

SORD M5**PRICE**

£145

SIZE

185 × 70 × 55mm

WEIGHT

1kg

CPU

Z80A

CLOCK SPEED

3.58MHz

MEMORY

8 Kbytes ROM

20 Kbytes RAM, of which 16 Kbytes are used for graphic display.

With the addition of cartridges the ROM can be expanded to 16 Kbytes and the RAM by 32 Kbytes

VIDEO DISPLAY

Up to 16 colours, which can be used on different 'planes'. There are sprite graphics and four different screen modes: two graphic, one text and a 'multi-colour' mode

INTERFACES

Cassette, printer (Centronics), joypads, ROM cartridge, audio

LANGUAGE SUPPLIED

Language cartridge is integer Basic, BASIC-I

OTHER LANGUAGES AVAILABLE

BASIC-G (graphics), BASIC-F (floating-point BASIC), FALC (a spreadsheet and database language)

COMES WITH

Power supply adaptor, cassette leads, television lead, two joysticks with leads, BASIC-I cartridge and a cassette with two games

KEYBOARD

55 keys: eight shifts giving all alphanumeric characters, 28 BASIC statements, and 64 graphic patterns

DOCUMENTATION

There is an 18-page User Guide that describes how to connect up the computer, how to load and play the two games, with a page dedicated to simple fault-finding. There is no description of the BASIC language or of using the cassette or other interfaces for any other purposes than for playing the games supplied

proposed 'MSX standard', developed by a group of major Japanese manufacturers, including Sord. The idea is that if manufacturers stick to these proposed standards for the design of home computers (covering both hardware and the dialect of BASIC to be used), it will be possible to write software that will run on all such machines, without modification. In terms of the graphics chips, the Sord M5 fulfils that standard.

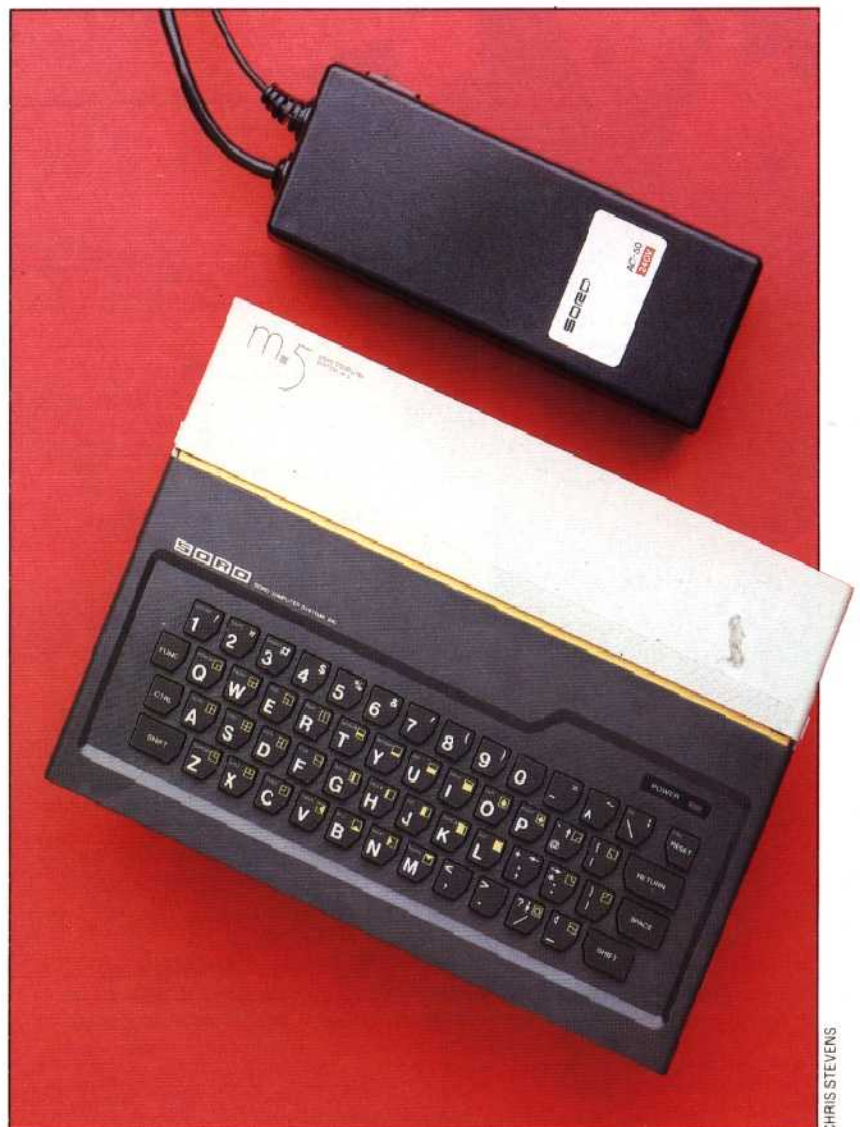
However, MSX also specifies that the sound chip must be the AY-3-8910 from General Instruments. To make sounds, the Sord M5 (like the BBC Micro) uses a TI 76489 chip, which has better control over the range of sounds produced than the GI chip, though it is similar in having three tone channels and one noise channel. This means that the M5 is not a true MSX machine. However, it is sufficiently close to give an idea of what such machines will be like in use.

Three different versions of BASIC, several utilities, some games and other applications can be supplied in ROM cartridge form, and since these may be up to 16 Kbytes in capacity, some useful programs may well appear for this machine.

The M5 may be a little more expensive than other computers of similar physical appearance, but the quality is definitely worth the extra cost.

The Sord M5 Keyboard

The rubber keyboard is slightly larger than the Sinclair Spectrum's, and a lighter touch makes it more suitable for typing. A total of 55 keys can be used in a number of ways, to obtain alphanumeric characters, graphic symbols, or whole BASIC keywords, by means of the FUNC key. All keys will repeat automatically if held down — which is very useful for screen editing



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