



# LG Gram 17

The 17in version of the LG Gram has a lot to live up to. Thankfully, it's just as impressive as its smaller sibling



**SCORE** ★★★★★

**PRICE** \$1,699 from [pcpro.link/295gram](http://pcpro.link/295gram)

**L**G may not be the first name you associate with laptops, but its Gram series has turned heads. Last year, the South Korean firm released a 15in version that gained lavish praise for its phenomenal battery life, low weight and stunning display. When LG announced a 17in version at CES this year, suffice to say expectations were high.

## ■ Slimline tonic

The svelte and lightweight design of the LG Gram 17 is one of its biggest selling points. As the photographs here attest, it's a lovely-looking laptop, and equally pleasant to hold. It's deceptively light for its size and it surprises everyone who picks it up. And little wonder, with a 17in screen in a laptop that weighs only 1.33kg. In contrast, the Dell XPS 15 weighs 2kg.

Alight frame doesn't automatically mean travel-friendly, though, with the added screen size meaning the Gram 17 will struggle to squeeze into smaller bags or rucksacks. You might

want the protection, too. The LG Gram 17's chassis is made of an extremely light metal alloy (nano carbon mixed with magnesium), but while the base feels sturdy, the laptop lid is flimsy. It looks fine but can be wobbled like a piece of cardboard. The hinge is well-engineered, however, and the screen lifts smoothly with a single finger.

It's not quite an edge-to-edge display but the bezels are still sleek, especially on the sides. The LG winking logo sits below the display, with the HD webcam sitting top and centre. LG doesn't offer any other colours besides the plain silver finish you see here, which is disappointing – the dual colour scheme of the XPS 15 is more interesting.

Unlike the X1 Extreme on p54, you aren't lavished with ports. You'll find an HDMI 2 port and USB-C 3.1 slot on the left, along with a power port and lone USB-A 3.1 socket. Two more USB-A ports sit on the opposite side, along with a microSD reader, 3.5mm audio jack and security lock slot.

Poor audio quality was the original Gram's only real let-down. Sadly, it's much the same here. The downward facing speakers are pressed right up

**ABOVE** Not only does the Gram 17 look sleek in silver, but it's also deceptively light at just 1.33kg

against the laptop's resting surface, which increases the volume but worsens the sound quality. Music sounds muffled and messy and the more instruments you have, the worse it gets. Differentiation between bass levels is practically non-existent. It's a shame as the viewing experience on that display is so wonderful.

The 17in IPS display is vibrant, crisp, vivid and with a high contrast ratio. It might not be 4K, but the HDR video-streaming capabilities are arguably of greater importance. The 2,560 x 1,600 resolution is more than adequate for a panel of this size, and due to the display's quality you can

**“Due to the display's quality you can genuinely enjoy watching films on this laptop – and that's coming from a cinema snob”**

enjoy watching films on this laptop. And that's coming from a cinema snob who normally refuses to watch a film on anything smaller than a 50in screen.

Diving into the numbers, the display remains just as impressive. It has an 89.6% sRGB gamut coverage and a solid Delta E average of 1.54 – almost every colour is dead on, apart from some shades of grey. The 1,554:1 contrast ratio helps images “pop” right out and the maximum brightness of 397cd/m<sup>2</sup> is more than enough for almost any environment. The only exception is direct sunlight. I only wish the panel was less reflective under office lights.

**LEFT** You're well supplied on the ports front: there's a USB-C, HDMI 2, three USB-As and a microSD reader





Like the LG Gram that came before it, the Gram 17's display is best-in-class. The Dell XPS 15 has a higher sRGB gamut coverage of 95.5%, but its 3.21 Delta E average makes it less suitable for professional photo and video editing than the Gram 17. It's worth noting for gamers that this is a 60Hz panel, so if you're after smooth 144Hz performance, you're better off with a gaming laptop.

### ■ Balanced power

But this is hardly a laptop built for games. It relies on the Intel UHD 620 Graphics built into the quad-core 8th-Gen Intel Core i7-8565U. This is a fast processor – unless you compare it to the H Series chip in the ThinkPad X1 Extreme – and with 16GB of RAM it performed respectably well in our tests. It achieved an overall score of 90 in our media-focused benchmarks, and a fine 5,163 in Geekbench 4's single-core test. As a multicore result of 13,925 shows, though, others will outstrip it in such tasks.

LG skimps with the 512GB SSD storage, choosing SATA 3 rather than a PCIe NVMe unit. In the AS SSD benchmark, the LG Gram achieved a sequential file read speed of 518MB/sec and wrote files at 468MB/sec. That's about a quarter of the speeds we see from the best NVMe SSDs.

Only those writing hundreds of gigabytes to the disk will notice, though.

