

## BLUE RAY PLAYERS



If you have a high-definition TV and you want the best picture quality, your choice is simple: buy a high-definition Blu-ray player.

Blu-ray is the latest development in the world of DVD players and discs. A Blu-ray disc gives a sharper and more detailed picture than a standard-definition DVD. The picture is even better than HDTV broadcasts.

Blu-ray also has some extra features. For example, BD-Live-enabled players let you connect to the internet, download extras such as games and trailers, and even interact with other connected users.

### **The future: Blu-ray players or film downloads?**

The Blu-ray format is rapidly becoming more popular as people upgrade from DVD players. (Blu-ray machines also play older DVDs so your old collection won't become obsolete.)

Disc sales grew by a healthy 358% last year, more than two million Blu-ray capable machines have been snapped up, and it's predicted that by 2012, more than one in three film discs bought in western Europe will be Blu-ray.

This growth sounds impressive, but isn't all it seems. Many Blu-ray players sold in the UK and Ireland are part of Sony PlayStation3 (PS3) video games machines rather than standalone players.

Many, if not most, buyers are likely to be buying the PS3 mainly as a games machine - the Blu-ray player is almost incidental.

And while sales of Blu Ray discs saw a 123% increase in sales in 2009, rising to 8.4 million units in the UK, this only equates to 3.4% of total video sales. It's still dwarfed by the 256 million standard DVD discs sold which account for 96.3% of the market.

Another fact to consider is film downloading, which increased by 4,080% in 2009 - a trend that will accelerate with the rise of internet-capable TVs.

With the advent of faster broadband, it's increasingly convenient to download a film from **Sky**, **Virgin**, or **Apple's iTunes** rather than rent or buy it on disc

Here are the top 5 "Best Buys" from the Which? team



**Which? score: 82%**

**Model: LG - BD670**

The LG BD670 is a 3D-capable Blu-ray player. It's similar to the LG BD660 but also features built-in wifi plus DLNA networking and LG's NetCast system (which includes access to BCC iPlayer and YouTube). An impressive spec-sheet

Some Blu-ray players can be slow to get going, but this player boots up and starts playing a disc fairly quickly, so there's not much delay before you start watching a film.



**Which? score: 81%**

**Model: LG - BD660**

The LG BD660 is a 3D-capable Blu-ray player with DLNA networking, LG's NetCast system (which includes access to BCC iPlayer and YouTube) plus a USB input. An impressive spec-sheet

Some Blu-ray players can be slow to get going, but this player boots up and starts playing a disc fairly quickly, so there's not much delay before you start watching a film.



**Which? score: 81%**

**Model: Philips - BDP5200/05**

The Philips BDP5200/12 Blu-Ray player is a 3D-ready player that comes with coaxial digital audio output, a front USB port, a rear SD-card port for BD-Live content, an ethernet port and built-in wireless connectivity. It can access YouTube, Picasa, Twitter and more. It can also connect to a DLNA server to stream media. This model has a lot going for it

Picture quality from Blu-ray and DVD discs was up there with the best and it was easy to use.



**Which? score: 80%**

**Model: Sony - BDP-S780**

The Sony BDP-S780 Blu-Ray player is Sony's flagship model with a vast array of features. It has built-in wireless connectivity and can access a range of Net TV services such as YouTube and BBC iPlayer. It has both coaxial and optical digital outputs, can also play 3D Blu-ray discs and can connect to a DLNA server to stream media. With the addition of a suitable webcam and microphone you can also make Skype calls via your TV screen with this player. This Sony Blu-Ray player certainly has all the bells and whistles.

Performance is very good and the player's pretty easy to use



**Which? score: 80%**

**Model: Samsung - BD-D6500**

The Samsung BD-D6500 is a 3D compatible Blu-ray player with built-in wireless connectivity. It also features Samsung Apps, which allows you to stream media and other internet services such as YouTube, BBC iPlayer, Picasa, Facebook, Google Maps and Twitter. It can also connect to a DLNA server and stream media and it has touch-sensitive front-panel controls. It has great features and is versatile.

Performance is top notch and the player's pretty easy to use.

information is from Which? magazine