



	LABS WINNER	RECOMMENDED	RECOMMENDED				
	Dell XPS 13	HP Envy 13	HP Spectre x360 15.6	Lenovo ThinkPad X280	Lenovo ThinkPad X380 Yoga	Microsoft Surface Laptop	PC Specialist Recoil II
	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
	cnx37004	ah0001na	ch004na	20KFO01GUK	20LH000SUK	Model1769	N/A
	£1,333 (£1,599)	£708 (£849)	£1,583 (£1,899)	£1,242 (£1,490)	£1,133 (£1,360)	£833 (£999)	£824 (£989)
	dell.co.uk	store.hp.com	store.hp.com	lenovo.com	lenovo.com	pcpro.link/289surf	pcspecialist.co.uk
	302 x 199 x 11.6mm	307 x 212 x 149mm	359 x 250 x 194	308 x 210 x 17.8mm	313 x 222 x 18mm	308 x 223 x 15mm	359 x 236 x 19mm
	1.21kg (1.47kg)	1.31kg (1.53kg)	2.14kg (2.57kg)	1.15kg (1.46kg)	1.44kg (1.78kg)	1.25kg	1.99kg (2.54kg)
	1yr C&R	1yr C&R	1yr C&R	3yr C&R	3yr C&R	1yr C&R	3yr RTB (1 month C&R)
	82%	80%/80%	80%/80%	80%/80%	80%/80%	80%/80%	N/A
	Core i7-8550U	Core i5-8250U	Core i7 8750G	Core i7-8550U	Core i7-8550U	Core i5-7200U	Core i7-8750H
	16GB	8GB	16GB	16GB	8GB	8GB	16GB
	13.3in gloss	13.3in gloss	15.6in gloss	13.3in matte	13.3in gloss	13.5in IPS glossy	15.6in matte
	1,920 x 1,080	1,920 x 1,080	3,840 x 2,160	1,920 x 1,080	1,920 x 1,080	2,256 x 1,504	1,920 x 1,080
	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
	Intel UHD Graphics 620	2GB Nvidia GeForce MX150	Intel UHD Graphics 630/4GB AMD Radeon RX Vega M	Intel UHD Graphics 620	Intel UHD Graphics 620	Intel HD Graphics 620	4GB GeForce GTX 1050 Ti
	USB-C (Thunderbolt)	USB-C (Thunderbolt)	HDMI	HDMI	mini-DisplayPort, HDMI	mini-DisplayPort	2 x mini-DisplayPort, HDMI
	512GB	256GB	1TB	512GB	512GB	250GB	500GB
	NVMe M.2 SSD	NVMe M.2 SSD	NVMe M.2 SSD	NVMe M.2 SSD	NVMe M.2 SSD	NVMe M.2 SSD	NVMe M.2 SSD
	Lithium ion	Lithium ion	Lithium ion	Lithium ion	Lithium ion	Lithium ion	Lithium ion
	52Wh	53.2Wh	84Wh	51Wh	48Wh	45.2Wh	46Wh
	802.11ac	802.11ac	802.11ac	802.11ac	802.11ac	802.11ac	802.11ac
	✗	✗	✗	✓ (Gigabit)	✓ (Gigabit)	✗	✓ (Gigabit)
	microSD	microSD	SD	SD	microSD	✗	SD
	3 (2 x Thunderbolt 3)	1 (USB 3.1)	2 (Thunderbolt 3)	2 (USB 3.1, Thunderbolt 3)	1 (Thunderbolt 3)	✗	1 (USB 3.1)
	✗	2 x USB 3, audio	USB 3	2 x USB 3	2 x USB 3	USB 3, Surface Connect	2 x USB 3, USB 2, audio
	HD	HD	Full HD	HD	HD	HD	HD
	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Windows 10 Home 64-bit	Windows 10 Home 64-bit	Windows 10 Home 64-bit	Windows 10 Pro 64-bit	Windows 10 Pro 64-bit	Windows 10 in S mode (free upgrade to Windows 10 Pro 64-bit)	Windows 10 Home 64-bit

PC Specialist Recoil II

It's not really that thin or that light, but who cares when you see what the Recoil II can do?

