



### Snappy Play

Acornsoft's Snapper is quite a good version of the classic PacMan game. It costs £12.80 in cartridge format and can be controlled with keys or with a joystick. The game is also sold in tape format at a lower price



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### Expansion Connector

The Plus 1 links to the Electron via this edge connector. This is the only provision for expansion on the Electron

easily be attached. All of these require additional chips and sockets, which inevitably add to production costs. By omitting these interfaces, not only are the extra chips unnecessary but power requirements are less and the computer is smaller and cheaper. That was the philosophy behind the original Electron. The fact that Acorn has now introduced the Plus 1 suggests that possibly this cost-cutting went too far.

The Electron Plus 1 is less versatile than the BBC Micro and offers fewer expansion possibilities. But many users do not require such facilities and at a price considerably less than the BBC machine, the Electron Plus 1, with its excellent graphics and sound facilities, structured BASIC and a growing range of software, looks good value for money.

## BBC MICRO MODEL B

### PRICE

£399

### DIMENSIONS

75×340×410mm

### CPU

6502, 1.8MHz

### MEMORY

32K RAM, 32K ROM

### SCREEN

8 display modes. Highest resolution: text – 80×32 characters; graphics – 640 × 256 pixels. Up to eight colours, which can be steady or flashing. Teletext display mode. User definable characters.

### INTERFACES

UHF for television, RGB and composite video for monitors; cassette port; RS423 and Centronics printer interfaces; analogue port (for joysticks etc.); ROM sockets (for software); Tube (for second processors); 1MHz bus; Disk interface (optional); Econet networking interface (optional); user port; auxiliary power output (to power disk drives etc.)

### LANGUAGES AVAILABLE

BBC BASIC (included), 6502 Assembler (included), LISP, FORTH, BCPL, PASCAL

### KEYBOARD

72 typewriter style keys. This includes 10 programmable function keys.

### DOCUMENTATION

The BBC manual is an excellent guide for experienced programmers, but offers little help for novices.

### STRENGTHS

One of the best versions of BASIC available, a huge range of interfaces, good graphics, sound and keyboard.

### WEAKNESSES

Not easy for the beginner to get started on the BBC

## ACORN ELECTRON PLUS 1

### PRICE

£259 (Electron £199, Plus 1 Interface £60)

### DIMENSIONS

65×260×340mm (with Plus 1 fitted)

### CPU

6502, 1.8MHz

### MEMORY

32K RAM, 32K ROM

### SCREEN

7 display modes. Highest resolution: text – 80×32 characters; graphics – 640×256 pixels. Up to eight colours and eight flashing. User definable characters

### INTERFACES

UHF output for television; RGB and composite video for monitors; cassette port; parallel printer port; analogue port (for joysticks etc.); two sockets (for ROM cartridge software etc.)

### LANGUAGES AVAILABLE

BASIC, 6502 Assembler (supplied); FORTH, LISP (also on ROM cartridge), S-PASCAL

### KEYBOARD

56 typewriter-style keys. Function key permits single key entry of BASIC commands. 10 programmable keys

### DOCUMENTATION

The User Guide is well laid out and easy to read. It has a very thorough coverage of Electron BASIC and (most unusually) 6502 Assembly language

### STRENGTHS

The graphics are good, and it produces a clear picture. High-quality keyboard. A good version of BASIC.

### WEAKNESSES

The multi-function keys can be confusing. There is only one sound channel. Little available memory. No teletext mode. Lack of communications port



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