If you are hoping to do some gaming, dampen your expectations. It can run some games to a decent level – at 1080p, *Dirt Showdown's* benchmark ran at an average of 28fps on High settings, and at 720p that went up to 43fps – but it's far better suited to *Minecraft* and *The Sims* than *Battlefield V* or *Apex Legends*.

One trait I'm glad the LG Gram 17 shares with its 15in predecessor is battery life, which is nothing short of incredible. It's also nothing short of

11hrs 16mins, which was how long it lasted in our battery rundown test. The power efficiency of this laptop is a real achievement, even more so considering the added display size and the more powerful CPU. If you want a plus-sized laptop that lasts all day, the LG Gram 17 is the device for you.

### ■ Key features

With those large dimensions, there's a luxurious amount of space for the keyboard, touchpad and palm rests. If anything, it's a bit too far of a stretch to the keyboard from the bottom edge of the base. I like the keyboard, though, and would be happy to type on it all day. Note the fingerprint reader in the power button, too.

The generously sized touchpad is smooth and sensitive, offering as good an experience as you would hope for on a premium laptop. The left- and right-clickers are integrated into the pad, but work well. Overall, this is a well-machined piece of kit.

One annoying feature, carried over from the previous Gram, is LG's use of an on-screen window that pops

up on the display every time you hit Caps Lock on or off. It sits bang in the middle of the screen for three seconds before fading, and there's no obvious way to turn it off in keyboard settings.

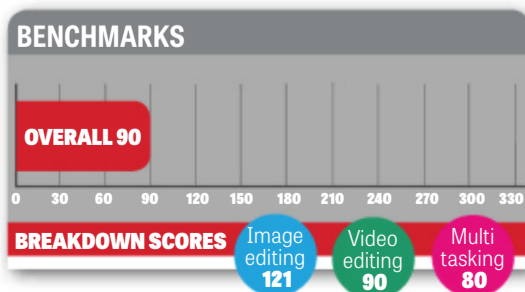
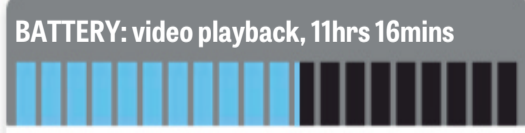
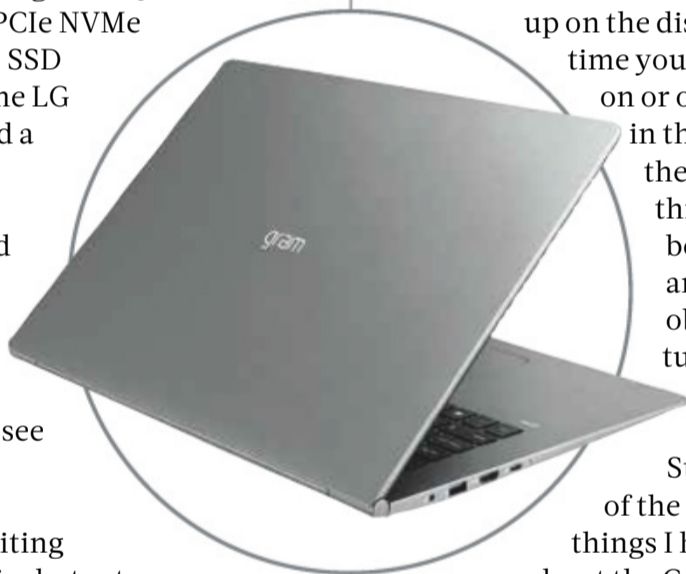
Still, that's one of the few negative things I have to say about the Gram 17. Apart

from its slow sequential SSD speeds and muddy speakers, it's the full package, combining an elegant and lightweight design with nippy performance and excellent battery life. And that 17in display is something else. If you don't mind the increased surface area, the Gram 17 improves on the first Gram in every way, and the larger screen sets it apart from rivals when it comes to watching video.

The poser is that we don't know what the UK price will be yet. It's on sale in the US for \$1,699 before taxes and, if it lands here at £1,500, it will be an excellent buy. **TOM BRUCE**

### SPECIFICATIONS

Quad-core 1.8GHz Intel Core i7-8565U processor • Intel UHD Graphics 620 • 16GB 2,400MHz DDR4 RAM • 17in IPS display, 2,560 x 1,600 resolution • 512GB SATA 3 SSD • 2x2 802.11ac Wi-Fi • Bluetooth 5 • USB-C 3.1 • 2x USB-A 3.1 • HDMI 2 • microSD card reader • 720p webcam • 72Wh battery • Windows 10 Home • 381 x 267 x 25.4mm (WDH) • 1.33kg • 1yr RTB warranty



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