT)
from bechtle.co.uk

Comparing the Hannspree (see p64) to this NEC monitor is a touch unfair – it's double the price, after all – but also shows what you get for your money. They're also aimed at two completely different markets: while the Hannspree is all about wallop your eyes with vivid colours, the MultiSync is aimed at demanding office workers. The idea is that you can stare at this monitor for a day without feeling fatigue, all while delivering a top-quality image.

While combating eye fatigue is difficult to judge objectively, the EA271U ticks all the right boxes. An ambient light sensor means it can optimise the brightness for conditions, while a combination of low blue light and flicker-free technology means that your eyes should feel fine at the end of the day. Personally, I didn't notice a big difference compared to the Hannspree, but I certainly didn't struggle with sore eyes at the end of an eight-hour day.

The one thing I did immediately notice was the quality of the image. It helps that this is a 4K screen, with 3,840 x 2,160 pixels ensuring that everything looks pin-sharp. But the most obvious sign of this panel's top-tier background was the quality of the whites. I spend a lot of my time in Word, Google Docs and Excel, and it feels like you're staring at a pure white sheet of paper.

My tests backed this up. While this screen doesn't claim to be suitable for graphics professionals (it proved to have a slight green bias at default settings), with a little tweaking it's superb. In the pre-supplied sRGB mode, it displayed 97% of the sRGB gamut with a 98.6% volume, but when I switched to the user mode and nudged the green downwards it increased to 97.6% and 109.5%.



The latter value isn't as high as the Hannspree, but that figure shouldn't be used in isolation: while this screen can't display some of the more vivid colours of that quantum dot-powered panel, you can trust its accuracy far more. I measured an average Delta E of 0.5 with a maximum of 1.29 – which are both phenomenal results for a display that isn't aimed at graphic designers.

Note in particular that it isn't designed for Adobe RGB or NTSC colour gamuts, with NEC claiming volume figures of 81.6% and 78% respectively. A response time of 5ms shows that it's more than capable of gaming if you want to kill aliens at the end of a working day, while a measured contrast ratio of 1,078:1 is also excellent.

It's a doddle to adjust the settings too, with the touch-sensitive controls on the front made blissfully easy to understand thanks to text boxes appearing above them when activated. Once in, you can make an enormous number of changes to everything from colour balance to eco settings to the brightness of the blue LED at the bottom right of the screen.

ABOVE The 4K screen is razor sharp, with both images and Excel spreadsheets looking equally classy



“In fact, there's very little this screen can't do. Want to feed power, audio and video signals via USB-C? No problem”

LEFT The controls are touch-sensitive and helpful text boxes appear above them

BELOW You can smoothly swivel the monitor into portrait mode

In fact, there's very little this screen can't do. Want to feed power, audio and video signals via USB-C? No problem. There are also two HDMI ports and a DisplayPort, with three-port USB hub for good measure. You can of course VESA mount the NEC MultiSync, but if you do so you'll be missing out on an incredibly versatile stand: it can smoothly rotate into portrait, of course, and do so in either direction, and if you want to swivel the screen left or right then that's covered too. In fact, it can almost do an owl-style 360° swivel,

falling short by 20°. Add a 150mm height adjustment plus tilt adjustment from -5° to 35° and this is, unequivocally, the most versatile stand I've seen.

I can't give such fulsome praise to the pair of 1W speakers, but they're fine for listening to the radio and viewing Facebook videos. An almost total absence of bass makes them much less suitable for playing music or enjoying a movie, though.

The fact that this is my only real criticism of this screen speaks volumes, even if it can't hit them. It's a top-notch all-round display and worth every penny of the asking price.

TIM DANTON

SPECIFICATIONS

27in 3,840 x 2,160 IPS panel • max 75Hz refresh rate • 5ms response time • DisplayPort • 2 x HDMI 2 (with HDCP 1.4) • USB-C • USB 3.1 hub with 3-up/2-down ports • 2 x 1W speakers • portrait mode • -170° to 170° swivel • -5° to 35° tilt • 150mm height adjustment • 612 x 250 x 378-528mm (WDH) • 9.5kg • 3yr warranty including backlight