SCORE ★★★★★

PRICE £824 (£989 inc VAT)
from pcspecialist.co.uk

The PC Specialist Recoil II isn't exactly subtle about its angle or its audience; if the name doesn't tell you that this is a gaming laptop, the multi-coloured pyrotechnic display of the fully RGB-backlit keyboard will. Admittedly, it also stretches our definition of thin-and-light to breaking point. It's 19.9mm thick towards the back and hits the scales at nearly 2kg. Throw the chunky power adapter in your bag, and you're looking at a 2.54kg carrying weight.

Still, you can't help but like its sense of menace. With a design mixing metals, matte-black plastics and whopping grilles, it's the kind of laptop the new *Star Wars* trilogy's Kylo Ren might use to wind down before smashing up his room when he failed to get a *Fortnite* Victory Royale. The fan at the back spits out a fair bit of air and a lot of noise while gaming, but in simple Windows desktop use it stays fairly quiet. It's one of the more ergonomically-friendly gaming laptops you can find.

Gamers, of course, will instantly get the appeal of that RGB keyboard, not to mention the clicky, rugged appeal of the mechanical-switch keys. If you play shooters or games such as *League of Legends* at a high level, this is exactly what you want. It isn't so great for typing, as the pressure required to get a click isn't quite so conducive to getting a lot of words down fast. That's something to bear in mind if you're looking for a laptop that does gaming duties and some good, hard work. Still, we've got no such problems with the touchpad. 105mm x 75mm in size, it's absolutely massive and a pleasure to use. Just one word of warning: the keyboard surround and lid are fingerprint magnets, so you might want to avoid anything remotely greasy while this laptop is in use. Even a simple doughnut can result in the kind of marks you would normally associate with fried chicken.



We could say the same about the Recoil II's screen, which seems weirdly huge. PC Specialist has stuck to a 1,080p resolution, which on balance is a bright idea. After all, you don't have to push as many pixels as with a higher-density screen, and at 15.6in the difference when gaming isn't all that significant. It's bright, maxing out at 347.2cd/m², with high contrast levels of 993.9:1, and it makes games and action movies look spectacular. That said, the colour accuracy is just okay with a Delta E of 2.59 and sRGB gamut coverage comes in at only 85%. Consequently, if you're a designer or amateur photographer, then the Recoil II isn't for you.

This laptop has a Soundblaster-branded speaker system, but it's a bit of a mixed bag. On the one hand, there's plenty of clarity and some impressive pseudo-surround effects to give the impression of a wider stereo spread. However, there's not as much boom and bang as on some larger gaming laptops, while subtlety and finesse aren't amongst the Recoil II's strengths.

ABOVE The RGB keyboard and clicky mechanical-switch keys will instantly appeal to gamers

"It's the kind of laptop Kylo Ren might use to wind down before smashing up his room when he failed to get a *Fortnite* Victory Royale"

BELOW You're very well served on the connectivity front – there's even a Gigabit Ethernet port

Connectivity is a different matter. As well as two USB 2 ports, two USB 3 ports and a single USB-C, you also get an SD card slot, separate mic and headphone sockets, two mini DisplayPort outputs and an HDMI. There's even a Gigabit Ethernet port with gaming-friendly Quality of Service features; just what you need if you're a budding pro.

Now, I won't tell you that the Recoil II is the last word in gaming performance, but with a six-core Core i7 8750H processor, 16GB of RAM and an Nvidia GTX 1050 GPU, it has more than enough grunt to run anything at high detail settings at over 30fps – and some titles at nearer 60fps. There's also an option to step up to a GTX 1060 if you need more speed. Unsurprisingly, the PC Specialist also decimated every other laptop in our 2D benchmarks. Sure, it's a bit like putting Dwayne Johnson in an arm-wrestling contest for the Oscars, but it hammers home the point: this is the fastest laptop here by a mile.

