

SHORT-THROW GAMING PROJECTOR

OPTOMA GT1080

COMPUTER
SHOPPER
RECOMMENDED



£650 inc VAT • From www.scan.co.uk

VERDICT

It lacks video inputs beyond HDMI, but this short-throw gaming projector is a versatile big-screen TV substitute

SHORT-THROW PROJECTORS ARE a great way of bringing big screen gaming to a small room at a lower price than a large TV. Optoma's GT1080 does exactly this and is able to create a 100in display from a metre away, so even the smallest gaming den should have room for it.

At just 2.65kg, the GT1080 is both small and light enough to be moved around, and also comes with a carrying case for extra portability. It's adaptable, too, as it supports both inverted and mirrored projection should you wish to use a ceiling mount or place it behind your projection screen to save space. Each of its feet are adjustable, and there's vertical keystoneing to ensure you get a proper rectangular image on to your projection surface regardless of the height the projector.

The only video inputs on the GT1080 are a pair of HDMI ports, one of which is compatible with MHL, which means you can project your tablet or smartphone's screen on to a bigger surface. We'd prefer a slightly larger selection of video inputs, though, including a VGA input.

THE BRIGHT STUFF

Image quality is excellent for the price. The 2,800 lumen bulb is bright enough to overcome some artificial light, but you should dim your lights and close the curtains where possible, as darker spots onscreen suffer greatly when external light sources are present. The DLP chip, which projects through a high-speed colour wheel, creates crisp and colourful images. However, during your first few days with the projector, you should test out colour and image options to see which suit you best.

The Gaming preset works well for games, making hard-to-spot objects in darkened areas easier to see. When we switched to another

source to view some high-resolution photos, though, we found the Gaming preset artificial-looking. The more realistic Reference preset was better for our high-resolution photos. Thankfully, your choice of preset for each HDMI input is remembered, so if you use the Gaming mode for your games console on one input and Reference for your laptop on the other, the projector will choose the preset you last used for each device.

There are also three slots for user-created presets and an array of colour options, including BrilliantColor and Dynamic Black. Both work in moderation, but when BrilliantColor is turned up too high it creates a messy, artificial-looking image. Dynamic Black alters contrast levels based on what's onscreen, but the change can jar when it happens in the middle of a scene.

The GT1080 is a brilliant projector, perfect for gamers who want a bigger screen but don't have money for a large TV

More conventional image adjustments include individual hue, saturation and gain settings for red, green, blue, cyan, yellow, magenta and white, all easily manageable via the well-designed remote control. The remote control is backlit, too, which is a nice touch.

MOTION SENSE

The GT1080 handles rapid movement well. It doesn't support frame interpolation, which we've seen on more expensive projectors, but although juddering was present on moving objects, it didn't distract from the action or ruin our gaming. We'd have liked more digital image processing tools such as noise reduction, but they are rarely found on a projector at this price.

Although 3D is also supported, this comes at an extra cost in the form of a transmitter and one pair of active shutter glasses priced at £90. Extra glasses cost £80 each, which is steep, particularly as the 3D isn't brilliant. We found that 3D films and games such as *Avatar* and *Killzone 3* sacrificed a lot of their vibrancy and lush visuals because of the 3D effect. This is more an effect of the glasses than the projector. Still, it's nice to have the option to upgrade.



We were impressed with the 10W speakers built into the GT1080; in many projectors, the speakers feel like they've been added as an after-thought, but those of the GT1080 are loud and very clear. They can't match a good set of 2.1 or 5.1 speakers, but they're more than adequate for normal usage if you're not too bothered about the sound of your games.

The only audio output present is a 3.5mm jack, which will be handy for headphone users and for basic multimedia speakers. If you want to use high-end audio devices, you'll need to connect them directly to your video source rather than the projector, which may prove problematic if you have multiple sources such

as a games console and a PC or set-top box. In this case, you'll need to invest in an amplifier.

PROJECTION RACKET

Optoma's GT1080 is a brilliant projector that's perfect for gamers who want a bigger screen but don't have the money for a large TV. Its short-throw capabilities mean it should fit into any room, and its adjustable feet, keystone settings and colour settings mean it's versatile and easy to set up. The lack of video input beyond HDMI and slightly lacking 3D performance are only minor drawbacks. However, if you have more to spend and don't need short-throw capabilities, Optoma's HD25-LV (see Reviews, Shopper 319) is also worth considering, as it's a strong performer with a brighter lamp and a better range of inputs.

Michael Passingham

SPECIFICATIONS

PROJECTOR TYPE Single-chip DLP
NATIVE RESOLUTION 1,920x1,080
VIDEO INPUTS 2xHDMI (1xMHL)
LAMP LIFE 5,000h
LAMP BRIGHTNESS 2,800 lumen
SIZE 114x315x224mm
WEIGHT 2.65kg
WARRANTY Two-year RTB
DETAILS www.optoma.co.uk
PART CODE GT1080

