

## WD Blue 3D NAND SSD

With consistently good performance, this is an excellent mainstream SSD for an excellent price

SCORE ★★★★★

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### PRICE MATRIX

£48 250GB (£40 ex VAT)	£72 500GB (£60 ex VAT)	£127 1TB (£106 ex VAT)	£280 2TB (£233 ex VAT)
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WD's Blue line is its mainstream storage option, giving you faster performance than on the entry-level Green line without the costs and cutting-edge performance of the Black. Yet it's hard to see where the WD Blue 3D NAND could go much further on specification. It uses WD's 3D BiCS NAND technology, as developed by WD and Toshiba, along with a Marvell controller and a Micron cache module. Plus it promises read

speeds of up to 560MB/sec and write speeds of up to 530MB/sec, matching Samsung's mighty 860 Pro.

It's a little slower on the random read/write side, with 95,000 and 84,000 IOPS to the Samsung's 100,000 and 90,000, but not to any worrying extent. In fact, the biggest difference between the two is reliability and lifespan. While the WD Blue comes with a five-year limited warranty and beats the Samsung on MTBF, WD's claimed lifespan is just 200TB total bytes written – one of the lowest figures of any drive in this Labs. Still, the likelihood is that the drive will outlast its warranty, so you needn't count this against the WD.

The Blue's biggest strength is its consistent performance. It's only just behind the Seagate Barracuda in CrystalDiskMark's sequential read and write tests and while its trumped by the Barracuda, Adata SU800 and Samsung 860Pro in some or all of the random read/write tests, it's never far from the frontrunners. Much the same is true in the AS SSD benchmark, where it does a good job of keeping up with the speediest drives. What's more, it's just as fast in our real-world benchmarks. It shaved



ABOVE It may have a low lifespan, but the WD Blue performs consistently well



seconds off the video and multitasking components of our standard PC Pro benchmarks and finished a mite behind the Barracuda in our file-transfer test.

This makes things tricky for us. The WD Blue 3D NAND is cheaper than the Samsung 860 Pro, but in the same general ballpark as the Barracuda, the Adata and the Crucial MX500, and while each has different performance characteristics they're all fantastic 2.5in drives. The MX500 just pulls ahead on value at some capacities, although at 1TB the Blue starts winning. Either way, this is another great go-to 2.5in SSD.

## WD Green SSD

Fantastically cheap, but slower than the competition and increasingly difficult to find on the shelves

SCORE ★★★★★

SUPPLIER [lambda-tek.com/shop](http://lambda-tek.com/shop)

### PRICE MATRIX

£21 120GB (£19 ex VAT)	£31 240GB (£25 ex VAT)	£53 480GB (£44 ex VAT)
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Western Digital has stuck to its old three-line policy with its transition to SSDs, and where Black means high performance and Blue is for mainstream PCs, Green is the cost-conscious choice. That means living with slower TLC NAND than its Blue stablemate, albeit combined with an SLC cache, but the price helps compensate. The 240GB version comes in at £31, giving you a bargain basement cost per GB of just 13p. There is a 480GB version

available but it seems to be going end-of-life; it was only available at [lambda-tek.com/shop](http://lambda-tek.com/shop) at time of going to press.

Heavy PC users might have some concerns about reliability. The MBTF is just one million hours where most comparable SSDs claim over 1.5 million, there's no suggested lifespan stated and the warranty is just three years. Given the price and spec, though, it's hard to complain; it's likely that you'll give up the drive before it gives up the ghost.

It's no surprise that the WD Green is not a fast SSD. Sequential real speeds both in AS SSD and Crystal Disk Mark are at the bottom of the table at 515MB/sec and 555MB/sec respectively, while random read/write speeds aren't any better. The results in our real-world file-transfer tests back this up; the WD Green took over ten seconds longer to move 20GB of data than the Samsung 860 Pro and was over three seconds slower than the next slowest drive, the SanDisk Ultra II. The one chink of light for WD's entry-level drive is that everyday performance in our PC Pro



ABOVE The prices are staggeringly low, but we'd recommend shelling out more for better performance

benchmarks isn't nearly so awful. The WD actually polished off the toughest multitasking test faster than some rival drives, and even put in a credible effort with the video transcoding test.

In short, this isn't that bad an SSD, but you don't have to spend much more to get better value. The Corsair MX500 isn't much more expensive in its 250GB version and offers significantly better performance – and comes in 500GB and 1TB versions too – while the Seagate Barracuda and WD Blue 3D NAND offer a better balance of performance, capacity and cost.